



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR  
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## September 2020 UPDATE TO COMMUNITY BOARD 6

### Vote by Absentee Ballot!

Many of you have written to me with concerns about the coming election and New York's absentee ballot laws. We passed legislation in July allowing all New Yorkers to vote absentee in this election, but the Governor had not signed it. Last week, he did. And that means you can (and should) request your absentee ballot online at [www.nycabsentee.com](http://www.nycabsentee.com). It's easy to do and takes less than a minute.

Here's what else you need to know:

- To vote by mail, you must request an absentee ballot.
- You can select the reason as "Temporary illness or disability" due to the risk of contracting the coronavirus.
- You must request an absentee ballot to vote by mail this fall, even if you voted by mail in the June primaries. (Unless you are already on the permanent absentee voter list due to long-term disability or illness.)
- If you request an absentee ballot, you are still eligible to vote in person (Early Voting or Election Day). I recommend requesting your absentee ballot early to give the Board of Elections in the City of New York as much time as possible to process your request. You can also call 1-866-VOTE-NYC to request a form.
- The Board of Elections will start to mail ballots out September 18th on a rolling basis. Once you receive your ballot, mail it back as soon as you can!
- You can also drop it off at your poll site or local Board of Elections office to avoid the mail. (And you better believe I'll keep fighting to pass my bill to put ballot drop boxes across the city).
- Another great option to avoid the crowds on Election Day is to vote early October 24th-November 1st.

Vote, and vote safely. If this is helpful, please share this information with your friends and family so they know what to do too.

### Saving Small Business

While the PPP provided some level of relief to New York businesses, we all know that it hasn't been sufficient and that far too many of our beloved local institutions are making month-to-month decisions about the survival of their business, especially with the obligations of rent hanging over their heads. That's why Assembly Member Harvey Epstein and I recently introduced new commercial rent relief legislation (S.8865/A.10901) that we hope will win approval. The rent obligation of covered tenants – COVID-19 impacted small businesses and not-for-profits – would be limited to the lesser of (a) 20% of their actual income in a given month, or (b) 1/3 their contractual rent payment. Landlords of covered tenants would be required to waive 20% of the contractual rent. The state would establish a Commercial Rent Relief Program consisting of up to \$500 million to provide financial assistance to impacted landlords to make up the difference. We spoke to business owners from across the district about the bill as part of our advocacy efforts.



## Continuing Our Fight for a Fair Election in November

I recently stood on the steps of the Farley Post Office Building with my elected colleagues, Assembly Member Dick Gottfried, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, State Senator Robert Jackson, City Council Member Carlina Rivera, and City Council Member Keith Powers, and voting rights activists, League of Women Voters, Empire State Indivisible, Downtown Women for Change, and the New York Public Interest Research Group, to unveil a drop box already in use in other states that would make voting absentee safe and accessible for all New Yorkers. Assembly Member Dick Gottfried and I sponsor a bill that would allow the Board of Elections to implement this low-tech voting solution. While the Governor has issued an executive order that requires local boards of election make plans that allow New Yorkers to drop off ballots



at some BOE and poll sites, this is not enough. We need to go further with convenient drop boxes dispersed throughout the entire city to ensure everyone can vote this November.

Just last month, Donald Trump threatened to withhold funding to the U.S. Postal Service because he didn't want it to be used to support mail-in voting, and the USPS recently warned 46 U.S. states (including New York) that their voters could be disenfranchised by postal delays. Despite the Postmaster General announcing that reforms

designed to slow mail service are on hold until after the election, we've already seen mailboxes and sorting equipment being removed in New York. Drop boxes would give voters a safe, convenient option to submit their absentee ballots any time of day, protect their health, and decrease the burden on the USPS. I was interviewed about my bill this week and you can read more about my bill [here](#).

## My Testimony at DHCR's MCI Hearing

Today I testified before DHCR regarding the reasonable cost schedule for major capital improvements in collaboration with The Stuy Town Peter Cooper Village Tenants' Association, advocates, and Assemblymember Harvey Epstein. I called upon DHCR to delay the implementation of the cost schedule and make the third-party report on which the schedule was based available for public review and discussion. There were a number of issues with the cost schedule as currently written, including excessive cost estimates for MCIs, the creation of loopholes that will allow owners to pass on even more of the expense to tenants, and inclusion of items that should not be considered MCIs. I will be following up with DHCR to ensure that tenants are heard on this important issue.

## One Fair Wage Rally

I was proud to join One Fair Wage this week to call for an end to the subminimum wage. New York's 400,000 tipped workers deserve pay that is equal to that of other worker and the Department of Labor must implement One Fair Wage in New York. This pandemic gives us the opportunity to level the playing field and ensure that the workers who work hardest in my senate district finally get the pay they deserve.





## Fighting to Protect Homeless New Yorkers



Today I spoke alongside advocates and colleagues at the Lucerne, the Upper West Side hotel where some homeless New Yorkers were being housed during the pandemic. These individuals are now being relocated after backlash from some in the community. While it is clear that the city needs to implement more robust systems of community engagement on these issues, we are still in a pandemic and our homeless neighbors need stable and supportive housing. As a community we need to prioritize getting these individuals the services they need rather than pushing them out of stable housing.

## Free Mammograms by Appointment on Monday, September 28

My office will be hosting Project Renewal's ScanVan offering free mammography services to those over 40 years old on Monday, September 28 from 9am to 4pm on West 26th Street between 8th and 9th Avenues in front of Penn South. All insurance plans are accepted, and co-pays and deductibles are waived. *Appointments are required, so please call 646-415-7932 to make one.*

## Please fill out the Census!

While this pandemic has posed a challenge to us all, there is something we can all do to help our community right now: fill out the 2020 Census. It takes 10 minutes, and you can start it by clicking the link below:



Our district's response rate is lagging behind city and state averages as well as where we were at this time in 2010. **Neighborhoods like the East Village, Turtle Bay, Clinton, and Midtown South are at almost HALF or less of where we were 10 years ago.** We must do better!

Census data is integral to determining the allocation of federal funding for public resources critical for New Yorkers including *health care, housing, education, and transportation*. As the city and state experience steep budget cuts, this federal funding is needed now more than ever.

## Warriors in the Garden Activist: Derrick Ingram

I was profoundly disturbed to see the footage of the NYPD's attempted arrest of activist Derrick Ingram at West 45<sup>th</sup> St. in Hell's Kitchen last month. During the five hours that the NYPD surrounded Mr. Ingram in his home, repeatedly banged on his door, and blocked off his street, the NYPD did not provide a warrant for his arrest and used helicopters, K9 units, and the Strategic Response Group. This outsized show of force was an attempt to intimidate and raises serious questions about NYPD oversight, which is why I sent a letter to NYPD Commissioner Dermot Shea requesting accounting for the events of the day, including questions about the cost to taxpayers, the process of approvals, involved officers, and the use of facial recognition. The letter can be viewed here.

## Volunteer to Help Your Neighbors

Throughout this scary and uncertain time, New Yorkers have risen to the occasion. It's been heartening to see so many neighbors calling me to ask how they can help those less fortunate in

the community. My office has created a web form to help connect constituents with local non-profits who are looking for volunteers to help senior citizens, immunocompromised individuals, and anyone for whom COVID-19 poses the highest health risk. If you're interested in volunteering from home, [please click here and fill out the form](#). And if you are able to volunteer out in the community, [please fill out this form](#). We already have 400 volunteers helping during this time!

### **Senator Hoylman's COVID-19 Resource Guide**

My office is continuing to update our COVID-19 resource guide with the latest news and information. You'll be able to read up on health tips you should know, new resources from State and Local government, and places to get help if you need it. [Click here to read our COVID-19 Constituent Resource Guide](#).



### **Topline Resources**

There is an incredible amount of new information being dispensed quickly and much of it deeply impacts our everyday lives. It can be overwhelming and hard to know where to begin. While by no means exhaustive, here are the resources we give out most often:

- [NYC Department of Health \[nyc.gov/health\]](https://nyc.gov/health)
  - NYC text alerts - text 692-692
  - [NYC Coronavirus page \[nyc.gov/coronavirus\]](https://nyc.gov/coronavirus)

[NYS Department of Health \[health.ny.gov\]](https://health.ny.gov)

- Coronavirus hotline: 888-364-3065
- Submit a question online [[Click here](#)]
- NYS Essential Businesses [[Click here](#)]
- Report complaints about price gouging online [[Click here](#)]
- [NYS Coronavirus page \[health.ny.gov/coronavirus\]](https://health.ny.gov/coronavirus)

[Centers for Disease Control & Prevention \(CDC\) \[cdc.gov\]](https://cdc.gov)

[Federal Coronavirus website \[coronavirus.gov\]](https://coronavirus.gov)

[Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center \[coronavirus.jhu.edu\]](https://coronavirus.jhu.edu)

User-friendly case # tracker (their [interactive map](#) is great)

If you have any ideas, questions, or concerns, you can always contact me or **Sam Vasquez** at **212-633-8052** or via e-mail at **[Svasquez@nysenate.gov](mailto:Svasquez@nysenate.gov)**

You can email me at **[hoylman@nysenate.gov](mailto:hoylman@nysenate.gov)** or visit my website at **[hoylman.nysenate.gov](https://hoylman.nysenate.gov)** to find copies of my letters, testimonies, and press releases.