



2020 Summer Interns in front of Community Office

Assembly Member Rebecca A. Seawright

REPORTS TO THE PEOPLE

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

This session brought unexpected uncertainties because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a State, we are facing economic challenges and budgetary deficits, unprecedented unemployment claims, and tough challenges at the expense of preventing the spread of a deadly disease.

In Albany, we responded to the COVID-19 virus with aggressive emergency legislation. The legislation prohibits the eviction of tenants in financial distress during the pandemic. Nursing homes would be required to develop and adopt annual pandemic emergency response plans for review and approval by the State Health Department. Price gougers of products or services “vital or necessary to the health, safety, and welfare of consumers or the general public” would be subject to strict sanctions. Other actions provide state-financed rental vouchers, a one-year extension for plaintiffs seeking monetary damages for claims of child sexual abuse, and penalties for employers who take action against employees who speak out against workplace safety hazards.

In our community, we provided vital personal protective equipment to medical professionals, held Virtual Town Hall Tuesdays, delivered hundreds of meals to homebound seniors, and supplied constituents with thousands of face coverings and hand sanitizer to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

While there is still much work to be done to stop a history of discriminatory police conduct, we took the first steps in the fight towards a fully transparent, equitable, and unbiased police force with the repeal of 50-A, the passage of the Eric Garner Anti-choking bill, and many other legislative reforms.

We continue to engage with neighbors and respond to thousands of requests for assistance. Our team is here to help connect you to resources. Keep in touch with our office by calling 212-288-4607 or emailing SeawrightR@NYAssembly.gov.

As always, we are here to serve you!

Rebecca A. Seawright



Election Reform

Assembly Member Rebecca A. Seawright’s election reform measure, Bill 9001, passed both houses with overwhelming support. The law will save taxpayer dollars and promote efficiency and transparency by allowing candidates to satisfy both local and state requirements when running for office. Governor Cuomo signed the measure into law.

Coler Hospital on Roosevelt Island

“We are here today to deliver to Coler Hospital these urgently needed supplies and to thank our courageous frontline medical workers for their service,” Seawright said.

Seawright held a press conference to spotlight the COVID-19 response at Coler and to distribute life-saving personal protective equipment (PPEs). She also co-hosted a meeting with patients, advocates, elected officials, and the City’s Health + Hospitals leadership to get answers about Coler’s patient care during crisis. As a result, a new community-based task force has been established to monitor operations at Coler, including COVID-19 testing and related protocols. Our advocacy for Coler Hospital residents on Roosevelt Island continues.

Delivering Food to Those in Need

With the support of dedicated volunteers, Seawright launched weekly meal deliveries to the homebound and seniors on the Upper East Side as part of our COVID-19 crisis response effort. Many thanks to the Stanley Isaacs Senior Citizens Center and their dedicated culinary staff for preparing nutritious and delicious meals. The center seeks additional volunteers to support homebound seniors who would otherwise go without food and nutrition in a pandemic. Sign-up with our office to volunteer!



Virtual Town Hall Tuesday: 17 Shows in 4 Months

In early March, our office launched “Virtual Town Hall Tuesday,” a live streaming show delivering vital information directly to constituents. To date, we have live-streamed 17 shows and counting. Guests have included New York State Attorney General Letitia James, the Chancellors of SUNY and CUNY systems, former long-time Assembly Member for the Upper East Side and First Deputy State Comptroller Alexander B. “Pete” Grannis, 19th Precinct Inspector Kathleen Walsh, and Co-Founder of Foresight2020, Alex Bores. Topics covered included housing, small business, human rights, LGBTQ rights, health and safety, animal rights, and K-12 education and distance learning. Remember to send your questions for the show which streams Tuesday evenings at 7 PM on my Facebook page at www.facebook.com/RebeccaASewright.



Seawright Cuts Through Unemployment Insurance Red Tape

Our office handled hundreds of constituent requests for help with their state unemployment insurance and pandemic unemployment assistance benefits. An unprecedented two million New Yorkers have applied for unemployment insurance since the COVID-19 Crisis. Every single person must receive the benefits they need and deserve. Please contact our office if you need assistance reaching the Department of Labor to receive the benefits to which you are entitled.

Providing Personal Protective Equipment Kits to the Community



Since the pandemic began, we have been working in the community to assist constituents. Seawright has co-sponsored vital legislation to help New Yorkers during this public health crisis that has claimed tens of thousands of lives in New York and sickened many more, particularly the elderly and in communities of color.

Our York Avenue community office has been hosting giveaways of personal protective face coverings and hand sanitizer. To date, we have distributed over 3,000 PPE materials to constituents. It is critical for all constituents have access to protective face coverings and hand sanitizer, both proven tools to lower the risk of transmission of infection.



Seawright Introduces Virtual Communications Crimes Accountability Package

Bills to Combat ZOOM-bombing, Prevent COVID-19 Scams, and Protect All Personal Identifying Information

Seawright recently introduced three bills that criminalize disruption of an online public meeting, authorize electronic appearances before a grand jury, and establish and redefine offenses involving fraud, scheme to defraud, and larceny. The bills would improve the way government functions during emergencies and bring our laws up to date with the modern era.

A.10693 – Establish Crime for Disturbing Online Public Meeting:

As we continue through this public health emergency, we have been forced to communicate, and host meetings, and gatherings through online video communications. However, such meetings are subject to harassment and disruptions. As the New York Times reported, a trend of ‘Zoombombing’ has intentionally wreaked havoc by disturbing the digital channels we rely on to communicate. This bill would criminalize the disruption of an online public meeting with the intent to cause public inconvenience, annoyance or alarm, and make such crime a class B misdemeanor.

