



Assemblyman Ken Zebrowski

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Winter 2021



Dear Neighbor:

2021 will come to a close shortly and I wanted to wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season and a happy and healthy new year.

This time of year I am both wrapping up 2021 issues and preparing for the 2022 legislative session. This mailing will provide an update on some important issues. Enclosed is a link to my website where we are soliciting input on the issues most important to you. In addition to the link, there is a QR code where you can access the webpage by taking a picture with a smart phone and following the link that pops up.

My office is always open and available to discuss both personal and policy issues of concern.

Please reach out!

Sincerely,

Ken Zebrowski

Property Tax Relief Update

Affordability remains a top issue for Assemblyman Zebrowski in the Assembly. Please review both current and new programs to ensure you are accessing all available programs:

■ Basic STAR

- Residents who own their home as their primary residence, and have an income below \$500,000 are eligible for Basic STAR. STAR is now administered in two separate ways: as a check sent directly to homeowners and as an exemption off your tax bill. All new homeowners after August 1, 2015 are eligible for only a check. Homeowners who owned previous to August 1, 2015 and earn below \$250,000 can keep STAR as an exemption on their tax bill or can choose to receive a check. Remember, if you are a new homeowner, you must affirmatively register for STAR. If you purchased your home after August 1, 2015 you must register with New York State in order to receive a STAR credit check. To register, visit: www.tax.ny.gov/star.

■ Have you checked your Enhanced STAR eligibility recently?

Enhanced STAR provides an increased benefit for senior citizens 65 or older based on income. The income limit to receive this benefit has been raised in 2022 to \$92,000 based on the 2020 income tax year. If you have been receiving Basic STAR, once you are eligible, you can apply for the Enhanced STAR exemption with your local assessor. When you apply, the assessor will verify if you are eligible based on the income information you provide. In the following years, the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance will verify your income so you do not have to visit your town assessor. The deadline to apply is March 1st of the year the exemption will begin.

- If you currently receive a STAR credit check, when you are eligible for Enhanced STAR, you will automatically be sent a check for your Enhanced STAR benefit.

■ Additional exemptions available

- Local governments and school districts have the option of offering additional exemptions for low income seniors, persons with disabilities, and veterans. Eligibility requirements and the amount of the exemption vary from municipality to municipality. The deadline to apply for any of these exemptions is March 1st. Contact your town assessor to learn which exemptions are available in your town:

- Clarkstown: (845) 639-2031
- Haverstraw: (845) 942-3717
- Ramapo: (845) 357-5100 ext. 255

■ New Circuit Breaker Program

- There will be a new tax credit available when you file your 2021 taxes to provide property tax relief. Residents who make less than \$250,000 a year and spend more than 6% of their income on property taxes are eligible for the program. The income tax credits will range from \$250 to \$350.

If you have any questions or need assistance in accessing any of the property tax relief programs, please feel free to contact my office at 845-634-9791 or zebrowskik@nyassembly.gov

✓ Bills Passed

Zebrowski in top 5% Assemblymembers for number of bills passed.

Assemblyman Zebrowski successfully passed 22 bills this session with 18 of them signed into law. He is #8 out of 150 Assemblymembers in terms of bills passed. Below are a few of the new laws he authored:

- ✓ Saves businesses money by excluding COVID related layoffs from unemployment cost calculations (Chapter 21)
- ✓ NY is the financial capital of the world and is the forum for a tremendous amount of financial contracts. As the former Chair of the Banks committee, Ken works on financial issues including a new law that prevented legal chaos and ensured NY financial contracts were able to survive the discontinuance of the LIBOR international interest rate standard (Chapter 94)
- ✓ Establishes State Monitors with ability to overturn board decisions in certain circumstances in the East Ramapo School District (Chapter 173)
- ✓ Creates the “Right to Know law” for Water Utility Customers who live in Condominiums, Apartment Buildings of Co-Ops. Requires the Water Company to give all customers safety and quality notices (Chapter 191)
- ✓ Limits property taxes from being dramatically shifted onto homeowners in certain circumstances in Clarkstown (Chapter 213)
- ✓ Designates a portion of State Route 304 as the “Rockland County Clerk Paul Piperato Memorial Highway” (Chapter 411)
- ✓ Creates new sexual coercion crimes where a person is coerced to produce intimate images (Chapter 481)
- ✓ Creates clear tax assessment guidelines and prevents large corporations from using a loophole to reduce their taxes, thereby raising everyone else’s. (Chapter 497)
- ✓ Imposes mandatory minimum fines where building and fire code violations remain uncorrected for over 6 months (Chapter 571)
- ✓ “Anthony Amoros’ Law,” requires used vehicles sold at retail to contain a functioning airbag (Chapter 580)



Assemblyman Ken Zebrowski joined his colleagues Congressman Jones, Senator Reichlin-Melnick, County Executive Day, Assemblyman Lawler and Supervisor Kenny at the opening of the FEMA Assistance Rockland office.



