



Dear Neighbor,

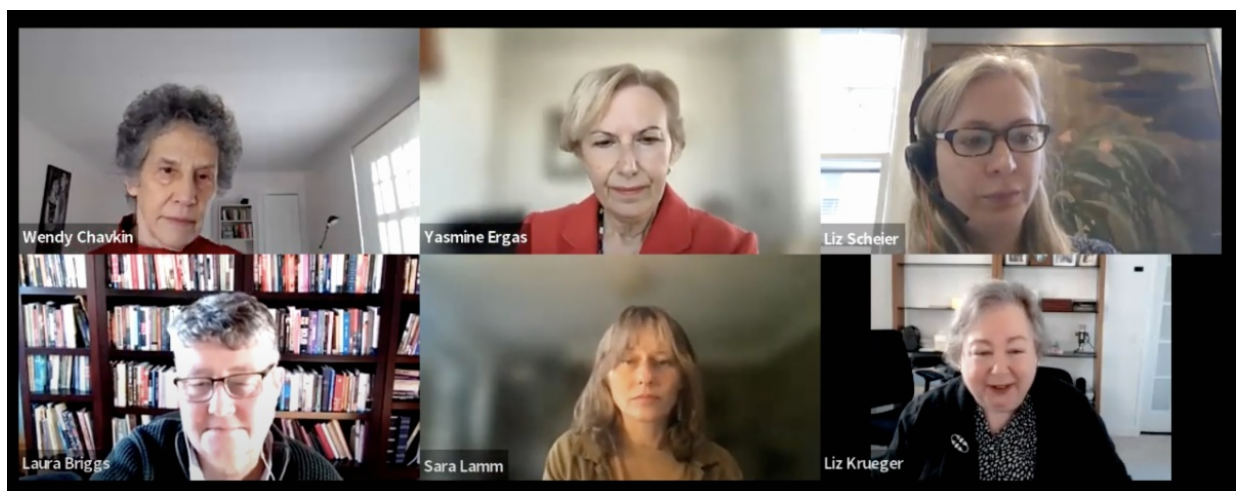
I hope that everyone was able to enjoy a Thanksgiving meal and a chance to experience and share gratitude last week. As we head further into a month of many holidays, I wish everyone who is celebrating a joyous season. I know that I will be holding fast to the hope of a more peaceful year ahead across the globe.

Below is an update on some of the legislative issues I have been working on, as well as upcoming events that may be of interest. As always, if you have any questions or need assistance, please email or call my office at lkrueger@nysenate.gov or 212-490-9535.

Best,

Liz Krueger
State Senator

New Bill to To Strengthen Protections For Surrogacy And Egg And Sperm Donation



Earlier this month I introduced new legislation, S.7749, that would strengthen rights and protections for New Yorkers involved in surrogacy or egg or sperm donation. The new bill builds on the framework created by the Child-Parent Security Act, which legalized gestational surrogacy in 2021.

You can [click here to read an op-ed](#) that I co-wrote with Dr. Arthur Caplan of the NYU Grossman School of Medicine explaining the need for the bill.

Video of the press conference announcing the bill can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

When New York State legalized commercial gestational surrogacy and gamete donation, we dove head-first into a rapidly evolving and expanding reproductive healthcare industry. Like many novel industries, this one opens up wonderful opportunities, but also presents challenges and uncertainties. Our first responsibility as a Legislature is to make sure that everyone covered by our laws has their safety, health, and rights protected. By that measure, we have more work to do in properly regulating this field. I hope that this bill will provide the necessary protections for everyone involved in surrogacy and gamete donation, including intended parents, surrogates, donors, and especially children.

Medical advances in assisted reproductive technology (ART) make family building possible today for intended parents who would otherwise be unable to conceive or sustain a successful pregnancy. Gamete donors (i.e. sperm or egg donors) and surrogates enable intended parents who are single, LGBTQ+, cancer survivors, or experiencing infertility issues, to have the children they want.

