

Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz

Reports to the People of the 81st Assembly District

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Serving the communities of Kingsbridge, Kingsbridge Heights, Marble Hill, Norwood, Riverdale, Van Cortlandt Village, Wakefield, and Woodlawn

Dear Neighbor:

This legislative session was the most satisfying and productive year that I have had throughout my tenure in Albany as your Assemblyman. I am very proud to have passed a personal best 28 bills through both houses (third most out of all 150 members), and as a legislature, we have passed some of the most monumental policy changes in at least a generation. We made revolutionary strides to protect tenants, save our climate, rebuild our democracy, prevent gun violence, fix our transit, promote public health, support workers and consumers, and ensure justice for all people.

It is a tremendous relief to finally have a partner in the State Senate after so many years of watching our bills from the Assembly die without receiving so much as a vote. I am energized and optimistic as we work together to accomplish even more in 2020.

There is certainly more work to be done. Some of my outstanding priorities include: passage of the New York Health Act, improving our mass transit system, continue our aggressive action to combat climate change, and much more.

As always, I work on every conceivable local issue in every neighborhood in our district. My excellent staff always stands ready to help you solve problems.

Thank you to each and every one of you who has advocated for what you believe in, and I look forward to our continued partnership on behalf of the 81st Assembly District.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Dinowitz
Member of Assembly



Access Will Be Provided at Mosholu Parkway: A tremendous team effort for elevators in the subway! (Pictured above, l-r: Coalition for Accessible Subways Co-Leader Eric Dinowitz, State Senator Jamaal Bailey, Assemblywoman Nathalia Fernandez, Coalition for Accessible Subways Co-Leader Jean Hill, Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York Board Member Dustin Jones, and North Central Bronx Hospital Executive Director Cristina Contreras.)

Elevators Coming to Northwest Bronx Subway Stations

Less than one-quarter of the 472 stations in our subway system are fully compliant with ADA requirements. This is unacceptable and represents, in my opinion, a dereliction of our moral obligation to ensure equal access to the backbone of our city. Improving transit accessibility is one of my top priorities as your Assemblyman, and I have been a vocal leader in demanding full access for all people to our transit system – authoring legislation which would codify benchmarks in state law for the MTA to make improvements, joining advocates and colleagues at numerous rallies for accessibility, and fighting for accelerated accessibility behind the scenes as well.

I am happy to share that our hard work is paying off. The MTA announced that 70 additional stations will be made accessible within the next five years. In total, the MTA has proposed to spend \$5.2 billion specifically on accessibility as part of a record \$51.5 billion overall capital plan. I am very excited that our neighborhoods have two stations slated to receive elevators among other accessibility improvements: Mosholu Parkway on the 4 train and West 242nd Street on the 1 train.

I am proud to have been part of a community coalition that was integral in getting these ADA improvements at Mosholu Parkway. Led by Jean Hill (President of Tracey Towers Tenant Association and former Chair of Community Board 7) and Eric Dinowitz (Chair of the Community Board 8 Aging Committee), this coalition gathered over 2,000 signatures in just a few weeks and delivered them to the MTA Board last fall. Their effort was strongly supported by State Senator Jamaal Bailey, Council Member Andrew Cohen, Assemblywoman Nathalia Fernandez, and community institutions such as North Central Bronx Hospital, Montefiore Medical Center, Jerome-Gun Hill BID, Mosholu Montefiore Community Center, and many more.

Thank you to all who helped advocate for these improvements, and I will keep fighting for accessibility until not only our stations are improved in the Northwest Bronx, but every station in the system throughout New York City – including our MetroNorth stations such as Woodlawn and Spuyten Duyvil.

FREE Notary Service

Our office provides free notary service during regular office hours, **10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday**. Please bring two forms of identification, at least one with your photo and signature, if you would like your signature notarized.

Protecting Children from Preventable Diseases

Children in New York State are now better protected from preventable diseases thanks to the passage of my legislation which eliminated non-medical exemptions to school vaccine requirements. This was likely the most controversial bill we passed this year in Albany, largely due to the presence of a tiny, but very vocal, minority of people known as anti-vaxxers.

The vast majority of New Yorkers agree that the health of all children should take precedence over the individual and often misinformed opinions of a few parents. There is as close to unanimous consensus as is possible among the medical community that vaccines are safe and effective at preventing the spread of certain diseases. It's unfortunate that many anti-vaxxers prefer to get medical advice from YouTube videos rather than from legitimate doctors.

Everyone at all schools and day care centers in New York State are now already better protected against preventable diseases such as measles, hepatitis, and more. Medical exemptions are still permitted, but must include a reason why it is being issued and they must be reissued each year.