Assemblyman Ken Zebrowski leading a public hearing on the issue of remote meetings as Chair of the Governmental Operations committee.

Public Hearing

As Chair of the Governmental Operations Committee, Assemblyman Zebrowski helps oversee the functioning of various parts of State and Local Government. The COVID-19 pandemic brought many changes to the day to day lives of New Yorkers as well as the functioning of government. Many government meetings were held remotely. In some ways this allowed residents the ability to more easily attend and participate in local government meetings through video meetings such as Zoom. Recently, Assemblyman Zebrowski held a public hearing to evaluate our experiences and to consider legislative changes that would make public meetings more accessible and open in the future. There needs to be the proper balance struck to ensure both accountability and accessibility and his committee is considering testimony from government officials, disability advocates, the press, good government advocacy groups and New York residents.

Combating Gun Violence with Common Sense Reforms

With the proliferation of firearms being sold with untraceable parts, New York took steps to close this loophole and ban the possession of “ghost guns.” Assemblyman Zebrowski co-sponsored several pieces of legislation that would prohibit the possession of unfinished firearm frames and receivers, and ghost guns, which are weapons made from untraceable gun components. These bills close loopholes in the law that allow people otherwise prohibited from purchasing a gun to still obtain one through the acquisition of component parts.

Suez Feasibility Study

With rising water rates and issues surrounding quality, Assemblyman Zebrowski recently wrote a letter to Governor Hochul requesting that she direct the Public Service Commission to initiate a feasibility study into the municipal takeover of Suez’s Rockland water operations. With some of the highest water costs in the State, it is imperative that we review all options to reduce the costs on ratepayers including the municipalization of the water system. A feasibility study would provide critical details and analysis in evaluating whether having a municipal water system would be beneficial for Rockland ratepayers.

Phasing Out Dangerous Chemicals in Consumer Products

Assemblyman Zebrowski recently introduced legislation that would phase out the sale of all products that contain intentionally added PFAS or its by-products. PFAS or “Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances” are known as forever chemicals because they do not easily break down and are increasingly found in our drinking water. As you may know, PFAS chemicals were detected in several Suez wells in Rockland in 2020; remediation is currently underway. Zebrowski’s proposal would phase out the use of these toxic chemicals in products that we use every day including cookware, personal care products, cosmetics and carpets. This legislation would phase out the use of intentionally added PFAS in commonly used products by 2025 and all products by 2028. This will greatly protect consumers by eliminating these harmful chemicals from unnecessary use and will protect our environment from the long term impacts including contamination of our drinking water.



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Assemblyman
**Ken
Zebrowski**

Winter Newsletter 2021

State Intervenes in Spring Valley Building Department

For years Assemblyman Zebrowski has been working with local fire officials and others on the importance of code enforcement in Rockland County. Illegal Housing and building conversions are a threat to health and safety and threaten the character of a community. This has been especially true in the Village of Spring Valley where we have seen egregious building conversions and a tragic fatal fire. Over the years Ken has helped achieve various interventions by the State to help clean up this department, however, those interventions have not produced the changes necessary to ensure the safety of the Village. Ken has been calling for the Secretary of State to use her extraordinary powers to take away authority to enforce the code from the Spring Valley Building Department and to appoint the County of Rockland. Assemblyman Zebrowski has done this in conjunction with County Executive Day who has been willing to use County government to help achieve the necessary changes. On November 16, 2021, we achieved this extraordinary intervention and the Secretary of State issued an order transitioning the building department authority from the Village of Spring Valley to the County of Rockland.

Share your feedback with me.

Use the QR code below with your smartphone, using the camera app, to open the short survey.

nyassembly.gov/mem/Kenneth-Zebrowski/story/99892



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