Gamete donation and surrogacy arrangements are complex, however, because they involve third-parties who provide their gametes and undergo surrogate pregnancy and delivery, but are not the legal parents of the resulting children. Gamete donors and surrogates also assume significant health, fertility, legal, and financial risk. The short- and long-term health impacts of fertility medication and ART on egg donors, surrogates, and donor-conceived and surrogate-born children are poorly understood due to lack of research. Intended parents incur high costs and assume legal and financial risk in their journey to have children using ART, particularly when using surrogacy. For all these reasons, it is crucial to ensure that state law provides sufficient rights and protections for all parties, including donor-conceived and surrogate-born children.

The Child-Parent Security Act (CPSA), which legalized gestational surrogacy in 2021, established a legal and regulatory framework under which eligible intended parents may enter into a surrogacy agreement and obtain a judgment of parentage that grants them legal parental rights to any children conceived through surrogacy, immediately upon birth. The legal framework also allows eligible intended parents to obtain a judgment of parentage that grants legal parental rights to any children conceived through assisted reproduction. These judicial processes establish legal parental rights for intended parents without having to undergo an adoption process. The CPSA built in protections by establishing a Surrogates' Bill of Rights and regulation of surrogacy agreements, surrogacy programs, and clinical practices.

S.7749 would strengthen and build upon the current framework by:

- Strengthening medical, legal, and financial protections for surrogates and intended parents, and establishing these protections for the first time for gamete donors and intended parents who participate in gamete donation agreements;
- Establishing a comprehensive informed consent process for gamete donors, surrogates, and intended parents;
- Creating a Bill of Rights for Donor-Conceived and Surrogate-Born Individuals to ensure they can access information about their origins and the medical information they may need;
- Providing for regulation of gamete donation agreements, marketing, and clinical practices;
- Establishing timely gamete donation policies to provide oversight of a rapidly advancing area of health care; and
- Establishing the Central Assisted Reproduction Registry (CARR) to enable

tracking and enforcement of state policies and to facilitate research.

[Click Here to View the Press Conference Announcing the Bill](#)

Joint Statement from Jewish New York Elected Officials on Israel and Gaza

Last week I joined several of my elected colleagues in releasing the following statement regarding the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas:

As progressive New York Jewish elected leaders, we care deeply about Israel, and are strongly committed to its Jewish and democratic future, grounded in the resilience of its people, and consistent with the vision of its Declaration of Independence: “based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel,” that “will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex.”

We have also long believed that a Jewish and democratic future for Israel requires an end to the Occupation and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, alongside a secure Israel, where all the people on the land are safe and free. We were horrified and continue to grieve Hamas’ unconscionable, murderous terrorist attacks of October 7, killing 1,200 people in one day. We continue to demand that the hostages be returned to their loved ones immediately. Hamas, a terror group which was last elected to govern Gaza in 2006 cannot be reasoned with. Given that Hamas broke a ceasefire agreement on October 7th, we understand that it’s difficult for Israelis to trust that they wouldn’t do that again, with dire consequences.

Hamas cannot be allowed to continue to govern Gaza. Its founding charter pledges the destruction of Israel, and its leaders have continued to reaffirm their commitment to endless terror attacks. Israel has the need and the right under international law to defend itself, to seek to rescue the hostages, and to eliminate Hamas’ terror infrastructure in order to keep its citizens safe.

However, we are also deeply distressed by the approach being taken by the Netanyahu government. Widespread bombing has killed many thousands of Palestinians, the overwhelming majority of them civilians and nearly half of them children. The siege, and the shutoff of food, water, electricity, and medical supplies have created a disastrous humanitarian emergency.

We want to support the Israeli government’s approach, but doing so is made far more difficult when government officials speak of bombing where “the emphasis is on damage and not on accuracy,” of displacement of Palestinians, and of nuclear weapons. We feel a very strong tension between how the Netanyahu government is conducting the war and the Jewish value of b’tzelem Elohim, that every human being is created in the image of God.

