

A Message From ASSEMBLYMEMBER HARVEY EPSTEIN



ASSEMBLY MEMBER HARVEY EPSTEIN COMMUNITY BOARD 6 REPORT, MAY 2022

Dear Neighbor,

I am outraged by the Supreme Court's draft opinion to overturn Roe v. Wade. It's a dangerous attack on the health of millions and the potential start of a campaign by a radical court to whittle away individual rights. The right to choose is something that I have always fought to protect. My colleagues and I are working to ensure New Yorkers never have to fear their access to abortion being taken away. I will always stand firmly as a pro choice legislator. We will not go backwards here in New York.

See you around the district,

Harvey

Covid Cases Are Rising

Covid cases are rising in New York. Visit <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-alert-levels.page> for information about the prevalence of covid in New York City. The City is now on a "medium" alert level, and will consider requiring face masks in high-risk settings where it is crowded and physical distance cannot be maintained. New York City will also consider bringing back the Key to NYC vaccination requirements for indoor dining, entertainment and fitness venues.

There are ways to protect yourself including wearing a [mask](#), [testing](#), and [getting vaccinated and boosted](#) if you have not already. Our office will be distributing rapid tests as we have them available. Contact our office to learn about the next distribution event: 212-979-9696.

Sweeps Don't Work: My Letter to Mayor Adams

In light of the recent sweeps of homeless New Yorkers in our community, I felt I had to express to Mayor Adams the problems with this policy. It's not only inhumane and disruptive to bring dozens of cops and city workers onto our streets to hassle struggling New Yorkers, the policy simply does not work. Discarding their belongings sets them further back from being able to get secure housing and services. They wind up on the street either way. The problem goes unsolved.

You can read my letter [here](#).

Fighting for Good Cause Eviction



We need to [pass good cause eviction](#) now more than ever. Rents are skyrocketing, the Rental Guidelines Board is contemplating astronomical increases, we're in the midst of a housing and homelessness crisis. Good cause is a common sense policy that protects tenants from price gouging. It's in effect in other localities around the state and it's time we extend that protection statewide.

Governor Signs My Bill to End Transcript Withholding

I'm proud to announce our bill to end transcript withholding became a law on May 4th. As of June 3rd, when the law takes effect, transcript withholding will be illegal. The law prohibits colleges from withholding a student's transcript because of unpaid debts or charging individuals who owe debts a higher fee to obtain their transcript. This legislation ensures that students can access their transcript when necessary so that they may continue their education or find a job.

If your school is attempting to withhold your transcript because you owe a past due balance, contact my office at 212-979-9696.

No longer will students be punished as they try to advance in their academic and professional careers. Removing the barrier of transcript withholding will help get students into the next step in

their lives, while they work to meet their obligations to their schools. I'm proud to have worked with Senator Kevin Thomas, Chair of the Assembly Committee on Higher Education, Deborah Glick, and many higher education advocates to pass this legislation. I want to thank the Governor for standing up for students by signing our bill.

Passing Our Bills on Legislative Disability Advocacy Day



I joined with my colleagues Assemblymember Tom Abinanti, Chair of the Committee on people with disabilities, Assemblymember Chris Burdick, Chair of the Subcommittee on Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities, and disability advocates from across New York to announce a package of disability bills that passed Assembly earlier this week on Legislative Disability Advocacy Day.

Two of my bills in the package passed the Assembly, A8599 and A8816. The first bill would require the public posting of civil service jobs and specify which are set aside for people with disabilities. The second bill requires state agencies to work together to streamline the process for people with disabilities accessing services provided by the state.

Attention to disability issues in the Legislature has been growing thanks to an increasingly active advocacy sector and legislators willing to prioritize the issues. In 2021, both houses of the legislature established standing committees on people with disabilities to consider legislation with impacts to the state's diverse disability community. Also in 2021, the final budget included the largest investment in enhancing supports for students with disabilities attending higher education institutions in New York State in decades. Funding for students with disabilities was reappropriated in the SFY 2022-23 budget.

In addition to the legislative package, we gave citations to over a dozen individuals and organizations serving and representing the disability community in recognition of their contributions to making New York a more inclusive state.

