



Assemblymember PATRICIA A. FAHY



Legislative & Community Report to the 109th Assembly District
Summer 2016

Dear Neighbors,

I'm honored to represent you in the New York State Assembly and continue to work tirelessly for each of you in Albany, Bethlehem, Guilderland, and New Scotland. This edition of the Legislative and Community Report to the 109th Assembly District includes updates from the recently concluded legislative session and highlights from the past few months within the district. The legislative session was an intensely busy and productive one.

My most significant achievement this legislative session was passage of a bill I sponsored with Senator DeFrancisco to reform and increase state funding for indigent legal services, which awaits the Governor's signature. Additional legislative highlights that passed both houses include: the renewal of Albany's parking system, Capital Region taxi and livery reform, oil train safety, ethics and pension reform, lead testing in schools, heroin and opiate treatment, and breast cancer screenings. A few outstanding issues, including ridesharing, remain to be addressed in the 2017 legislative session.

Your thoughts and input on these and other important issues are valuable to me, and I welcome your viewpoints. Please feel free to contact my office by phone, e-mail, or social media, and to sign up for our regular e-mail updates by sending a note to fahyp@nyassembly.gov.

PATRICIA A. FAHY
Member of Assembly, 109th District

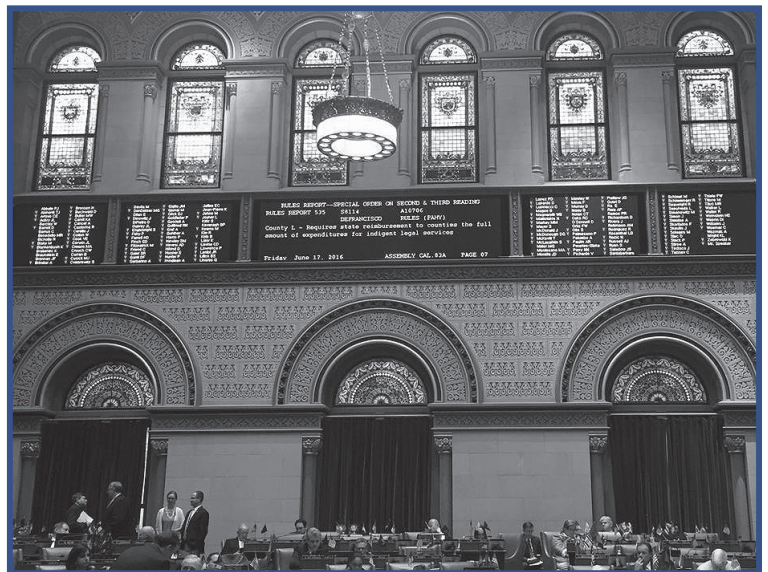
2016 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The 2016 legislative session ended this past June, in which the Assembly and the Senate worked to adopt or reject hundreds of legislative proposals. That being said, much remains to be done and I look forward to continuing to advocate for many of these unresolved issues in 2017.

Indigent Legal Services legislation passed. The Assembly and Senate unanimously passed a bill that I sponsored with Senator DeFrancisco to provide state funding and significant oversight of criminal defense for those accused of a crime, while relieving a huge unfunded constitutional mandate for Upstate counties.

Under the proposal, the state would gradually assume full funding of indigent legal services by 2023 relieving counties of their financial obligation. The legislation aims to ensure access to quality legal representation for all New Yorkers.

Currently, New York is one of only a few states where each county is responsible for funding legal services for persons charged with a crime and unable to afford counsel, resulting in uneven quality and effectiveness of legal representation statewide.



Assemblymember Fahy sponsored legislation addressing indigent legal services (#ILSNY), which passed the Assembly unanimously (112-0). The same bill passed the Senate and as of this publication, awaits Gov. Cuomo's signature.

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Assemblymember Fahy supported the expansion of the Albany County Rail Trail, which is a significant economic development investment for the area. She is pictured here with local officials from across Albany County at the opening of the Bethlehem section.



Assemblymember Fahy with interns Molly Ketterer and Zach Malitz, members of the 2016 Albany High School Girls' Track Team and the famed Tuskegee Airmen inside the Assembly chamber.

In many ways, this legislation was decades in the making and numerous statewide organizations came together to push for this historic legislation, which was recommended by Albany County Executive Daniel P. McCoy.

The editorial boards for both the New York Times and the Albany Times Union have urged the Governor to sign this into law to provide a greater justice for all.