I am sympathetic toward the children who are being removed from their schools by anti-vaxxer parents who refuse to vaccinate. All kids should be in school, with their friends and teachers, but this underlying principle unequivocally must include those who are medically unable to



Pictured above, l-r: Dr. Linda Prine of NYS Academy of Family Physicians, Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, State Senator Brad Hoylman, State Senator David Carlucci, and Dr. Sheila L. Palevsky of NYS American Academy of Pediatrics.

be vaccinated too. No child made the choice to have leukemia or AIDS or any other cause for a compromised immune system, and they have every right to attend school without fear of a preventable outbreak of measles or other communicable disease.



Victory for Tenants: *One of my long-time priorities as your Assemblyman has been to fight for more tenant protections in Albany. I am proud to have stood with housing advocates this spring demanding rent reform, and I am even prouder that we won so many important victories for tenants in New York. Please contact my office with any questions you may have with your landlord and compliance with the new laws.*

Reversing the Trend: Re-Regulation of 100+ Apartments

Oftentimes it seems that the fight to preserve (and expand) affordable housing is a bit like trying to stop the tide with your hands. That's why I am so excited to have won one of these fights, and am pleased that the NYS Division of Homes & Community Renewal brought 123 apartments right here in our community back into rent regulation.

It had been brought to my attention that one landlord may have illegally stopped registering their apartments with the DHCR (which is a requirement of rent regulation) from three buildings in my district: 3840 Orloff Avenue, 3075 Heath Avenue, and 2856 Webb Avenue. Armed with quarterly tax statements that failed to show the required rent stabilization fees, I contacted the Tenant Protection Unit at DHCR and requested that they investigate. They did, and lo and behold, we were correct. DHCR then forced the landlord to re-regulate these three buildings.

Assemblyman Dinowitz Provides Funding for Better Lighting at Marble Hill and Fort Independence Houses

A few years ago, I successfully fought to secure \$1.25 million through the New York State Assembly for safety improvements in NYCHA buildings in my district. After speaking with residents, many said that they felt unsafe in dark stairwells and that the hallways were dim and foreboding. The consensus was that this money should be spent on lighting improvements. New lighting has been designed and installed throughout building lobbies, stairwells, hallways, and outside.

I am proud of the community-driven process which has resulted in these improvements, and look forward to continuing to work with residents and leadership at NYCHA to restore the public housing stock in the Northwest Bronx. At one point in time, public housing represented an investment in working people of New York and offered ladders to opportunity. I believe that with effective leadership, adequate resources, and support from tenants, that this ideal could be restored.

National Night Out 2019



Strong community relationships with NYPD officers are a huge part of how we ensure that our neighborhoods are as safe as they can be. I was excited to see so many community leaders attending this year's National Night Out, including Congressman Adriano Espaillat, Assemblymember Carmen De La Rosa, and many more. Thank you to 50th Precinct Commanding Officer, Captain Emilio Melendez, and the entire Community Affairs team!

Left Turn Signal Approved

Perseverance pays off. For many years, our community has wanted a left-turn signal on southbound Riverdale Avenue turning onto West 231st Street. I strongly advocated for this green arrow and I am very satisfied that this year, the DOT has approved the installation of a left-turn signal.

With so many new buildings and schools going up, we have seen a marked increase in the amount of pedestrian traffic in recent years. This intersection has long been a problem, not only for pedestrians but also for drivers who are tired of saying their prayers every time they want to turn left onto West 231st Street.

This victory is a testament to what we can accomplish when our community is united in fighting for a common goal, and I appreciate the support of Council Member Andrew Cohen and Congressman Eliot Engel. I look forward to continuing our work to make the entire Riverdale Avenue corridor and streets throughout the district safer for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers alike.



Assemblyman Dinowitz speaks at a press conference with a neighborhood family whose members were struck by a turning vehicle in the dangerous corridor of Riverdale Avenue between West 230th Street to West 236th Street. (Pictured above, l-r: The Keck Family, Congressman Eliot Engel, Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, and Council Member Andrew Cohen).



Fighting for a Strong MTA Capital Plan: I joined transit advocates and fellow legislators to rally at Grand Central for an MTA Capital Plan that includes tangible improvements for mass transit instead of superficial vanity projects. I spoke about the need for modernized train signals, new train cars, accessible subway stations with elevators, and also increased investment in bus service – more buses, new/clean buses, more bus stop shelters, transit signal priority, all-door boarding, cashless fare collection, and more. The MTA ultimately released a capital plan that includes many of these items that I advocated for.



West 229th Street Step Street Reopens: Step streets are often overlooked but are a vitally important part of our community that helps facilitate pedestrian travel through the hilly terrain which covers much of the Northwest Bronx. I am glad that DDC and DOT renovated the dilapidated West 229th Street step street which had become a safety hazard for local residents. This was something for which I strongly advocated, and now residents of Kingsbridge Heights can enjoy this beautiful new step street (complete with a bike rail) as they go about their daily lives. I would especially like to thank Council Member Fernando Cabrera, pictured to my right, for his leadership and support in revitalizing this step street.



