



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR
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SEPTEMBER 2021 UPDATE TO COMMUNITY BOARD 6

Extraordinary Legislative Session

At the end of last month, the United States Supreme Court rejected President Biden's attempt to extend the eviction moratorium for Americans in counties with high rates of COVID-19. As many as 1.2 million households across New York are at risk of eviction.

In response, Governor Hochul recently called an Extraordinary Session of the New York Legislature. The Senate Democrats have passed legislation to do the following to help tenants, homeowners and landlords:

- Extend the period covered by the Tenant Safe Harbor Act, legislation I sponsored, to January 15, 2022. This means a court can never use unpaid rent that accrued during the COVID-19 period, even after eviction moratoria elapse, as the basis for a non-payment eviction of a financially burdened tenant.
- Extend the residential and commercial eviction and foreclosure moratoria to January 15, 2022.
- Add a nuisance standard to the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program's (ERAP) eviction protections to provide landlords with a basis to start an eviction proceeding against a covered tenant if a tenant is a nuisance or has inflicted substantial damage to a property.
- Create a process for landlords and banks to challenge Hardship Declarations submitted by residential tenants, commercial tenants and property owners and direct judges to require residential tenants to apply for ERAP if their hardship claim is valid.
- Authorize the Office of Court Administration (OCA) to access limited ERAP application information in order to allow the court to determine whether to stay an eviction proceeding.
- Increase the Hardship Fund from \$100 million to \$250 million and provide for the fund to be used for tenants whose incomes are between 80% -120% AMI, landlords whose tenants vacated their property with rent unpaid, and landlords whose tenants are unresponsive or uncooperative.
- Provide a new \$25 million appropriation to fund legal services for tenants facing evictions.

Press Conference on Abortion Rights with Governor Kathy Hochul

On the heels of the Supreme Court electing not to take up a lawsuit challenging a horrific piece of legislation in Texas, functionally banning abortion in the state, I was proud to stand with join our first female Governor yesterday at the Women's Monument in Central Park along with numerous colleagues in government and reproductive rights groups to affirm New York's role as a safe haven for those seeking abortions. Abortions are health care and health care is a human right. I'm very proud that one of the first acts Senate Democrats took when we took the majority in 2019 was to pass the Reproductive Health Act, which I co-sponsored along with Senator Liz Krueger, enshrining the right to abortion under New York's public health law.

COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program

Eligible New York residents who are behind on rent owed on or after March 13, 2020 can apply for the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). The program can cover up to 12 months of past due rent, 3 months of additional rental assistance, and up to 12 months of past due utility bills. To be eligible, you must have a household gross income at or below [80% of the Area Median Income](#). In Manhattan, this would be \$66,850 for a single person. There are no immigration status requirements to qualify for the program.

To apply, visit www.otda.ny.gov/erap. For questions about your application, call the ERAP helpline: 844-691-7368. There are 3 organizations with staff members trained to provide assistance completing your application: [Catholic Charities](#) at 888-744-7900 or cc.erap@catholiccharitiesny.org; [Cooper Square Committee](#) at 212-228-8210 or csc@coopersquare.org; and contact [University Settlement](#) at

332-233-7440 or erap@universitysettlement.org (for residents in zip codes 10002, 10003, 10009, or 10013).

Record Number of Traffic Deaths

This past weekend, a reckless driver killed a 3-month-old baby in Brooklyn. This is yet another senseless death in our city due to reckless driving. There have been nearly 190 traffic deaths so far in 2021, the deadliest year since vision zero started in 2014. I'm proud to carry Sammy's Law ([S.524A/A.4655](#)) and the FURIOUS Act ([S.77/A.579](#)) which would allow the city to lower speed limits and expand the speed camera program. This week, Democratic nominee for Mayor, Eric Adams, announced his support for street safety legislation including my legislation. I look forward to working with our new Mayor to enact important reforms and ensure that we can all enjoy our city without fear of traffic violence.