We therefore welcome the news of a four-day cessation of hostilities, and a hostage release deal. We’re relieved to hear that this deal includes provisions for the Red Cross to visit and care for those hostages who will not be released. Critically, any deal

must also allow urgent humanitarian aid to flow, the injured to leave, further negotiations and hostage release to take place, and civilian protection measures to be put in place to curb unacceptable levels of civilian death and suffering.

Any further multi-day cessation, urged by President Biden, Secretary Blinken, the UN Security Council, and many others, should be accompanied by the release of all the hostages. Their release could change the trajectory of the conflict, and begin to offer a path forward, toward an interim authority taking governance of Gaza, longer-term humanitarian assistance, and Palestinians returning to their homes there.

The Netanyahu government's demonstrated approach is also inconsistent with a vision of peaceful coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians, of self-determination for both peoples, and therefore of any sustainable democratic future for Israel. There is no credible plan for governing Gaza after the war. Deadly settler violence and displacement is allowed to rampage in the West Bank, rapidly exacerbated by the war, causing even more suffering and threatening to expand the conflict.

Ultimately, there is no military solution to the conflict. There will need to be negotiation and political compromise, between Israelis and Palestinians, with the international community involved and a strong role for the U.S., to achieve safety, stability, and co-existence via a two-state solution, with self-determination for both peoples. We must keep that vision alive, even when it seems so far away.

As city and state elected officials, our legislative work is not on this war. However, we know our constituents here are deeply connected to Israel and Palestine, and the conflict there reverberates overseas to our city. Closer to home, we are also anguished by the ways these violent weeks have resulted in surging antisemitism and Islamophobia, and in rising tensions between communities, including increasing reports we hear from Jewish, Arab, and Muslim constituents who are scared of being physically harmed while going about their daily lives. There is no excuse whatsoever for hate crimes, violence, or vandalism. Violence begets violence, and our communities here will also be safer when those in Israel and Palestine are safer. And while all speech is free, not all of it is good; we must remain deeply committed to rooting out antisemitism and Islamophobia.

We pledge our continued efforts to work vigilantly against hate and to keep all our communities safe, and we plead with the leaders in government, education, and around the city — and with everyone who reads this message — to do the same.

Signatories

Assemblymember Harvey Epstein
State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal
State Senator Liz Krueger
NYC Comptroller Brad Lander
Councilmember Lincoln Restler
Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal

Senate Holds Hearing on Retail Sale of Adult-Use Cannabis



Last month, the NYS Senate Subcommittee on Cannabis, in partnership with Senate Standing Committees on Agriculture, Finance, and Investigations & Government Operations, conducted a hearing on the current state of the adult-use cannabis marketplace in New York.

Thirteen panels of more than thirty-five individuals ranging from regulatory agencies and law enforcement officials to cannabis farmers and retail-licensees provided testimony. Testimony focused on enforcement operations undertaken by various agencies to counter illicit retail operations, efforts to support and expand social equity initiatives prioritized by New York State, and plans to bring more licensed retail operations online quickly following delays the state has faced thus far.

The hearing's purpose was to examine issues surrounding consumer accessibility and retail sale of legal, safe adult-use cannabis in New York. The findings from testimony given in-person, and written testimony submitted by dozens of individuals and industry experts will be utilized by legislators to examine potential 2024 legislative solutions to current challenges and delays facing those seeking to participate in the market through cultivation, processing or retail sales.

This hearing was an important opportunity to examine where we are in the process of rolling out New York's adult-use cannabis market. It is invaluable for us in Albany to hear the experience of people on the ground, as well as to hear from the agencies charged with the massive undertaking of building this regulated industry from scratch. I look forward to digesting and discussing the testimony as we all continue to work toward building equitable and sustainable adult-use and expanded medical cannabis markets.

[Click Here to Watch Video of the Hearing](#)

Local Elected Officials Push Governor to Include

Climate Change Superfund in Upcoming Budget



This week I joined New York City Comptroller Brad Lander, Elected Officials to Protect America (EOPA), and a coalition of groups at City Hall Park to call for the Governor to take action to protect New York taxpayers from staggering climate costs.

