



New York State Senator **BRAD HOYLMAN**



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REPORT TO COMMUNITY BOARD 6

Fighting Fossil Fuel Burning Plant in Stuy Town

In 2018, NYSERDA provided Clean Energy Fund grants to fund the fossil fuel burning power plant Blackstone is building in Stuy Town. We know that this plant burns fossil fuels and is definitely not clean energy. This week, during a Senate Hearing, I asked NYSERDA President Doreen Harris for a commitment to look at this grant and decide if we really want to be funding our planet's demise. Watch the video of that question here: <https://twitter.com/bradhoylman/status/1488575448883806210>

Mental Health Win at Health Budget Hearing

This week I got the NYS Medicaid Director to commit to apply for an 1115 Medicaid waiver which would allow the state to fund long term stays in large mental health institutions. This would help many New Yorkers that are struggling with their mental health and often end up on the streets without any help. Other states have this funding and so should we. We can help make our streets safe without relying solely on policing. I look forward to working with the NYS Department of Health on the implementation.

Let My People Sit! Moynihan Needs Benches

I joined Senator Robert Jackson, along with Congressman Jerry Nadler, Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine, NYS Assembly Member Richard Gottfried and City Councilmember Erik Bottcher, in sending a letter to Amtrak CEO William Flynn and MTA Chair and CEO Janno Lieber urging them to add additional seating in Moynihan's main hall.

This problem goes beyond inconvenience. All New Yorkers, especially older adults, people with disabilities, and adults traveling with young children deserve a clean, safe and comfortable place to wait for their train. As all transit agencies work to bring back ridership, making stations as accessible and welcoming as possible should be top of mind. Read the full letter here: <https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/bradhoylman/letter-mta-amtrak-requesting-seating-moynihan-train-hall>

Sammy's Law Passes Committee

The Transportation Committee recently reported my bill [S.524A](#) "Sammy's Law," which allows New York City to lower its speed limits to 20 mph in all areas and 5 mph on certain streets, like shared streets. This lifesaving law is long overdue. Slower speeds are proven to reduce serious injury and death from vehicle collisions.

Legislative Updates

I am pleased to announce some updates on legislation that I am working on in the Senate.

[S.78](#) - The Aging Committee reported this bill which allows the State to direct programs under the federal Older Americans Act to LGBT+ seniors and seniors with HIV.

[S.566A](#) - The Investigations & Government Operations Committee reported this bill to extend the statute of limitations for the ability to file sexual harassment claims with the Division of Human Rights from one year to three years.

[S.996](#) - The Children & Families Committee reported this bill that prevents judges from prohibiting a parent from undergoing gender reassignment to get custody of their child.

[S.4609](#) - The Investigations & Government Operations Committee reported this bill to repeal outdated, homophobic language from the Human Rights Law.

Newly Introduced Bills

[S.8152](#) - I recently introduced The Crash Victims Bill of Rights (S.8152/A.9152) with Assemblymember Glick. In New York State about 10,000 people are killed or seriously injured in a traffic crash every single year, and more than 100,000 suffer or non-fatal injuries. In the City 98% of drivers who are sober and remain at the scene following a crash are never charged with a crime, therefore most traffic crash victims do not receive the critical support and protections afforded crime victims. On top of that, crash victims and their families have unacceptable difficulty getting police reports, are denied attending and testifying at DMV hearings, and struggle obtaining the support they need after a crash. Assemblymember Glick and I will change that with this bill, thanks to the tireless advocacy of Transportation Alternatives, Families for Safe Streets, and dozens of other coalition members fighting for Crash Victims.

[S.8153](#)- A number of retailers have recently been caught rejecting prospective workers or harassing current workers because of their weight or height in New York City. It is simply reprehensible that these businesses would target New Yorkers because of their weight. However, New York State Human Rights Law does not yet specifically protect against discrimination on weight and height. I introduced a bill to fix this and protect New Yorkers with Assemblymember Abinanti (S.8153/A.8316).