Parking permit system for Albany renewed. The legislature passed legislation I sponsored with Senator Breslin to renew the residential parking pilot program for the City of Albany to alleviate parking problems for residents who live within a one-mile radius of the Empire State Plaza.

Archived records funding sweep protection passed. The legislature passed my bill (sponsored with Senator Ritchie) to ensure local governments have the resources they need to preserve and protect access to vital and archival records. Historically, the funding has been swept into the state general fund for other purposes. Under this legislation, the money would be distributed as local government grants for use as intended to preserve the Empire State's rich history.



Assemblymember Fahy joins ironworkers at the Albany Capital Center construction site in Downtown Albany.

CDTA to create regulations, standards for Capital Region taxi / cab system. Important local legislation introduced by Assemblymember McDonald and Senator Breslin was passed to grant the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) the ability to regulate and standardize taxi and livery service across the Capital Region. This will lead to a modernization of standards across municipalities in the region and improve service by taxi and livery operators.

Ethics reform and pension forfeiture passed. The legislature passed an amendment I cosponsored to provide for the stripping of pensions for public officials convicted of a felony related to their official duties.

For this state constitutional amendment to become law, it must pass in both chambers again next legislative session. At that point, it will be placed on the ballot as a public referendum for voters to amend the New York State Constitution.

Additionally, the legislature overwhelmingly adopted a measure that will require 501(c)(4) organizations, which are entities that can engage in unlimited lobbying, to disclose financial support and in-kind donations from 501(c)(3) organizations, which are organizations that are not permitted to engage in political activity. This reform helps prevent organizations from corrupting the political process and utilizing funds that are not intended for political purposes, as well as requiring 501(c)(4) organizations to disclose their sources of funding if they engage in activities to influence electoral politics using "issue advocacy."

Campaign finance reforms. In addition, the Assembly passed a series of one house measures, which did not move in the Senate, to close the LLC loophole (to evade legal campaign contribution limits) and to increase voter access and turnout.

Zombie Homes reform adopted. The legislature passed a significant and needed three-way agreement to combat the rising problem of abandoned residential properties by creating new obligations for mortgage owners and lenders to maintain property rendered vacant and abandoned.

The measure will address the problem of vacant and abandoned properties by codifying the obligation of eleven major banks, mortgage companies, and credit unions under a best practices agreement with the Department of Financial Services. This important legislation will expand these obligations to a majority of lenders or owners of mortgages statewide.



Congratulations to Joey Berben and Max Wolff for the opening of their new business, Berben and Wolff's Vegan Delicatessen, along Lark Street in Albany.

Breast cancer prevention adopted. New York State is taking the most aggressive action in the nation to improve access to breast cancer screening. The legislature passed measures to help more women across the state gain access to the health care and services they need and deserve. Legislation will extend hours for screening at mammography facilities across the state and to eliminate insurance hurdles for mammograms and other screening and diagnostic imaging procedures to detect breast cancer.

Testing for lead in water at public schools. Legislation I co-sponsored to require school districts to test drinking water for lead contamination passed. Costs associated with testing and remediation will be eligible for reimbursement by the state.

Currently, some school districts have voluntarily tested for lead, however, it is not required. Additionally, safe drinking water must be provided and parents need to be notified of the test results in a timely manner.



Assemblymember Fahy joined members of the New Scotland Historical Association, Town of New Scotland Supervisor Doug LaGrange, and members of the Crouse family in the unveiling of the Captain Henry Crouse site marker.

Fantasy sports regulation adopted. A comprehensive regulatory package passed to allow fantasy sports (Draft Kings, Fan Duel) to operate in New York State. This bill offers important consumer protections to ensure that all contests are safe and fair. Requirements such as limiting players to one active and continuously used account, offering introductory procedures for players, identifying highly experienced players, and depicting accurate representations concerning the chances of winning in all advertisements will help to provide transparency and fairness across all platforms.



Assemblymember Fahy with Albany police officers during National Night Out.



Assemblymember Fahy alongside community members at the 255 Orange Street Urban Resilience Project, a community mural in Albany.

Because of concerns raised by myself and others, these interactive fantasy sports contests will be taxed and will bring in tens of millions in new revenue dedicated to education.

Ridesharing legislation stalled. Ridesharing legislation to allow for services such as Uber and Lyft to operate in Upstate New York did not pass this session. As an original co-sponsor of legislation to enable these services, I recognize and value the economic development impact expected for the Capital Region. While this was an unexpected disappointment, there are a handful of differences that need to be reconciled (to protect drivers and passengers). I remain optimistic that a compromise will be reached by the end of the year if not by early next year to adopt protections and safeguards for drivers and passengers (such as the indemnification clause, multi-app coverage, and workers' compensation).