NYPIRG released [an analysis](#) showing that city taxpayers are heavily burdened by climate costs. The future climate cost estimate for New York City is \$162.9 billion, or \$50,906 per household; the current City annual climate cost estimate is \$1.8 billion, or \$562 per household.

NYPIRG's analysis shows that without a revenue source for climate programs, by default the costs have been placed on the backs of city, state, and federal taxpayers while Big Oil companies have made a whopping \$750 billion in profits since 2021. Elected officials and advocates called on Governor Hochul to put fiscal fairness and environmental justice front and center by including the Climate Change Superfund Act in her FY 2024/25 Executive Budget. The bill (S.2129A/A.3351A) is based on the highly successful Federal Superfund "polluter pays" law created 43 years ago that has cleaned up thousands of toxic dumps. It would require Big Oil companies releasing large amounts of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) to pay apportioned fees totaling \$3 billion a year.

Another consequence of the lack of funding is budget cuts to programs. Recently, Mayor Adams called for austerity cuts as high as 15% to agencies by next spring. These cuts include the elimination of the [Interim Flood Protection Measures Program](#) and a reduction of \$11.7 million over the next three years for the Mayor's Office of Climate and Environmental Justice. The removal of funding for flood protection is exactly what the city should not do in the midst of a climate crisis as it puts families in danger when the next storm hits.

The costs of adapting to the climate crisis are not going to disappear anytime soon. In fact, they're going to skyrocket, as the analysis from NYPIRG shows. \$562 per household every year in New York City - placing the entire burden of paying those costs on the backs of taxpayers, businesses, and individuals is simply not responsible governing. In the context of a fiscal crunch both in City Hall and in Albany, it makes more sense than ever to require the companies that made the mess to help clean it up. The Climate Change Superfund Act is must-pass legislation this session, so let's get it in the budget and start making municipalities across the state whole for these huge expenses.

[Click Here to Read the NYPIRG Analysis of NYC Climate Adaptation Costs](#)

Fair Fares Income Eligibility Has Increased



More New York City households may now be eligible for discounted subway fares. The NYC Department of Social Services - Human Resources Administration (DSS-HRA) has announced that the agency has significantly expanded access to the Fair Fares transit discount by implementing a rule change that increases the program's income eligibility standard to 120% of the federal poverty level – the first such increase in the program's history. Previously, the Fair Fares discount was available only to New Yorkers ages 18 - 64 whose income was at or below the federal poverty level. As a result of this modification to eligibility standards, more New Yorkers will be able to enroll in the program and utilize this critical discount.

Household Size	Annual Income Limit
For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$6,168 for each additional person.	
1	\$17,496
2	\$23,664
3	\$29,832
4	\$36,000
5	\$42,168
6	\$48,336
7	\$54,504
8	\$60,672

Fair Fares NYC applications are open to eligible New Yorkers, ages 18-64, whose household income meets program income eligibility requirements. Subway and eligible bus discounts are open to New Yorkers who do not have, and are not eligible for, discounted transportation from the MTA or the City. If individuals meet the Fair Fares NYC eligibility criteria, they may be eligible for the Fair Fares NYC discount on Access-A-Ride fares even if they are already enrolled in the MTA reduced-fare program for persons with disability or have an Access-A-Ride MetroCard.

Fair Fares enrollment is simple and can be completed online: [Click here to Apply for Fair Fares on ACCESS HRA](#). View the “How to Enroll” videos in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

MTA Installs OMNY Vending Machines at Select Subway Stations

You can now buy or reload an OMNY card at the MTA's new vending machines at select subway stations. Enjoy the convenience of tap-and-go payment and all the benefits of OMNY, including the [7-day fare cap](#), with a card you can buy and reload at your local subway station just like MetroCard.

As a limited-time introductory offer, you can buy a new reloadable card for \$1. That's the same price as a new MetroCard, even though OMNY cards last for years. You can pay with cash, a credit or debit card, or a smart device.