[S.8187](#)- Rates of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) have been trending upward, with reported STDs reaching an all-time high for the sixth year in a row, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A recent report found a nearly thirty percent increase in reported STDs between 2015 and 2019. Alarmingly, the most recent data available for 2020 suggests that this trend has only gotten worse, but the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted our STD testing protocols and staffing capacity, which has left us in the dark about the true state of this parallel epidemic. To make testing more available and convenient, I have introduced Senate bill S.8187 which would require insurance plans to cover at home STD testing. This bill helps ensure New York can control the spread and provide treatment for those in need by making convenient at home testing widely available.

Bill Number Forthcoming - A new study conducted by Duke University found that many of the top-rated anti-fogging sprays and wipes used to prevent condensation on eyeglasses contain high levels of PFAS chemicals. Exposure to some PFAS chemicals have been linked to many health problems including kidney cancer, testicular cancer, thyroid disease, birth defects, and fertility complications. This bill would ban the entire class of PFAS chemicals from anti-fogging sprays and wipes used in New York. During the pandemic, as masks cause eyeglasses to fog up at a rapid rate, people have been using these products daily, raising serious health concerns. TI introduced legislation to prohibit the sale and distribution of anti-fogging sprays and wipes containing these harmful chemicals.

[S.8161](#)- Last week I introduced, a bill to increase oversight over our deplorable corrections facilities. This bill would implement a series of reforms- to empower and restore the vigorous independent watchdog status of the State Commission of Correction.

[S.7335](#)- I also introduced an amendment to The Tenant Safe Harbor Act I to extend the prohibition on the eviction of residential tenants who have suffered financial hardship during the COVID-19 covered period

New State District Lines

The newly proposed state district maps were released recently from the New York State Legislative Task Force on Democratic Research and Reapportionment. These maps include files for all the State Senate and Assembly districts across New York. You can see the new district lines [here](#).



Center for Urban Community Services Resources

The Center for Urban Community Services has reached out to my office with new resources for anyone who may need them. Resources include help with Unemployment Insurance and Financial Coaching. Additionally, there are legal support services including eviction support services, and employment issues. Resources are free and open to any member of the public. If you or anyone else is interested please call CUCS at 1-855-932-2827 or visit the website at www.cucs.org/connects. Please reach out to my office at hoylman@nysenate.gov if you have any issues.

In Support of the Equality Act

It was a pleasure to join U.S. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer at the LGBT Center last week (pictured above) in support of the Equality Act which would codify federal protections against discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation and gender identity in employment, housing, public accommodations, education, federally funded programs, credit, and jury service. I'm proud to have played a leadership role in getting this protections for the LGBTQIA+ community passed at the state level along with my colleagues in Albany.

Senate Passes Remote Option Extender for Community Boards, All Public Bodies

In late January, the Senate passed a bill to allow all public bodies to continue videoconference options for meetings for the duration of the state of emergency. With COVID-19 cases counts rising during Omicron, there is still uncertainty over when we will be able to safely gather in large numbers. This legislation allows public business to continue undeterred, while keeping everyone safe. I am proud to have supported this bill and have helped our community boards to continue meeting remotely for the duration of this pandemic. However, the benefits that we have experienced from remote meetings have been plentiful. Our democracy has become accessible to so many more New Yorkers and we are better for it. I believe that while we need this relief now, we should update our statutes to adapt to the technology we have available today. I have introduced legislation that would permanently allow community boards and certain other public bodies to use a remote option. I look forward to working to pass that bill as well to ensure we can continue to use this technology long after the pandemic has ended.

FY23 Executive Budget Released

On January 5th, Governor Kathy Hochul released her proposed budget for the coming year. The Executive Budget for SFY 2022-23 totals \$216.3 billion. As part of this proposal, the Governor projects surpluses for the next five years. Highlights include an acceleration of middle class tax cuts, record school aid funding that brings us closer to fulfilling our Campaign for Fiscal Equity obligations, a tax credit for small businesses for COVID-19 expenses incurred to make businesses safer, and bonuses for health care workers. Over the next few weeks, I will be reviewing the Governor's proposal and working with my colleagues to negotiate the best budget for our community. You can learn more about the Executive Budget by visiting the [NYS Division of the Budget website](#). You can learn more about the budget process [here](#).