20 Years Since 9/11

I joined New Yorkers throughout my district to commemorate the 20 year anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attack at the World Trade Center. Lower East Side Ready hosted a 9/11 memorial event on 14th Street. I also joined Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand and Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal at the One Fair Wage event honoring the restaurant workers who lost their lives at the Windows on the World restaurant on 9/11. As we offered our condolences



to the family and friends of the workers, we acknowledge the continuous fight for a living wage for all restaurant workers. Additionally, I visited the AIDS Memorial in the West Village. (pictured above) for music, poetry and reflection with community members on the tragic events of that day.

Open Meetings Law

Since March 2020, I've been fighting to allow public meetings hosted by Community Boards, Community Education Councils, and other public bodies to be available remotely and online. In the last year we've seen how allowing these meetings to not just be held in-person makes them more accessible for so many of our neighbors.

As a part of the Extraordinary Session, the Senate passed a temporary extension to allow these meetings to remain remote until January 15. This is a great step and an important public health measure and I'm thankful for the work of Community Board 6 to get this passed. In the next few months, I will continue to work to make this a permanent option for public bodies.

Vaccinations for Children

I support legislation that would add immunization against COVID-19 to the list of vaccines children are required to receive to attend school in New York State. Dr. Fauci has announced he supports these types of mandates: <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/fauci-backs-covid-19-vaccine-mandate-us-school-children-2021-08-29/>.

The legislation I support would take effect 30 days after **full** FDA approval of such a vaccine for children and upon the recommendation by the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). We must make a future safe for in-person schooling, and protect immunocompromised teachers, students and staff who cannot receive a vaccine. Mandating a COVID-19 vaccine for schoolchildren is the best way to do that. New York law currently requires students to receive immunizations against 12 different illnesses.

Hurricane Ida

With Hurricane Ida sweeping through the northeast last week, my office continues to reach out to multiple community organizations, and constituents to assist with any damage that arose. If you or anyone within the district knows of any problems that are still outstanding, including insurance claims, please call me at 212-633-8052.

New Service: FREE Notary

It's getting harder to find notaries in the city. In response, I'm happy to offer my notary services for free to the community. If you are in need of notary services, please call me to make an appointment and I will personally notarize your documents. Proof of vaccination is required. Call 212-633-8052.

Free Flu Shot Event

With flu season upon us, we must all do our part to make sure we are safe and healthy. Join me on Monday, October 25th at the Fulton Community Center as I host a free flu shot event for anyone who would like their shot. The clinic will run from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and appointments can be made by reaching out to my office via email or phone. My office email is hoyleman@nysenate.gov and my district office number is 212-633-8052. Please sign-up early and reach out to my office if you have any questions.

Letter Requesting Remote Learning Option

I joined my State and City elected colleagues in a recent letter to the New York City Department of Education requesting a remote learning option for this school year. There are still too many variables and fears in this year's reopening to warrant a fully in-person learning environment without a remote option. Until vaccines are approved for children under the age of 12, I believe that we should give parents the freedom to decide how to best educate their children.

Empire Station

In August, the Empire Station Complex Community Advisory Committee Working Group (the "Working Group") submitted a comprehensive set of recommendations to Empire State Development. The 34 member Working Group is comprised of local elected officials, representatives from Manhattan Community Boards 4 and 5, and numerous stakeholders from business, labor, civic and advocacy organizations. It has met 12 times so far over the course of 14 weeks, with another meeting planned for September 21 when ESD will present its response to the Working Group's recommendations. I joined my elected colleagues in strongly urging our new governor to review these recommendations closely and support them in full. The recommendations represent a wide range of views and include many ways to improve not only the Empire Station Complex but also related projects such as the Penn reconstruction and Master Plan currently being undertaken by the MTA. I'll be honest, I'm not convinced by the funding scheme that ESD has put forth for this project. I hope the new State administration re-envision this plan so that it is a transit plan, not a real estate development project. We need a new Penn Station and the Gateway project, not 20 million square feet of commercial real estate.

Illegal Hotels Testimony

I joined Assembly Member Gottfried in joint testimony in favor of City Council Intro 2309 which would require applicants who plan to rent out rooms for a short term to register annually with the Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement (OSE) and to obtain a registration number before renting it and before listing it on Airbnb or other short term rental platforms. The City's housing affordability crisis has been compounded by the proliferation of illegal short-term rentals and the platforms that have facilitated them. Similar laws have passed in Santa Monica and Boston. In Boston, its deterrent effects were felt immediately, and Airbnb had to withdraw more than half of its listings because they were not registered with the City. Airbnb and similar platforms keep saying what good neighbors they are. By making sure that their practices live up to State and City standards, Intro 2309 will help make that so.

