

A Message From ASSEMBLYMEMBER HARVEY EPSTEIN



ASSEMBLY MEMBER HARVEY EPSTEIN COMMUNITY BOARD 6 REPORT, MARCH 2023

Friend,

We're in the midst of the budget process. By mid-March, the Legislature will release its response to the Governor's budget. As a member of the Codes, Corrections, Environmental Conservation, Housing, and Higher Education, and People with Disabilities committees, I've had the opportunity to take testimony from a variety of stakeholders during the joint budget hearing process, which concluded last week. As the newly appointed chair of the Legislative Commission on State-Local Relations, I also had the opportunity to take testimony from Mayor Adams and City Council Speaker Adams, both of whom agreed with one of my top policy priorities: the safe legalization of existing basement and cellar units in New York City.

See you around the district,

Harvey

How to Participate in Curbside Composting

Curbside composting will be available, year-round, to all New Yorkers over the next 20 months. Unlike past composting programs, there is **no sign-up required** for this new program. Residents simply set out anything from their kitchen or their garden in a separate bin on their recycling day and let DSNY pick it up to turn into usable compost or clean, renewable energy.

- March 27, 2023 – Queens service resumes
- October 2, 2023 – Brooklyn service begins
- March 25, 2024 – The Bronx and Staten Island service begins
- October 7, 2024 – Manhattan service begins

While DSNY will make its own Brown Bins available, this program also includes the flexibility for New Yorkers to use ANY bin of 55 gallons or less with a secure lid.

As announced in August, DSNY installed 250 smart composting bins citywide which are accessible 24 hours a day. After being piloted in Astoria, they were placed in traditionally underserved communities, including Bushwick, Bed-Stuy, Washington Heights, Harlem, Castle Hill, Parkchester, Highbridge, the area around Queensbridge Houses, and the North Shore of Staten Island. 150 more are on the way in Manhattan this Spring, since Manhattan will be the last borough to receive curbside service. Download the NYC Smart Compost app to use the bin near you and view locations.

Find out more details about what's to come [here](#).

Joint Budget Hearing Update

Basement Apartments

Last week, I was pleased to have both Mayor Adams and New York City Council Speaker Adams agree that we need to address the dangers of illegal basement and cellar units by creating pathways to legalization that focuses on safety and tenant protections, including the right for tenants to remain in their units after safety upgrades are complete.

The Governor has introduced legislation as part of the budget process that largely mirror my bill



with housing chair Senator Kavanagh. As we work to reach an agreement on a budget over the next six weeks, I am working hard to stand up for New Yorkers living in these apartments.

Mental Health at SUNY / CUNY



As a member of the Committee on People with Disabilities, I had the opportunity to raise questions with SUNY and CUNY leadership regarding their commitment to students who need mental health support. I am proud to be advocating for essential care for these students, as well as SUNY and CUNY students with disabilities who need additional support, including assistive technologies, interpreters, and more.

Students With Disabilities Advocacy Day

For the past 4 years, I have introduced a resolution in support of students with disabilities at our higher education institutions and fought for funding to help them succeed in school. This year, we welcomed hundreds of students from SUNY, CUNY, and private institutions to lobby in Albany for increased funding. Over 80 Assemblymembers signed onto the resolution I introduced along with Senator Gounardes, who has championed this issue in the Senate.



Report Back: 13th Forward Lobby Day



I was proud to stand with Senator Myrie and the 13th Forward Coalition in support of our two bills, The No Slavery in NY Act and The Fairness & Opportunities for Incarcerated New Yorkers Act. One hundred and fifty seven years ago the 13th amendment to the constitution was ratified, abolishing slavery in a majority of the states. However, one pernicious exception to abolition has persisted for over a century and a half,

allowing for slavery and involuntary servitude for prison labor.

Today, states are acting to amend their own constitutions to end slavery and guarantee freedom from forced labor under any circumstances, once and for all. In New York, we must do the same. You can learn more about the campaign here: <https://13thforward.com>.

Visit to Washington Irving Campus



On Friday March 3, 2023 I had the pleasure to tour the numerous schools at the Washington Irving Educational Campus. I was able to meet the leadership staff and student ambassadors of the school to hear their concerns and needs.

Tax Season is Coming Up

Those earning less than \$250,000 a year, based on the proportion of their income spent on property taxes, may be eligible for a property tax relief credit, commonly known as a “circuit breaker” plan. For more information or to find if you are eligible, please visit www.tax.ny.gov/pit/property/homeowner-tax-rebate-credit.htm.

Various tax savings are available for working families through the expanded Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit. Visit www.irs.gov/help/ita/does-my-childdependent-qualify-for-the-child-tax-credit-or-the-credit-for-other-dependents or www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/individuals/earned-income-tax-credit-eitc to learn more.

Free Tax Help

Need help doing your taxes? New Yorkers whose 2022 income was \$73,000 or less may be eligible to file their state and federal income tax returns for free through the state’s partnership with the Free File Alliance. Visit www.tax.ny.gov/pit/efile/ to learn more.

Tax Filing Assistance

The IRS's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs offer free basic tax return preparation for seniors. For more information or to see if you are eligible for these services, please visit www.irs.gov/individuals/free-tax-return-preparation-for-qualifying-taxpayers.

Trip to Albany with SOMOS, Assemblymembers Grace Lee and Harvey Epstein

Friday March 10th, 2023

We call upon the Seniors of our district to join us on this FREE trip to the Capitol. We will be having free resources, a meet and greet with elected officials, and a reception with food. Please call 212-979-9696 to RSVP before Thursday March 9th 5:00pm to Joanna or Kathleen.

E-Waste Event

March 19, 2023, 10 am - 2 pm

Location: **Tompkins Square Park**, Between 9th and 10th Street On Avenue A

Come Recycle your E-waste! We accept working and nonworking computers, monitors, printers/scanners, keyboards, computer mice, cables, TVs, VCRs & DVD players, phones, audio/visual equipment, cell phones and PDA's.

For more information go to lesecologycenter.org or call 212-477-4022.

55 Suffolk Street Application Start

Applications are now being accepted for affordable housing at **The Suffolk Apartments, 55 Suffolk Street, New York, NY 10002.**

The ad is enclosed. Please note that rents and income limits are subject to change and asset limits may apply. In addition, minimum incomes listed may not apply to applicants with Section 8 or other qualifying rental subsidies.

We encourage interested persons to apply online at <https://housingconnect.nyc.gov/PublicWeb/details/3489> or write to request a paper application and advertisement (see below). Online and paper applications are available in English, Arabic, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, and Spanish.

To obtain paper applications send self-addressed envelope to:

The Suffolk Lottery

c/o Settlement Housing Fund, Inc.

247 West 37th Street, 19th Floor

New York, NY 10018

Please remember that online applications must be submitted by **April 12, 2023**, the deadline date, and that the applications received after this deadline date will not be considered. Completed paper applications must be sent to the Post Office Box address indicated on the application, postmarked by the application deadline date. Applicants may not submit more than one application per household.