Back to School: This fall, students headed back to class. I was happy to join my colleagues in government and the community at North Central Bronx Hospital's back-to-school health fair. Joining me, pictured above (l-r): Community Board 7 member Betty Arce, North Central Bronx Hospital Executive Director Cristina Contreras, Council Member Andrew Cohen, Community Board 7 Chair Emmanuel Martinez, State Senator Gustavo Rivera, Deputy Bronx Borough President Marricka Scott-McFadden, and Community Board 7 District Manager Ischia Bravo.

Old Albany Post Lake

A decades-old problem is one step closer to being resolved. Old Albany Post Road (one-half block west of Broadway between West 251st Street and West 252nd Street) is a defunct section of the old postal road that had fallen into extreme disrepair. Over the past several years, erosion has created what I call "Old Albany Post Lake" – preventing adjacent residents from accessing their rear driveways, restricting emergency vehicle access, and creating an unsightly and likely unhealthy pool of standing water.

With residents at their wits end, Council Member Andrew Cohen and I worked to make an aggressive push for a solution to this area. A big thank you to NYS Office of General Services Commissioner (and former colleague) RoAnn Destito for responding to our concern and dispatching a crew to clear a blocked drain and to stabilize the eroding former roadway. There is still a need for permanent solutions – especially considering the illegal dumping that happens there, but I am glad that the immediate hazard has been addressed.

Street Tree Relief for Homeowners

For many years, homeowners have bemoaned a broken system which forced them to take responsibility for damage to sidewalks caused by city-owned trees. I am happy to report that homeowners can breathe a sigh of relief with a revamped Trees and Sidewalks Program. This change was brought about after Speaker Carl Heastie and the Assembly Majority elevated this concern and worked with Mayor Bill de Blasio to implement changes that are more equitable to homeowners.

New York City will now cancel liens against homeowners for damage caused by city trees, review all outstanding sidewalk violations, and complete 5,500 urgent repairs over the next three years. Additionally, it will expedite the re-evaluation process for homeowners in the process of selling or refinancing their homes.

To sign up for the program or for more information, please call 311 or visit www.nycgovparks.org/services/forestry/trees-sidewalks-program. If you have any difficulties with this new initiative, please contact my office for assistance.



Thank You Detective Ramos: We have had the incredible fortune of having the wonderful Detective Mindy Ramos-Santiago serving the people of the 50th Precinct as part of their Community Affairs team for the past 20 years. As she begins her post-retirement life, we are thankful for everything she has done over the years and wish her all the best!



Puerto Rican Day Parade: I joined thousands of our fellow New Yorkers at the 62nd Annual National Puerto Rican Day Parade, including Governor Andrew Cuomo, Attorney General Letitia James, Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., Council Member Andrew Cohen, NYPD Commissioner James P. O'Neill, 50th Precinct Captain Emilio Melendez, Assemblyman Marcos Crespo, and many more.



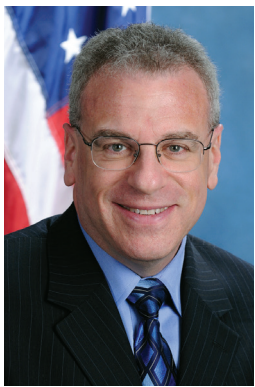
More Town Halls: We had a packed house of constituents attending the town hall meeting that State Senator Alessandra Biaggi and I sponsored in July. The massive turnout of local residents was heartening, particularly given the efforts by anti-vaccination extremists to disrupt the event by bringing in dozens of people from Long Island who believe that they have a right to endanger other people's children by not vaccinating their own.

Assemblyman Dinowitz Receives Perfect Environmental Scores in Albany

I am very proud to have received perfect scores on two legislative environmental scorecards this year: the New York League of Conservation Voters and Environmental Advocates of New York. While I have historically received great scores throughout my tenure in Albany, this year takes on extra significance because for the first time those bills which have almost always passed the Assembly have also passed the Senate and are finally getting to the Governor's desk for a signature.

Our climate crisis is urgent and demands a massive paradigm shift in our energy production, transportation sector, and building efficiency in order to ensure our children and grandchildren are left with a habitable world. There is much work left for us to do, but we have a strong foundation to work from when we return to Albany in 2020.

Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz
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**Jeffrey
Dinowitz**

November 2019

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Hearing from the People: Throughout the summer, I visited senior centers throughout my district to share updates on our 2019 legislative session and to hear what people thought about our accomplishments and our next steps. It was wonderful to visit with people at Riverdale Senior Services, the Riverdale Y, and Van Cortlandt Senior Center!



Van Cortlandt Library Opening: On July 15, the new Van Cortlandt Library celebrated its grand opening with a ribbon cutting. I joined my colleagues in government and representatives from the New York Public Library system and numerous very, very important community stakeholders. I am proud to have secured half a million dollars for this project and encourage everyone to go visit the new space.