Pandemic Small Recovery Grant

On August 30th, Assembly Member Epstein and I, wrote a letter to Governor Hochul requesting immediate intervention into the administration of the Pandemic Small Business Recovery Grant Program, which to date has disbursed a mere fraction of the funds approved by the legislature. Additionally, the letter requests that ESD address accessibility issues that applicants have faced, including; limited support for deaf applicants, inaccurate translations on the website sourced from google translate, and a lack of accurate data on the primary language of applicants. We also asked that application rules regarding tax year be altered, as currently any applicant with a fiscal year closing after July 31st is automatically rejected.

Family First Transition Act

On August 13th, I sent a letter to the Commissioner of the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) with my Senate and Assembly colleagues to advocate for preventive services that will

ultimately help keep families together. We should use the \$20.4 million allocation of one-time federal funding through the Family First Transition Act to ensure we have a child welfare system that prioritizes family unity, thus helping children before they even reach the welfare system. These investments are more important now as families face the additional stressors and burdens of a pandemic. I look forward to continue working with my colleagues in the State Legislature and OCFS to do what is best for the children of New York.

Letter to IRS Regarding Excluded Workers Fund

On August 23rd, I joined Sen. Jessica Ramos and several of my other colleagues in sending a letter to the Internal Revenue Service urging them to not tax New York's Excluded Workers Fund payments. The fund was created for our fellow New Yorkers who were excluded from the unemployment benefits. This money is critical to people who were not eligible for UI benefits, and taxing them will not help in the midst of multiple levels of uncertainty. As we continue to move towards normalcy, we must ensure that all people make it with the help that they need.

Testimony for Zoning for Accessibility

On July 14th, I joined my colleagues Senator Krueger and Assemblymember Gottfried in testifying on the MTA's proposed "Zoning for Accessibility" Plan. Currently, only 28% of stations are fully accessible for people with disabilities. Increasing access to public transit must be a priority if we want to reduce traffic congestion and accelerate the City's progress towards state, national, and international climate goals. While I believe "Zoning for Accessibility" would be an important step to achieving fully inclusive transportation infrastructure, I have some serious concerns about this proposal in its current form and believe that it can be improved. We must ensure that this proposal's negative consequences do not outweigh its value. I strongly urge the MTA to amend this proposal to provide bonuses only for accessibility projects (and not so-called beautification), acknowledge local context and implications, protect affordable housing, promote equitable development, and develop long-term plans to ensure that no one is left behind.

Delta Variant Questions and Concerns

In July, I joined Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and my colleagues in the State Legislature in a letter to New York State Department of Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker and New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene Commissioner Dr. Dave Chokshi requesting information about the new Delta variant of COVID-19, and the State and City's plans to address rising transmission levels. Although New York has ended its State of Emergency, State and City public officials should be as transparent as possible with New Yorkers, particularly as the Delta variant has become the most prevalent strain of the virus.

Small Business Recovery Fact Sheet

This year's State budget includes \$1 billion in financial relief for small businesses. On top of that, the federal government has made up to \$5.3 billion available in relief to New York's small businesses. I've compiled everything you need to know to access this money in an easy-to-follow fact sheet. Please give it a look and share it with anyone you know who needs help: <http://bit.ly/HoylmanSmallBusiness>.

COVID-19 Vaccines

In-home Vaccinations / Mobile Vaccination Sites

New York is continuing to follow the CDC and FDA's guidelines and has resumed use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, including for the homebound program.

New Yorkers who are fully homebound, meaning someone who cannot leave their unit even with assistance, can request an in-home vaccination by filling out this form: <https://forms.cityofnewyork.us/f/home> or calling 877-829-4692. **Please do not submit multiple forms.** Within two to three weeks of submitting the form, the Mayor's Public Engagement Unit will call to confirm eligibility and then the FDNY will call to schedule an appointment. On that call, household members (family and home health aides) can also request to be vaccinated during the in-home appointment.

The website for mobile restaurant workers is here: <https://www.roarnewyork.org/vacc-bus/> Restaurant workers can make an appointment by emailing vaccbus@roarnewyork.org or calling 1-833-

ROARNYC (762-7692). Restaurant workers (or owners) should sign up for [updates](#) on the mobile bus schedule.

Assistance for New Yorkers Who Test Positive for COVID

The Test & Trace Corps will make sure that anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 and their close contacts will have the resources needed to safely separate in a hotel free of charge or at home to help prevent the spread of the virus. To request a hotel room or learn more about how to safely separate in a hotel or at home, call 1-212-COVID19 (212-268-4319). Speaking with the Test & Trace Corps will not change your ability to apply for permanent residency (or “green card”).

NYC Health + Hospitals has two Community Health Centers in the Bronx and Queens dedicated to those recovering from COVID-19. Both centers provide short and long-term follow-up care for those recovering from COVID-19. For appointments, call 1 (844) NYC-4-NYC or 1-844-692-4692. 24-hour access to a health care provider is available.

COVID-19 Funeral Reimbursements

FEMA will provide financial assistance to individuals with COVID-19 related funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2021. Call the COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Line at 844-684-6333 (TTY: 800-462-7585) to complete an application with help from FEMA's representatives. The line is open Monday through Friday from 9 am - 9 pm Eastern Time and multilingual services are available. They are experiencing high call volume which is causing some technical issues, but please try again later if you get a busy signal or your call doesn't connect. There is no deadline to apply. Learn more on the FEMA website: <https://www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance>

IMPORTANT: FEMA has reported reports of scams involving offers to register individuals for funeral assistance. FEMA will not contact anyone until they have called FEMA or have applied for assistance. If there is doubt as to the legitimacy of the call, individuals should hang up and call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362 or the National Center for Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721 to report suspected fraud.

Emergency SNAP Allotments

Starting with the April SNAP benefit, all households, even those receiving the maximum SNAP allotment, will receive an emergency allotment. The supplement is being issued to households even if their SNAP case is currently closed. Further information is available here: <https://otda.ny.gov/SNAP-COVID-19/Frequently-Asked-Questions.asp>

You can check your available SNAP balance, including the emergency allotment at <https://otda.ny.gov/workingfamilies/ebt/>.

Important Information about Recertification

Starting March 1, if you receive a Cash Assistance or SNAP recertification notice by mail or an ACCESS HRA alert that you need to recertify, it means you must submit your recertification or your benefits will stop. Learn about the ways you can submit your recertification and supporting document here: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/cash-assistance.page>

There will be no negative actions taken for failing to return the SNAP periodic reports and Cash Assistance mailers due between March 1, 2021 and June 30, 2021.

Medicaid cases with authorization ending in July, August, September, October, November, December 2020 and January, February, March, April, May and June 2021 will be automatically extended.

Empire Pandemic Response Reimbursement Fund.

Up to \$1,000 is available per household to reimburse out-of-pocket child or dependent care, transportation, lodging, and other qualifying expenses that eligible workers incurred while employed in New York State between March 1, 2020, through the date of application submission. Applications are now being accepted here: <https://pandemicfundny.smapply.org/>

Small Business Services Employment Assistance

The City's Department of Small Business Services has a new “Find A New Job” page, which lists open employment listings from across NYC.

Mental Health Resources

The pandemic has shown us that mental health care is more important than ever. I want to share some free, confidential resources that you can use or share with others:

- NY Project Hope: Emotional Support Helpline: 1-844-863-9314.
- NYC Well: 1-888-NYC-WELL or text "WELL" to 65173. They also offer free access to digital mental health apps and a database of behavioral health and supporting services (substance use, housing, legal, social and community services) within the five boroughs.
- The Trevor Project is based in our district and operates a national 24-hour toll-free confidential suicide hotline for LGBTQ youth. Call 1-866-488-7386 or text "START" to 678678.
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 or text "LOVEIS" to 22522

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**

You can email me at **hoylman@nysenate.gov** or visit my website at **hoylman.nysenate.gov** to find copies of my letters, testimonies, and press releases.