

Assemblymember Dan Quart

March 2021 Full Board Report to Manhattan Community Board 6

Full Newsletter: Attached in this document.

Video Report to CB6:

Highlights

- The Assemblymember & our office are engaging in discussions regarding the budget, and are hearing from many constituents about what they'd like to see be supported and included in this year's budget.
- In our winter newsletter we highlight one of the Assemblymember's bills that is gaining traction this session, which would overhaul the way NYS approaches wrongful convictions.
- Our office continues to assist constituents with unemployment insurance problems and with information about the vaccine & vaccine appointments, and if anyone needs help please reach out to our office at quartd@nyassembly.gov or call 212-605-0937.



Assemblymember **DAN QUART**

Community Update

Winter 2021



Dear neighbor,

Last month, the 2021-2022 legislative session convened in Albany. After a year consumed by the COVID-19 crisis, the relief many of us hoped 2021 would bring has yet to materialize. Countless neighbors face financial instability and hardship, and almost 40,000 New Yorkers have lost their lives. I won't sugarcoat it: as we stare down a gaping \$15 billion hole in the state budget, the challenges ahead are great, and we have our work cut out for us.

What's certain is that the burden of this pandemic has not been equally shared, with communities of color and working families disproportionately suffering its adverse effects. Moving forward, all levels of government must work together to get aid to New Yorkers and ensure equitable recovery. With budget season upon us, I will be working with my colleagues in the People's House to reject devastating cuts to essential public services and secure a fair and just budget that includes funding for health care, education, and housing.

Vaccinations have started and as a new era begins in Washington D.C., additional federal relief is likely on the way. Despite the difficult months ahead, for the first time in a long time there appears to be hope on the horizon.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to once again represent and fight on behalf of you in the state legislature. If you are in need of assistance or are passionate about a particular issue, we want to hear from you. Please don't hesitate to reach out anytime.

Warmly,

Dan Quart

Bill Spotlight

A00098 – Our state has a wrongful conviction problem. Since 1989, 283 people have been exonerated. Often when we think of wrongfully convicted people, defendants who staunchly maintain their innocence come to mind. The reality, however, is much different. Faced with a greater penalty if they go to trial, many defendants make the difficult decision to plead guilty to a crime they didn't commit. In NY, some 98 percent of convictions are the result of a guilty plea.

Under NY law, the only way to overturn a conviction in our state courts is through DNA evidence. While DNA evidence has led to the successful exoneration of numerous people over the years, its role has been somewhat exaggerated. This leaves wrongfully convicted people with no DNA evidence in their cases with little chance to clear their names. My legislation would overhaul the rules governing wrongful convictions (Criminal Procedure Law 440) and protect the innocent by giving wrongfully convicted New Yorkers a pathway to exoneration.



At Carl Schurz Park supporting a community organized antiracist food drive.

Rent Relief

Just before 2020 came to an end, the New York State Legislature passed, and I voted in favor of the Emergency Eviction and Foreclosure Prevention Act of 2020. The fear of losing your home can be debilitating, especially during a pandemic. That’s why the Assembly took action to stay evictions and foreclosure through May 1, 2021. As we urge the federal government to act, we in the state legislature will continue working to ensure no New Yorkers are forced out of their homes during this pandemic, or otherwise.

The MTA Crisis

Last November, the MTA released a budget plan for 2021 that shocked us to our core. The proposal included mass layoffs, cutting subway service by half, and eliminating certain bus route completely. Fortunately, the most recently passed federal stimulus package included over \$4 billion for the MTA. While this does not completely plug the deficit, it will help the agency starve off the worst of the cuts.

The subway is the lifeblood of our city. The aftershocks that would follow dramatic reductions in service would disproportionately harm communities of color and ripple across the entire region, undermining economic recovery post-COVID. We must put working families first and that means rejecting proposals to balance the MTA budget on the backs of riders and frontline workers.

The Safe Staffing for Quality Care Act

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, our health care heroes have been working tirelessly against all odds to provide patients with the highest standard of care possible. As lawmakers, it is our job not only to listen, but respond to the needs of our health care professionals.

Long before this virus came to be, nurses and caregivers – forced to take on as many as 10 patients or more – have been advocating for safe staffing ratios. The Safe Staffing for Quality Care Act (A00108/S01168) would create nurse-and caregiver-to-patient ratios, reducing the number of patients that can be assigned to a single worker and improving the quality of care. When implemented in California, these reforms reduced staff burnout and turnover, and improved patient outcomes. Enacting this legislation is just one of the concrete ways in which we can demonstrate our gratitude and appreciation for the extraordinary sacrifices and work of our health care heroes.

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New York State Assembly, Albany, New York 12248



Assemblymember

DAN QUART

Community Update

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COVID-19 Vaccinations

Efforts to vaccinate New Yorkers against the novel coronavirus are underway. That being said, we are still in the early phases of distribution and inoculation has not yet been made widely available to the public. According to NYC Health + Hospitals, the vaccine will be available to most New Yorkers by mid-2021.

Among the first groups to be inoculated are those most vulnerable to the virus: all public-facing health care workers, including nursing home residents and staff, EMS, and urgent care providers. Most recently, in an effort to increase rollout speed, the Governor expanded eligibility to include Phase 1B and authorized thousands of additional organizations to administer the vaccine such as pharmacies, labor unions, and medical offices. Teachers and education workers, first responders, public transit and safety workers, people over 65, among others, can now schedule an appointment online. To find out if you’re eligible and make an appointment visit: am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov.