



New York State Senator **BRAD HOYLMAN**



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REPORT TO COMMUNITY BOARD 6

Historic New York State Budget Passed

Over the weekend, the State Legislature passed a \$220 billion State Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023. As we emerge from the pandemic, I'm hopeful this State Budget will help us continue our recovery while making historic new investments in education, childcare, public housing, healthcare and the environment. I'm particularly proud to have helped usher in new programs for touring musicians and another new fund for transgender New Yorkers, as well as money for emergency rental assistance for tenants and landlords and changes to the Open Meetings Law that I hope will allow community boards to meet virtually.

For all that was good in the budget, I couldn't bring myself to support the proposal to spend close to a billion dollars of public money for a new Buffalo Bills stadium when there are so many other pressing needs. Therefore, I voted against this portion of the State Budget.

My office will be sharing more information about the various rental assistance programs, small business and arts assistance, and other benefits and programs authorized in this State Budget.

You can read more about what was in the State Budget [here](#).

Open Meetings Law for Community Boards

The pandemic has shown us that holding meetings via videoconference makes them more accessible, but nothing can replace an in-person meeting. I was able to secure a provision in the budget allowing community boards and other public bodies to move forward with an optional hybrid meeting format. For now, boards can continue meeting remotely until June 8th. After that, community boards will be required to hold their meetings in-person, or they can switch to a hybrid model if they adopt a resolution to do so. A hybrid meeting is a meeting held both in-person and via videoconference, with a quorum of the board in-person. The location must be accessible to the public and the livestream must allow for remote participation.



Walkthrough of West 28th Street Substation

I attended a walk-through with MTA officials of the proposed West 28th Street substation to support the A, C, E lines with representatives from Penn South, Community Board 4 and elected official representatives on West 28th Street, just west of 8th Avenue. According to the MTA, this location has been chosen because it has sufficient street width and will experience the least subsurface utility issues. The duration of the project is 24 months of construction at street level. A contractor will be awarded for the contract by the end of this summer with street-level completion projected by the end of 2024. I plan on working closely with the community board and Penn South residents to address concerns about noise, pest control, appropriate agency communication, trees, and pedestrian and traffic needs. If you have concerns or

questions, please contact me at 212-633-8052 or hoylman@nysenate.gov.

In the News

On March 28, the *New York Times* published [an opinion piece by editorial board member Mara Gay](#) about the housing crisis facing our city in which she discussed my legislation to prohibit exclusionary zoning measures in cities and villages statewide ([S.7574](#)). The *Times* also published [a guest essay by Jaeah Lee](#) about the unfair use of rap lyrics in criminal trials citing my legislation with Senator Bailey to prohibit the practice without clear and convincing proof of a literal, factual nexus to the alleged crime as the first legislation in the nation to address the issue ([S.7527](#)).

The Fashion Workers Act

Fashion is one of New York's most important industries: it accounts for 5.5% of the workforce, \$11 billion in wages, and nearly \$2 billion in tax revenue each year. And the cultural impact may even be greater than the financial impact. New York City is the best dressed place in the country. It's part of what makes our city special. Yet the models and creative professionals often have the least leverage and power, which puts them at risk of abuse and exploitation. That's just plain wrong. That's why I introduced the



Fashion Workers Act ([S.8638](#)) with Assembly Member Reyes to finally ensure that fashion's modeling and creative workforce has as much labor support as any other worker and to close the legal loophole by which management companies in the fashion industry escape accountability.

Legislative Update

On April 5, the Senate passed my bill, [S6172A](#) which would create strong and clear laws against tampering, disabling, removing or interfering with emission control devices and emission tampering devices on vehicles. Emission control devices installed by manufacturers of diesel-powered heavy duty vehicles are essential to limiting the emission of air pollutants from such vehicles, protecting the public health from the adverse health effects of those pollutants, and maintaining the state's ability to meet the greenhouse gas reduction targets set forth in the Climate Change and Community Leadership Act.

Here are some additional legislative updates from Albany:

- My new bill, [S.8422](#), directs New York State to apply for a Medicaid waiver so the State can reimburse stays in large residential mental health institutions. New York has a severe shortage of in-patient mental health care options, especially for those suffering from serious mental illness, and the lack of Medicaid reimbursement for large institutions fails to provide an incentive for the provision of these services. Read more about my effort [here](#).
- A recent investigation [revealed](#) it is common practice in California for police to use a victim's DNA collected in a "rape kit" as DNA evidence to identify them as a suspect in unrelated crimes. In response, I introduced legislation [S.8408](#) to ensure that is practice is not allowed in New York State and to confirm to survivors that we have their backs. This practice treats victims as criminals in cases completely unrelated to their sexual assault. When someone elects to have a sexual offense evidence kit exam, they are consenting to the use of their DNA for a very narrow focus: to hold the perpetrator of their assault accountable. Any other use is a violation of the survivor's privacy.
- I recently introduced [S.8423](#) to ensure that anti-retroviral medications are readily available to patients and not subject to procedural delays so that patients can start an HIV treatment regimen as soon as they are diagnosed or exposed to possible infection.
- I introduced [S.8424](#) to reform New York's overly complex court system. Court reform is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to fix our labyrinthine state courts and make our judicial system fairer, especially for low-income litigants. I look forward to working with the Chief Judge and my legislative colleagues on a consolidation proposal that reflects these goals, while diversifying the bench and respecting our unionized workforce.