Look for OMNY vending machines at these locations:

- 86 St at the Downtown and Brooklyn entrance
- Atlantic Av-Barclays Center
 - At the Atlantic Av/Flatbush Av/Barclays Ctr entrance
 - At the Pacific St/4 Av entrance
- Bowling Green
- Fordham Rd at the E 188 St/Grand Concourse entrance
- Fordham Rd
- Junction Blvd

The MTA is piloting the use of OMNY vending machines at these six stations so they can gather feedback from customers before expanding availability to more stations. During the pilot, you may see machines in other stations that are installed but not available for use while they evaluate customer feedback from the pilot. Eventually,

OMNY vending machines will be available in all 472 subway stations as they prepare to retire MetroCard. OMNY cards are also available at retail locations throughout the region.

Need help with an OMNY vending machine? Contact OMNY customer service or call 877-789-6669.

Virtual Workshop on Local Law 97

On Tuesday, December 12th, from 10 am–12 pm, City Council Member Gale Brewer is hosting a virtual Local Law 97 Climate Resiliency Workshop.

Buildings are the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in NYC, and Local Law 97 sets limits on emission levels from buildings over 25,000 sq. ft. starting in 2024. With compliance deadlines around the corner, join representatives from the Department of Buildings and NYC Accelerator to learn what steps your building can take and what resources are available to achieve compliance with Local Law 97.

[Click Here to Register for the Local Law 97 Workshop](#)

Car-Free 5th Avenue in December

For three Sundays during the month of December, Fifth Avenue from 48th Street to 59th Street will be closed to cars from noon to 6pm. There will be vendors, performances, and seating throughout the area.

[Click Here to Read More About Car-Free Fifth Avenue in Our Town](#)

Holiday Tree Lighting in Carl Schurz Park

December 3, 2023 at 5pm
Rain, Snow, or Shine!

Location: 86th Street at East End Avenue

A cherished, family tradition: carols from Cantori New York, candlelight, candy canes, hot chocolate... and an evening your family will cherish for years to come.

Held snow, rain or balmy weather!

Go to <https://www.carlschurzparknyc.org/events> for more info.

**Westside Neighborhood Alliance
Tenants Conference**

THE 18TH ANNUAL WEST SIDE TENANTS' CONFERENCE

DECEMBER 2, 2023
9:30 - 4 PM

Fordham Law School
150 W 62nd St
Free breakfast & lunch

WORKSHOPS ON:

- **FIGHTING FOR TENANTS RIGHTS IN ALBANY**
- **ORGANIZING YOUR BUILDING**
- **HOW TO WIN REPAIRS**
- **STOPPING AIRBNB**
- **HUD 101**
- **IMMIGRATION & HOUSING**
- **OLDER ADULT ISSUES**

*More info
+ RSVP:*

bit.ly/WSTC2023

*Or call our mainline
(212)-541-5996*



FREE CONFERENCE, ORGANIZED BY HOUSING CONSERVATION COORDINATORS INC. IN COALITION WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS, ELECTED OFFICIALS, AND TENANT ADVOCATES

NYS Attorney General's Faith-Based Housing Forum



SAVE THE DATE

Faith-Based Housing and Development Forum

Early Planning, Financing, and Land Use

Wednesday December 6, 2023 | 5:30 p.m.

*Hunter College Silberman School of Social Work
2180 Third Avenue at 119th Street*

RSVP: ag.ny.gov/faithbased-housing-forum

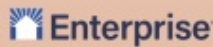
A conversation with area experts on how to begin the process of starting a project, financing your development deal, land use, landmarks and air rights, affordable housing, senior housing, workforce development housing, and home ownership.



Bricks & Mortals



NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development



RiseBoro
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

LLSC NY



Office of the New York State Attorney General Letitia James

NYC DEP Green Infrastructure Grant Program Winter Workshop



Join the NYC Department of Environmental Protection at a virtual workshop on the Green Infrastructure Grant Program on Wednesday, December 6, 2023 from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM.

Attendees will learn about funding available for green roof retrofits on private property, eligibility requirements, and how to apply.

To learn more about the Green Infrastructure Grant Program, visit nyc.gov/dep/gigrantprogram.

[Click Here to Register for the Virtual Workshop](#)



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