Proud to have stood alongside the IBEW, CWA, and Local 1118 in Albany during their strike against Verizon. Local union jobs are important to not only our community, but middle class families across the East Coast. FIOS, once built, can change the landscape to provide competitive telecom and broadband options for consumers.



Assemblymember Fahy joined law enforcement from across the area at the end of the 30th New York State Torch Run. The Torch Run is the largest grassroots fundraiser for Special Olympics New York.

Farm cideries to serve New York State-made beer, wine, and spirits by the glass. The legislature passed legislation Senator Amedore and I sponsored to allow parity for licensed farm cideries to serve New York State-made beer, wine, and spirits by the glass at their facilities. Presently, farm cideries would have to apply for an additional farm brewery, winery, or distiller license in order to serve these kinds of beverages on premises. As of this publication, the bill is heading to the Governor for his signature.

Heroin and opioid treatment and prevention. Landmark legislation to combat the heroin and opioid crisis in New York State passed the legislature and was signed by Governor Cuomo. The package of bills was passed as part of this year's session and marks a major step forward in the fight to increase access to treatment, expand prevention, while limiting the over-prescription of opioids in New York. The legislation includes several best practices and recommendations identified by the Governor's Heroin and Opioid Task Force, and builds on the state's aggressive efforts to break the cycle of heroin and opioid addiction.



Assemblymember Fahy joined members of the Muslim Soup Kitchen Project (MSKP) for the first National Muslim Soup Kitchen Day at the newly reopened RISSE (Refugee and Immigrant Support Services at Emmaus) in Albany.

APPR waiver extended until December 31st. The legislature also approved a measure that will allow for a needed delay for teacher evaluations or APPR. School districts will have until December 31st (and hopefully beyond if the legislature reconvenes in December).

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Providing information for victims of military sexual trauma. The Assembly has passed for the third consecutive year legislation that I've sponsored to require the further dissemination of information to veterans who have been traumatized by military sexual abuse. The bill requires these documents to be available on the Office of Mental Health and the Division of Veterans Affairs websites where they can seek treatment and counseling for Military Sexual Trauma.



Assemblymember Fahy with accomplished graduates of the Maimonides School in Albany.

Alcohol to be served earlier for Sunday brunch. The legislature passed a bill to allow restaurants and bars to serve alcohol on Sundays starting at 10 a.m. ("brunch"). This also allows for establishments to open at 8 a.m. up to 12 times a year (should they apply for a new permit).

DID YOU KNOW?

Job Opportunities.

Please visit my Assembly website to access links to government job listings and exam announcements.

Public access television.

Did you know Albany has a public access channel?

Channel Albany broadcasts from Channel 18 (or 116.3), presenting content made from residents and organizations within the City of Albany. The studio is located in the basement of the Albany Public Library's main branch and is open to the public. For more information, you can e-mail channelalbany@gmail.com.

Affordable Housing Education.

The Affordable Housing Partnership conducts a series of workshops on home buying, financial education, credit usage, and property management on a regular basis. You can register for these workshops by visiting www.ahphome.org.

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Mixed martial arts. Legislation legalizing mixed martial arts (MMA) was signed into law by Governor Cuomo earlier this year. As you may recall, I opposed the bill because of my serious concerns regarding the health impact of brain trauma suffered from repeated blows to the head and links to CTE (chronic traumatic encephalopathy). I am grateful, however, that because of the long-standing opposition of mine and others, all professional fighters (including boxers) will now be covered by health insurance (along with disability insurance in certain instances).

I will continue to advocate my concerns with MMA as the research continues to evolve and as concerns are raised about brain trauma. An overlooked but significant aspect of the bill is that amateur level MMA fights will now be regulated. Under previous law, New York State officials did not oversee amateur MMA, which meant there were no safety guidelines, such as pre-fight physical examinations, ambulances, or medical staff on site.

Visit NYAssembly.gov for a comprehensive summary of legislation that has passed in the 2016 legislative year.



Assemblymembers Fahy and McDonald participate in a group activity with children at the reading program at the Albany Public Library's Washington Avenue branch.



Assemblymember Fahy and her daughter Eileen Bequette while on the Cycle the Erie Canal tour.



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Chair, Subcommittee on Oversight of the Department of Environmental Conservation

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