



# New York State Senator **BRAD HOYLMAN**



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## **REPORT TO COMMUNITY BOARD 6**

### **Westside Tenants Association Conference**

I was proud to join the Westside Tenants Conference this past weekend. The conference was organized by the wonderful groups Housing Conservation Coordinators and West Side Neighborhood Alliance. The two-day event covered housing issues, from a number of perspectives, including legislation and tenant organizing. Last Saturday, I joined to give an update on some of the bills the State Legislature is working on to protect tenants and build more affordable housing. On Sunday, I sat on a panel of experts to discuss the 421-a tax abatement, its failings, and plans for the future.

### **Legislative Update**

I am thrilled to report updates on all of the legislation that I have recently introduced, and also legislation that I have carried that has been signed into law below:

- On December 7<sup>th</sup>, I introduced legislation (S.7568) to hold social media platforms accountable for promoting disinformation, violent hate speech, and other unlawful content that could harm others. While Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act protects social media platforms from being treated as publishers or speakers of content shared by users on their apps and websites, this legislation instead focuses on the active choices these companies make when implementing algorithms designed to promote the most controversial and harmful content, which creates a general threat to public health and safety.
- On November 24<sup>th</sup>, I introduced the Local Journalism Sustainability Act (S.7544). The legislation would create new tax credits to support local newspapers, digital publications and other local news organizations, including a personal income tax credit for subscribers and a business tax credit to support the hiring of local journalists. This legislation creates two new tax credits to support the local journalism industry: (1) individuals who subscribe to a local publication will get an annual tax credit for 80% of subscription cost in the first year and 50% in subsequent years, up to \$250 a year; and (2) eligible local news organizations that employ full time local journalists (those that live within 50 miles of the area they cover) get a quarterly tax credit up to 50% of the salary for the first year of their employment and up to 30% in subsequent years, up to five years total, for the first \$12,500 in wages paid to the journalist each quarter.
- Additionally, on November 24<sup>th</sup> I introduced the Recovery Incentives Act (S.7543) to help address New York's overdose crisis by paving the way for payment of Medicaid funds for contingency management programs, a model of treatment that provides an incentive structure

to reward participants for specific behaviors, like remaining sober. Studies have demonstrated that contingency management is an effective tool for increasing treatment retention and abstinence from drug use. Despite the significant potential of this type of treatment and demonstrated effectiveness in studies, it is unclear if federal law prohibits the use of Medicaid funds to pay for contingency management services. This bill directs the Health Commissioner to seek any necessary federal waivers to be able to use Medicaid for this promising treatment.

- On November 18<sup>th</sup>, I introduced with Senator Jamaal Bailey (D-The Bronx) “Rap Music on Trial” legislation ([S.7527](#)) to enhance the free speech protections of New Yorkers by banning the use of art created by a defendant as evidence against them in a courtroom. The legislation will protect all artists and content creators, including rappers from having their lyrics wielded against them by prosecutors. The legislation would guarantee freedom of creative expression in New York by prohibiting prosecutors from using creative expression as criminal evidence against a person without clear and convincing proof that there is a literal, factual nexus between the creative expression and the facts of the case. Art is creative expression, not a blueprint of criminal plans. Yet we’ve seen prosecutors in New York and across the country try to use rap music lyrics as evidence in criminal cases, a practice upheld this year by a Maryland court. It’s time to end the egregious bias against certain genres of music, like rap, and protect the First Amendment rights of all artists. I’m proud to introduce this legislation so that New York leads the way in treating artists fairly, no matter their background.
- On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, Governor Hochul signed my bill (S.997) to protect consumers from burdensome contract clauses that force them to bring lawsuits in far flung jurisdictions to be able to enforce their rights relating to the purchase of household goods or services.



### **VOCAL-NY and Housing Works Worlds AIDS Day March**

Last Wednesday on Worlds AIDS Day, I marched with VOCAL-NY and Housing Works to the NYC AIDS Memorial. I currently carry (S.6779A) with Assembly member Danny O’ Donnell which will ensure that New Yorker has access to the medical drugs PReP and PeP. I will continue to fight to pass this bill. With AIDS still taking lives in the LGBTQ+ community, we must continue to fight for supportive housing, medical services for people living with HIV and AIDS, and to end the AIDS epidemic here in New York.