A.10692 – Authorize Grand Jury Electronic Appearances:

Due to the ongoing public health crisis, most courts are closed and grand juries are not being called or assembled. This bill would allow any parties or witnesses to participate electronically through an independent audio-visual system when grand juries are allowed to return. It would mean that witnesses won’t have to travel, and would mitigate the risk of infection for all involved. The bill will only apply to the COVID-19 pandemic and would allow grand juries to safely resume activity.

A.10725 – Establish Offenses Involving Fraud and Larceny:

This bill would provide more severe penalties to a person who engages in a scheme to defraud. The current charge of a class A misdemeanor does not reflect the severity of a scheme to defraud a significant number of people out of their income. The legislation would also repeal a statute relating to the theft of service and includes theft of service within the existing crime of larceny. This would create higher penalties for theft of extremely valuable services. Lastly, in a world where personal information is increasingly stored online, it is more important than ever to ensure the theft of personal identifying information is prosecuted appropriately. This bill would make the theft of personal identifying information, computer data, or computer program to be included under the crime of larceny.

Seawright Votes to Repeal 50-a Supports Passage of Police Reforms

The murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor by police officers represent another horrifying chapter in the history of racism in America. Now, millions of Americans are saying enough is enough.

We took steps to shine a light on police disciplinary records by repealing section 50-a of the state Civil Rights Law. This statute has been interpreted broadly by state courts to prevent disclosure of a broad swath of law enforcement agency records that could have any potential connection to the possible disciplining of an employee.

Measures cosponsored by Seawright and passed include:

- Approving a law that requires a police officer who discharges a gun in the direction of a person to verbally report the firing of the gun to a police supervisor within six hours and provide a written report within 48 hours.
- Affirming the right of a person to record law enforcement activity and maintain custody and control of the recording.
- Enacting a statewide ban on racial and ethnic profiling by police and law enforcement agencies. We approved a new law to combat false 911 calls motivated by bias. We also took actions to protect the health and safety of those in custody. We banned chokeholds. We enacted legislation for a special statewide office to oversee police actions in cases of wrongful death and police misconduct.

This comprehensive legislative package will help ensure police officers are accountable, promote transparency, and begin the process of rebuilding trust between communities and the police sworn to protect them. Make no mistake: We are not against law enforcement; we are against bad policing and bad cops who should not be wearing the uniform. We understand how dangerous and difficult the job is. But with great power comes great responsibility, and where there is a great power, there is an acute need to make sure that power is not abused. The law enforcement reform measures are only the first steps. There's still so much more important work that needs to be done.

Press Conference for Supporting Voiceless Shelter Animals



Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright was joined by animal advocate groups to bring attention to a major city-wide shortage of food for animals in shelters across New York City and to announce a \$1 million funding effort to feed animals in critical need throughout the nation helping to combat shortages caused by COVID-19 hardships. American Humane Ambassador Jean Shafiroff, Assembly Member Seawright, Community Board 8 Member Peter Patch holding "Oreo," and Special Assistant Flor de Maria Eilets stand with neighbors in support of the shelter animals.

Delivering Food to Frontline Healthcare Workers

We delivered flowers and a wood-fired pizza lunch to frontline healthcare workers at Lenox Hill Hospital Center/ Northwell Health. I was delighted to co-sponsor this event with our courageous firefighters and the leadership of the Uniform Firefighters Association.



Constituent Jill Eisner and Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright serve lunch to the healthcare heroes before Mother's Day.

Seawright Holds Press Conference to Hold Developers Accountable

The community office of Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright is here for you. Our office is located at 1485 York Avenue (between 78/79 Streets) and can be reached any time by calling 212-288-4607 or emailing SeawrightR@NYAssembly.gov. Our office's dedicated staff has taken on Extell developers and uncooperative management companies. We are also introducing no-cost notary services. Consider us a resource for your housing questions at our Tuesday night Housing Legal Clinic by appointment. If you have a quality of life issue that needs to be resolved, need information or help cutting through bureaucratic red tape to access services, please do not hesitate to be in touch.



Seawright took on Extell for their unsafe construction site at East 79 Street and First Avenue. Soon after her office's intervention, lighting and safety improvements were made.



The Seawright Survey

Together, we can make the Upper East Side, Yorkville,
and Roosevelt Island rise and restore from the COVID-19 virus.

Please fill out and return the form below to let me know which issues most concern you.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

- Food insecurity
- COVID testing
- COVID related stress
- Jobs and Unemployment
- Social Justice
- Housing Costs
- Crime and Public Safety
- Senior Citizens Concerns
- Health Care
- K-12 Schools
- Homelessness

Other:

Additional issues, questions or concerns

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REPORTS TO THE PEOPLE

from Assembly Member
REBECCA A. SEAWRIGHT



Seawright Delivering Face Coverings and Hand Sanitizer on Roosevelt Island

Hand sanitizer and protective face coverings are available and distributed during our scheduled giveaways at the district office. We are working to ensure that all constituents have access to the proven tools to lower the risk of transmission of infection. Please contact the district office for the next scheduled giveaway.

Seawright stands with Roosevelt Island neighbors at a PPE giveaway at the Chapel of the Good Shepherd.