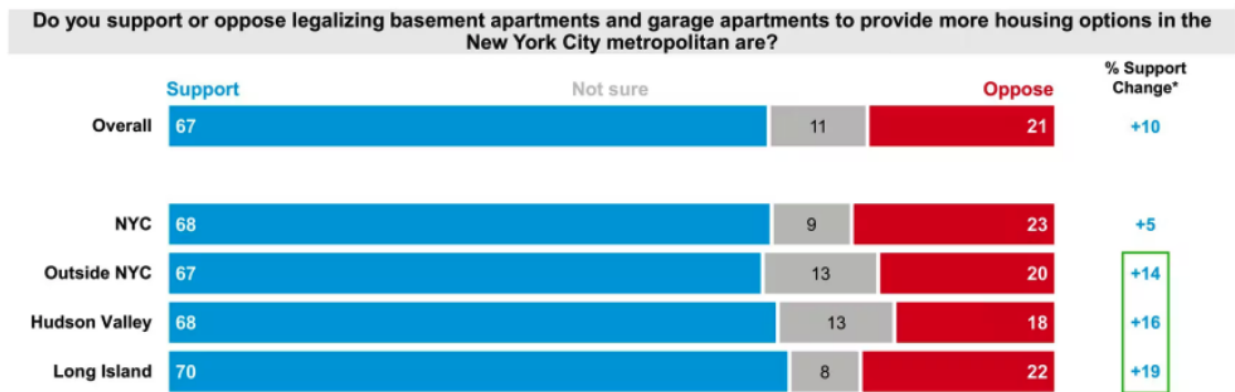
It's an honor to welcome so many dedicated advocates to the Capitol and recognize their contributions in pushing this package of legislation to help New Yorkers across the finish line.

Together, we are steadily raising the profile of disability issues in our state. I look forward to continuing the fight with my colleagues in the legislature and the activists that make this work possible.

Rent Guidelines Board Takes Preliminary Vote

Last week, the Rent Guidelines Board (RGB) took a preliminary vote and approved raising rents on 1 year and 2 year leases by a range of 2%-4% and 4%-6%, respectively. To follow through with these increases would be a dangerous mistake. The RGB's own research, as well as additional economic indicators simply do not support raising rents on stabilized tenants, many of whom are on fixed incomes and are rent burdened. According to the RGB, landlords have continued to receive an average net operating income of \$302,000. In contrast, rent-stabilized tenants have a median income of \$44,560. It's easy to see why a rent freeze is necessary.

Supermajority Support for Legalizing Basement Apartments



In a survey fielded by the Regional Plan Association, 67% of respondents support legalizing basement and garage apartments to provide more housing options in the region, including 70% of respondents from Long Island, 10-point and 19-point increases since October 2021, respectively.

I have introduced [legislation](#) with Senator Brian Kavanagh to empower New York City to safely legalize basement apartments. The bill has Mayor's backing along with dozens of housing, planning, and immigrant rights groups. Read about the growing list of supporters [here](#).

New Lieutenant Governor

Former Lieutenant Governor Brian Benjamin stepped down following his indictment for federal fraud and bribery charges. I supported removing him from the ballot but voted against a bill that allows someone to replace him on the ballot. While it makes sense to create pathways for candidates

running for office to take themselves off the ballot if they want to, the larger issue here is the timing of the law, which undermines the public's confidence in government.

Summer Reading Challenge

We're inviting kids in the 74th Assembly District to participate in the New York State Assembly's annual Summer Reading Challenge, held in partnership with New York State Libraries. The theme for the 2022 challenge is "Oceans of Possibilities" to encourage children to explore strange and new worlds and fall in love with exciting characters and stories. Young readers who complete the challenge will receive an Assembly Excellence in Reading certificate to celebrate their achievement.

During summer break, students often experience a decrease in reading proficiency. Known as the "summer slide," this phenomenon can compound over multiple summers and requires schools to apportion resources to help kids catch back up in the fall. Reading helps children prepare for the new school year and maintain their academic progress, and is a fun activity for students and families. New Yorkers are also encouraged to visit their local library for summer reading recommendations and a host of other programs and services. Find your library here: <https://www.nypl.org/locations>.

The challenge asks children to read a book for a minimum of 15 minutes a day for at least 40 days during July and August. Children can read on their own or with a partner or caregiver and mark off days on the calendar provided. Once they've completed 40 days or more, they submit the calendar to our office to receive a certificate in the mail.

For more information about the Summer Reading Challenge, please visit summerreadingnys.org, email elliottc@nyassembly.gov or call Assemblymember's office at 212-979-9696.

Upcoming Events

Paper Shredding Event 5/21 @ 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

We're partnering with Beam living to host a paper shredding event on Saturday May 21st from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM at Stuy Town on 14th St Loop Toad (1 Stuyvesant Oval)

No electronics or batteries, paper only. Please call 212-979-9696 or email events.district74@gmail.com with any questions.

Hang With Harvey - June

- Tuesday June 7th, 4:00 - 5:30 pm C Town Supermarket - 188 Avenue C
- Thursday June 9th, 2:00 - 3:30 pm St. Vartan Park - East 35th St & 1st Ave
- Thursday June 16th, 2:00 - 3:30 pm Augustus St. Gaudens Playground East 20th St and 2nd Ave
- Wednesday June 22, 4:00 - 5:30 pm Stuyvesant Town - East 14th Street & Avenue

Info on COVID19, Education, Housing, Senior Services, Housing, and more. Questions? Call
212-979-9696

Feel free to contact Assembly Member Harvey Epstein's office with any questions or concerns.

Our office is located at

107 Avenue B (store front)

You can email us at help.district74@gmail.com or call us at 212-979-9696