### **My bill extends protections to TGNC New Yorkers**

On November 16<sup>th</sup>, during Transgender Awareness Week, Governor Hochul signed our legislation (S.5325/A.6193) requiring utility and telephone companies in New York to use the preferred names and pronouns of their customers. Nobody should suffer the indignity of being ‘deadnamed’ or being referred to by their non-affirmed name or gender. And with 2021 being the deadliest year for transgender and nonbinary people since the Human Rights Campaign began recording this data, our new law sends an important message of support to the 78,000+ transgender and gender non-conforming people across New York State. I applaud Governor Hochul, along with Leader Stewart-

Cousins, Assemblymember González-Rojas and my colleagues in both houses for their support of this legislation and respect for the rights and dignity of transgender New Yorkers.

### **Trans Day of Remembrance**

On November 20<sup>th</sup>, I attended a beautiful event on Little Island to remember the lives lost to violence, hatred, white supremacy, and transphobia on Transgender Day of Remembrance. We lost at least 375 members of the trans community around the world to violent prejudice this year. I want more than recognition of their loss—I want us to commit to advances for trans equality at the White House, in Congress, and in NY. I am proud that my bill to repeal the Walking While Trans ban was signed into law. I'm grateful to my elected colleagues, passionate advocates, and grassroots activists who worked with me to get this long-overdue bill pass.



### **One Fair Wage Rally**

Every worker deserves to earn their fair piece of the pie this holiday season (and all year round). On November 18<sup>th</sup>, I stood with One Fair Wage (OFW) and Assemblymember Harvey Epstein as we delivered Thanksgiving pies to service workers as a symbol that workers need their 'piece of the pie' (full and fair wages) in the service industry. I was proud to stand in front of Elisas Love Bites (at 441 E 9th Street) which pays all employees fair wages and sets an example for how all service workers should be treated. I am proud to cosponsor Senator Biaggi's bill to provide minimum wage requirements for service industry workers (S.808).

### **Housing For All Rally**

On November 16<sup>th</sup>, I joined Housing Justice for All at their 2022 agenda launch. Our goals for the next legislative session are to pass Good Cause Eviction, Repeal of 421-a, pass the Housing Access Voucher Program, pass the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act, and expand the Housing our Neighbors with Dignity Act. Housing should certainly be considered a human right and we must do more to make our neighbors have roof over their heads.

### **Communities Not Cages Rally**

On November 17<sup>th</sup>, I joined Communities Not Cages, Senator Zellnor Myrie, and other Albany colleagues in the Communities not Cages campaign launch, building the power of people and families impacted by mass incarceration to overhaul New York's racist and draconian sentencing laws. It is a moral imperative that we end mass incarceration by whatever legal means we can. That means abolishing mandatory minimums, excessive judicial discretion, three strike laws, and excessive sentencing.

### **Roosevelt House LGBTQ+ Education Discussion**

On November 11<sup>th</sup>, I joined Hunter College's Roosevelt House in a discussion about New York State's policy on LGBTQ+ education. Erin Mayo-Adam Director of the LGBTQ+ Center moderated the event with fellow panelist Daniel Hurewitz, History Professor at Hunter College. I'm the proud Senate sponsor of S.1729/A.817 with Assemblymember Seawright, a bill that would require the State Education Department to develop LGBTQ history curriculum. I would like to thank all the Hunter College Roosevelt House staff for putting together this incredible program.

### **Bleecker School Construction**

New public classroom space is always worth celebrating so I'm thrilled that that the School Construction Authority and NYU will finally begin to build a new public school after ten years of advocacy from Community Board 2 (several of which when I was chair!) and elected officials, including Congressman Jerry Nadler, Borough President Gale Brewer, Senator Brian Kavanagh, Assemblymember Deborah Glick, and Councilmember Margaret Chin. I'm particularly grateful to current CB2 Chair Jeannine Kiely and the entire board for continuously advocating for the new Bleecker School over the years and getting it across the finish line. Moving forward, I look forward to working with parents and advocates to be helpful in any way I can during the construction phase and help determine the mission for this new school.



### **Veterans Dental Care**

The New York University School of Dentistry has partnered with VetSmile/VOCARE (Veterans Oral Care Access Resource) to provide dental care to veterans within the community. The program aims to provide increased access to affordable dental care for Veterans in the NYC area who are not eligible to receive those services through the VA. This incredible program has provided 5,000 Veteran patient visits in the first year of VOCARE, with a goal of providing between 6,000 and 7,500 patient visits in future years. NYU Dentistry's Manhattan and Brooklyn facilities are participating in the program. If anyone is interested in learning more about the program, they can visit this [site](#) or call my office at 212-633-8052.