Joint Public Protection Budget Hearing

On January 25th, I participated in the Public Protection hearing, the first Joint Legislative public budget hearing this year. These hearings, each of which focuses on a programmatic area of the Governor's budget proposal (called the Executive Budget) provide opportunities for agencies, organizations, and other stakeholders to submit public testimony and answer questions from legislators. As Chair of the Judiciary Committee, many of the issue areas covered in today's Public Protection hearing fall under the purview of my committee. I was able to speak with agency heads about critical issues such as public safety, criminal justice reform, and court administration and reform

State Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)

As of January 11th, 2022 the State Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) is accepting applications. ERAP funds can be used to help with rental arrears, utility arrears, and limited future rent payments. This is a federally funded program and as of January 2022, funds have been exhausted and relief is not guaranteed. However, applying for State Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) will provide tenants with specific protections as a final determination on their application is weighed. More information including information on eligibility and a link to apply can be found [here](#).

Letter to NYCHA re: ERAP & Stopping Evictions

On January 19th, I joined Assemblymember Harvey Epstein and Senator Brian Kavanagh in sending a letter to NYCHA as a follow up to our meeting earlier this month to discuss ongoing issues with the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) and to ensure tenants can remain in their homes. We requested that NYCHA clarify their eviction policy and remove cases that involve tenants who have pending ERAP applications, grievances, administrative errors, and seniors over the age of 62 years old from the priority log which NYCHA has agreed to. In addition, we requested data on evictions by development and how many residents have applied for ERAP and how many are eligible who have not applied. We look forward to a response.

Confirmation of MTA Chair/CEO and Dept. of Health Commissioner

Two weeks ago, I participated in the confirmation hearings for Janno Lieber as Chair and CEO of the MTA and Dr. Mary Bassett as Commissioner of the Department of Health. My colleagues and I spent several hours on Wednesday interviewing the nominees on a variety of topics, including the Penn Station redevelopment, installation of platform doors at subway stations, and the continuing battle against COVID-19. On Thursday January 20th, we voted to confirm both nominees.

Campaign for "Rap Music on Trial" Legislation Gains Steam

In late January, the Senate Codes Committee approved my legislation that would restrict the ability of prosecutors to misuse creative artistic expressions, like song lyrics, as evidence in a criminal trial without a strong factual nexus to the case. This trial strategy is most often used against Black and brown defendants that use provocative lyrics in rap music. Our campaign for the bill got a further boost on Wednesday when a veritable who's who of the music, literary, and scholarly fields released letters in support of our bill, including Jay-Z, Robin Thicke, Kelly Rowland, Michelle Alexander (author of *The New Jim Crow*), the PEN America coalition, the Harlem Writers Guild, the Nuyorican Poets Café, and the Center for Fiction.

Order Free At-Home Test Online

The Biden Administration has announced that all Americans are now able to order four at-home tests at **no cost**. With the Omicron variant still being the dominant case of COVID-19, we must continue to stay vigilant. You can order for free [here](#). If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to my office at 212-633-8052 or hoylman@nysenate.gov

Home Energy Assistance Program

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded program designed to help low-income homeowners and renters pay for utility and heating bills. Regular HEAP opened October 1st, 2021 while

Emergency HEAP opened January 3rd, 2022. The program is set to run through March 15th, 2022. For more information on eligibility and the application process, please visit <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/>.

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 to schedule an appointment.

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).

Booster Shots

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 updated their recommendation on booster shots to include a larger share of the population and these shots are now widely available across New York City.

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

- 12+ with two vaccinations from either Pfizer or Moderna.
 - Those 12-17 are only approved for the Pfizer vaccine and booster at this time.
 - Those 18+ are approved for a booster from any brand, although it is recommended that they get a booster shot from the same brand.
- 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:

- 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.

The Federal Government is now shipping rapid antigen tests to those who request them. To request four free at home tests, please visit <https://www.covidtests.gov/>. Please note that each address is limited to *one* four-test order. Tests begin shipping via the US Postal Service in late January.

An appointment for at-home testing for those 65+ and immunocompromised individuals can be requested by calling (929) 298-9400 between 9:00 AM and 7:00 PM any day of the week.

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.

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