

A Message From ASSEMBLYMEMBER HARVEY EPSTEIN



ASSEMBLY MEMBER HARVEY EPSTEIN COMMUNITY BOARD 6 REPORT, JANUARY 2023

Dear Neighbor,

Happy New Year! Yesterday, Governor Kathy Hochul delivered her State of the State, which serves as a preview of the policies she plans to push in her executive budget. I am proud to announce that versions two of our bills are expected to be her proposed budget! The first requires SUNY and CUNY campuses to make medication abortion available on campus or to directly refer students to a trusted local clinic. I first introduced this bill in 2019 and it's more important than ever that we pass it now in this post-Roe landscape. I look forward to working with my senate partner, Senator Cordell Cleare, and reproductive justice advocates as we work to push this campaign over the finish line.

The second bill authorizes New York City to create a program to legalize basement apartments. In September of 2021, 11 basement apartment tenants died as a result of flooding in their homes caused by Hurricane Ida. Because they live in unauthorized housing, tenants in basement apartments are disincentivized from reporting unsafe conditions for fear of losing their homes entirely. There are tens of thousands of New Yorkers living in basement apartments right now. They live without the same strong tenant protections that other renters enjoy. We can't ignore the fact that illegal apartments exist. We should recognize that they are an important part of our city's affordable housing stock and ensure that they are safe for the residents.

I look forward to advancing these policies and more as we begin the budget process.

See you around the district,

Harvey

My New Bill to Protect New Yorkers Privacy



On Monday I introduced legislation with Senator Kristen Gonzalez to modernize the Personal Privacy Protection Law (PPPL). The PPPL was passed in 1983 when the government's adoption of technology to keep records was nascent. Forty years later, the collection of our personal information by government has exploded, creating new concerns around the safeguarding and dissemination of that information.

Under current law, state and local law enforcement agencies can obtain New Yorkers' personal information from an agency for any reason without a warrant. This loophole jeopardizes the vulnerable, such as undocumented immigrants and other New Yorkers who have been traditionally over-surveilled and over-policed. If New Yorkers can't trust the government to maintain their personal and sensitive information, how can we expect them to apply for benefits, substance use treatment, housing, or other essential services we provide? I'm proud to

work with Senator Gonzalez and [STOP](#) to modernize the PPPL and protect New Yorker's privacy.

Thoughts on the State of the State

Yesterday the Governor unveiled her policy proposals for the 2023 legislative session. There was a lot to applaud, including housing policies that would pave the way for the creation of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and the legalization of basement apartments. I have fought for decades, first as an activist and now as an activist legislator, to advance these ideas because, if done right, they will help increase the supply of affordable, safe, and dignified housing in our state. A comprehensive housing strategy needs to include good cause eviction and the tenant opportunity to purchase act (TOPA). I look forward to fighting for these bills so we can create and preserve affordable housing in New York.

I was also very happy to see the Governor plans to include a version of my bill to require SUNY and CUNY campuses to make medication abortion available at their student health centers. Students rely on their health centers for medical care. Abortion is medical care, yet far too many schools do not provide access to abortion services at their health



centers. As we face an increasingly hostile environment for civil rights, in New York we're fighting back to guarantee not only the right to abortion but access to it for a population that has limited time, resources, and transportation options.

Worryingly, the Governor signaled she will attempt to hike tuition at CUNY and SUNY while at the same time refusing to raise taxes. With tax collections outpacing projections, the state is in a relatively strong position even as COVID funding from the federal government has dwindled. We should not be raising tuition on New York's college students.

Finally, I appreciate the focus on mental health services. The Governor has proposed increasing capacity by 1,000 beds for inpatient psychiatric treatment, creating 3,500 units of housing to serve New Yorkers with mental illness, and increasing insurance coverage for mental health services. True public safety is only possible we address social problems like housing insecurity and lack of access to mental health services.

I look forward to keeping you updated as we begin the budget process in earnest.

ERAP Update - Deadline to Apply 1/20

New York State ERAP applications will not be accepted after January 20, 2023, at 9:00 pm Eastern Standard Time. Individuals will not be able to submit applications, or complete applications that have been started but not submitted, after January 20, 2023 at 9:00 pm.

Applications submitted before the application portal closes on January 20, 2023 will continue to be processed in the order received, consistent with State law and program rules.

OTDA is currently reviewing and processing eligible ERAP applications submitted through October 31, 2022. Additional applications are expected to be reviewed and processed in the future as funds become available. This notification will be updated if additional funding is available to pay eligible applications submitted after October 31, 2022.

After the portal closes to new applications, tenants and landlords may continue to upload required documentation for pending submitted applications.

Visit <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/emergency-rental-assistance/> for more information.

New COVID-19 Boosters Available

New Yorkers are urged to get the updated COVID-19 vaccine booster

The updated bivalent COVID-19 booster vaccines, from Pfizer and Moderna, protect you against the original COVID-19 virus and the current BA.4 and BA.5 Omicron subvariants.

NYC Health + Hospitals now has the updated bivalent COVID-19 booster available for all our patients. Make an appointment today at any of our hospitals or Gotham Health Centers in your neighborhood.

The updated booster is available for those who have already completed their primary COVID-19 vaccine series or booster at least two months ago. [Learn more](#)

[Make an appointment](#) | Call 877-829-4692 for an appointment | [NYC Vaccine Finder](#)

Who can get the updated COVID-19 booster shot?

- Young people from age 12 -17 can only receive the updated Pfizer booster vaccine.
- Adults 18 and older can receive the updated Pfizer or the updated Moderna COVID-19 booster vaccine.

[Read the CDC vaccine and booster recommendation by age](#)

Why you should get the updated booster shot.

If you completed a COVID-19 primary vaccine series, you will be considered up-to-date when you receive the booster dose recommended for you by the CDC.

- 90% of all current COVID-19 cases are caused by the BA.5 subvariant.
- Getting the updated vaccine booster will increase your protection against getting very sick or needing to go to the hospital if you get COVID-19.

Upcoming Events

Independent Redistricting Commission 2023 Public Hearings - January

Visit <https://nyirc.gov/participate> to learn more

Pursuant to Article III, Section 4(c) of the New York State Constitution, the New York State Independent Redistricting Commission (the "Commission") will hold a series of twelve public hearings across the state to receive feedback on its draft redistricting plan for court ordered New York State Assembly districts.

The Constitution requires the Commission to hold twelve hearings in the cities of Albany, Buffalo, Syracuse, Rochester, and White Plains, as well as the counties of Bronx, Kings, New York, Queens, Richmond, Nassau, and Suffolk. For a full list of hearings, visit <https://nyirc.gov/participate>.

Further information regarding these hearings will be available on the Commission's website, www.NYIRC.gov, in the coming days and weeks. Recordings of the hearings will be made available to the public following each hearing's completion.

*** = Indicates that the venue requires either Note that all guest must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 (all attendees, including staff) or provide a negative PCR test within 7 days of the event.

New York County *** Tuesday, February 7 4:00pm
Hunter College (CUNY)
Kaye Playhouse
695 Park Avenue
(entrance on 68th Street between Park and Lexington Avenues)
New York, New York 10065

We encourage you to review the draft Assembly plan the Commission voted to release to the public on December 1, 2022. The Commission eagerly awaits your input! Click below to explore the draft Assembly plan or to sign up to participate in a hearing