### **Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT)**

The Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) Food Benefits is a temporary federal food program to help families make up for school meals that were missed while students studied remotely. Families can expect \$820-1300 for the 2020-2021 school year, exact amounts will vary based on the number of days a student was learning remotely.

### **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.

### **COVID-19 Vaccine Information**

Visit <https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov/locations> and enter your zip code to view all vaccination sites. You can filter by vaccine type and walk-up availability. If you are doing a walk-up appointment be sure to check the hours of the site before you go!

There are mobile vans and pop-up sites providing vaccines throughout all 5 boroughs. Check this site to see the location and times for the coming week:

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/coronavirus/vaccines/covid-19-vaccines.page#nycmobilevax>

You can still schedule your appointment, including one just for a second dose. Visit <https://vax4nyc.nyc.gov/patient/s/> or call 877-VAX-4NYC (877-829-4692).

### **Vaccines for Children**

COVID-19 Vaccines are now available for Children Ages 5 to 17!

Vaccination is the best way to protect your child from COVID-19. With more contagious variants of the virus, more young people are getting COVID-19 and being hospitalized. Parents or guardians must give permission to get vaccinated and children ages 5 to 15 must have an adult with them. Children ages 5 to 17 can get the Pfizer vaccine. The Pfizer vaccine requires two doses, three weeks apart. Children are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second dose. You can still schedule your appointment, including one just for a second dose.

Visit <https://vax4nyc.nyc.gov/patient/s/> or call 877-VAX-4NYC (877-829-4692).

### **Booster Shots**

Now that the FDA has approved Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine booster shot, eligible New Yorkers can now receive boosters.

Boosters are widely available across New York City. Head here to learn more about eligibility or to find a location for you to receive a booster: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccines.page>

*Who is eligible for a booster shot?*

The CDC recently recommended booster shots for a select group of people and these shots are now widely available across New York City.

Some people who received both doses of the **Pfizer or Moderna** vaccine at least six months ago are now eligible for a booster shot. To receive a booster shot, you must be one of the following:

- 65 or older
- People ages 18 to 64 who have an [underlying medical condition](#) or a higher risk of COVID-19 exposure due to their job (for example, health care workers) or where they live or frequently visit (for example, a homeless shelter)
- People living in a nursing home or other long-term care facility

Everyone 18+ who received **Johnson & Johnson** at least two months ago should get a booster.

*Which booster should you get?*

Those who are eligible for a booster and received Pfizer or Moderna can get a booster from any of the three brands, although it is recommended that they get a booster shot from the same brand.

Johnson & Johnson recipients can get any of the three brands as well, although limited data shows that a Moderna or Pfizer booster could offer more antibodies. If you're not sure which booster to get, speak with your doctor.

*Reminders:*

- Adolescents ages 12 - 17 can only receive the Pfizer vaccine.
- You will need to bring proof of age and, if applicable, proof of consent for minors. Review this [list](#) of acceptable documents.
- At the vaccination site, you will receive a card with your name, date of birth, the vaccine you received, and the place and date you received it. Keep it in a safe place and make a photocopy or take a picture just in case you lose it. If you got the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, bring the card with you when you go for your second shot. If you are fully vaccinated but lost your COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card or need verification of your vaccine status, you can [request a copy of your COVID-19 vaccination record online](#). Vaccines are available at no cost to you and regardless of immigration status.
- The Excelsior Pass is a voluntary way to provide digital proof of vaccination on your smartphone. Businesses and entertainment venues can scan and validate the pass to ensure you meet any COVID-19 vaccination or testing requirements for entry. When using the pass, you'll be asked to show a photo ID that shows your name and birth date to verify identity. Visit <https://portal.311.nyc.gov/article/?kanumber=KA-03386> for more information about how to use the application.

### **COVID-19 Testing**

NYC Health + Hospitals offers free, walk-in testing throughout the five boroughs. Visit <https://www.nychealthandhospitals.org/covid-19-testing-sites/> to view a schedule of locations and hours.

### **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.

### **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: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/sbs/careers/find-a-job.page>

### **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](mailto:SVASQUEZ@NYSENATE.GOV)**

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OF MY LETTERS, TESTIMONIES, AND PRESS RELEASES.**