Penn Station Redevelopment Letter

In early March, I sent a letter with Senator Krueger and many of my senate colleagues to Empire State Development (ESD) to halt the Penn Station Redevelopment plan until explanations are provided to the public about the cost, design, scope, bond liabilities and other currently unknown aspects of the project. We also called on ESD to hold off from voting on the plan until the New York City Independent Budget Office releases its independent financial analysis of the project. You can view ESD's response to the letter [here](#).

Rally for Increased Funding for Mental Health Staffing in School Districts

The pandemic has brought about a state of emergency on our student's mental health. Between March and October of 2020, mental health emergency visits increased 24 percent for kids ages 5-11, 31 percent

for kids ages 12-17, and in early 2021, there was a 50 percent increase in emergency visits for suicide among teen girls. This wasn't just a blip in time. The trauma of the last two years is still deeply engrained in our kids, and we must give them the mental health support they deserve. I was proud to fight alongside my colleagues Senator Jackson and Assembly Member González-Rojas to increase funding for mental health staffing in school districts.



Supporting Community Gardens

On April 1st, I joined Senator Chuck Schumer and Councilmember Carlina Rivera in the East Village to celebrate the inclusion of funds for water management in community gardens in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. We toured La Plaza Cultural Armando Perez community garden where we experienced a beautiful oasis of greenery in our city. This important funding will benefit 260 community gardens under the jurisdiction of the NYC Parks Department.

NEW: Second Booster Doses for Eligible New Yorkers

The following New Yorkers are now eligible for a second COVID-19 vaccine booster of an mRNA (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) vaccine:

- Adults ages 50 years and older may choose to receive a second booster dose of an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) at least four months after their first booster dose.
- New Yorkers ages 18–49 years who received the Janssen/Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine as both their primary series dose and initial booster dose may receive a second booster dose of an mRNA vaccine at least 4 months after their first booster dose.
- New Yorkers ages 12 and older who are moderately or severely immunocompromised may choose to receive a second booster dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) at least four months after their first booster dose.

Tax Resources

As many of you know, 2022 Tax Season is upon us. Here are some resources:

- **IT-201G Resident Income Tax Return Form.** Is your 2021 income \$73,000 or less? If so, you can prepare and file your federal and state returns for free using the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance website, [here](#). While you can e-file online for free, if you need help receiving a physical form, please call my office at 212-633-8052 or by email at hoylman@nysenate.gov.
- **NYC Office of Consumer and Worker Protection Free Tax Help.** The NYC Office of Consumer and Worker Protection has free tax preparation with their certified volunteers. If you make \$72,000 or less, the Office of Consumer and Worker Protection can help you file your taxes for free, and there are options for in-person and drop-off services, in addition to virtual appointments and assisted self-prep. More information can be found [here](#).

- **1099-G Form for Unemployment Benefits.** My office has been receiving calls from constituents about getting access to their 1099-G forms to report their unemployment benefits in their taxes. Thankfully, there are two ways that the NYS Department of Labor has to get this form. On the Department of Labor's website the 1099-G form for calendar year 2021 will be available in your online account at labor.ny.gov/signin to download and print. You may also call them at : **1-888-209-8124** if you do not have an online account with NYSDOL. This automated phone line allows you to request your 1099-G via U.S. Mail to the address that the DOL has on file for you.

Center for Urban Community Services Resources

I am partnering with the Center for Urban Community Services to promote new resources they provide for anyone who may need them, including help with unemployment insurance, financial coaching, legal support services such as eviction protection assistance, 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 their website at www.cucs.org/connects. Please reach out to my office at hoylman@nysenate.gov if you have any issues.

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, but the state has requested more aid from the federal government. Meanwhile, applying for ERAP will provide tenants with specific protections as a final determination on their application is pending. More information, including information on eligibility and a link to apply, can be found [here](#).

Recent Con-Edison Rate Increase

Some of you may have heard about large increases in Con Edison bills, primarily due to the significant increase in the price of electricity produced by natural gas. Con Edison also implemented a scheduled rate increase previously approved by the Public Service Commission in 2019. On February 11, the Department of Public Service sent a letter to Con Edison seeking that the utility provide more transparency to customers in the next billing cycle, reassess power supply billing practices to reduce the risk of price volatility, and improve customer communication regarding commodity pricing, particularly in advance of expected bill increases. The Department determined that the combination of higher market prices for natural gas and electricity, coupled with higher energy use due to cold weather, resulted in significantly higher bills for consumers. I am continuing to monitor this situation and will take legislative action as appropriate.

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 & which booster should you get?

People who received both doses of the **Pfizer or Moderna** vaccine at least five months ago are 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. While Johnson & Johnson recipients can get any of the three brands, the

CDC recommends getting an mRNA booster (Pfizer) as they are more effective. 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 began 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
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.**