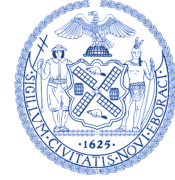


NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER

KEITH POWERS



February 2023 Full Board Report to Manhattan Community Board 6

Highlights

- Last week Council Member Powers introduced two new bills to address the growing number of fires throughout the city caused by lithium-ion batteries. These batteries, commonly used to power e-bikes, have been linked to an increasing number of fires. Last year, the FDNY reported over 200 fires caused by lithium-ion batteries; which was up from 28 in 2019. To address this issue, Council Member Powers is introducing legislation to create a program that will get unsafe batteries off the streets and ensure that workers who rely on e-mobility devices have the means to safely charge their batteries. The two bills are **Introduction 949 & Introduction 950**.

Introduction 949 would create a Lithium-Ion Battery Safety Program, which would be run by the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection, in collaboration with the Fire Department and Sanitation Department, and would allow New Yorkers to swap their used battery for a new one that meet industry standards and can be safely charged.

Introduction 950 would require delivery businesses to provide a fireproof container to delivery workers so they can safely charge a battery. The Fire Department would be tasked with establishing standards for determining if a container is fireproof or resistant.

- It's tax season! This year, families with dependents who earned \$80,000 or less and individuals who earned \$56,000 or less in 2022 can use [NYC Free Tax Prep](#). This link will take you to the New York City Department of Consumer and Worker Protection's portal to find the closest tax preparation site near you. There are four different types of services one can utilize when filing through NYC Free Tax Prep: In-person service, Drop-off service, Virtual Tax Prep service, and Assisted Self-Preparation.

[Review this checklist to ensure you have all the documents needed in order to file your taxes with NYC Free Tax Prep Services here.](#)

- Monday morning, Council Member Powers, the Manhattan Borough President, and several other City Council members held a press conference to unveil a report and recommendations on streamlining and expediting the use of scaffolding and sidewalk sheds throughout the city. Scaffolding laws in NYC are overly complicated, and, once scaffolding has been erected, these "temporary" structures often remain standing for years at a time. The sheds detract from the pedestrian experience, complicate wayfinding, and are poorly lit and maintained. [The report](#)

suggests several practical steps that can be taken, from new legislation to internal reforms at city agencies, that can help solve this issue. Included in our plan is [legislation](#) that I have already introduced calling on the Department of Buildings to utilize unmanned drones to speed up their ability to perform Local Law 11 facade safety inspections. More to come on scaffolding legislation in the coming weeks.

- This past month, an anti-Semitic crime took place in a building within my Council District where a shared building elevator was vandalized with a swastika. Many residents reached out with worry and asked my office to work with the local authorities to ensure this was properly investigated. My staff worked with NYPD's 17th Precinct and the NYPD Hate Crime Task Force on this incident, and last week, thanks to their work, an arrest was made regarding this vile incident.

A reminder: hate has no place in NYC!