

Liz Krueger



New York State Senate | 28th District

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Message from Liz...

On January 1st, Bill de Blasio was inaugurated as the 109th Mayor of the New York City, and he reaffirmed his commitment to progressive policies that address income inequality in our city. It was this commitment that led me to support de Blasio as a candidate, and I am extremely excited to work with him to achieve his vision in the coming years.

One of the key pieces of the mayor's agenda – funding pre-kindergarten and afterschool programs for middle school students through a small income tax surcharge on high-income New Yorkers – requires the approval of the state legislature and the governor. I will be fighting for approval of this surcharge, as I believe that the educational opportunities it will fund are central to efforts to provide equal opportunity for all New Yorkers in the years ahead.

Under Mayor de Blasio's plan, the tax rate on incomes above \$500,000 would rise to 4.4 percent from 3.786 percent. For the 27,300 city taxpayers earning between \$500,000 and \$1 million, the average increase would be \$973 a year, according to the New York City Independent Budget Office. This five-year surcharge would yield \$530 million in new revenue to pay for universal pre-K for all 4-year-olds and fund after-school programs for all middle school students.

Our economic future depends on the best-trained, best-educated workforce in the world. A review of the literature conducted by the National Institute for Early Education Research found "substantial long-term gains" in cognitive tests, improvements in social and emotional development and higher rates of high school graduation, among other positive impacts. And pre-K programs are cost-efficient as well, in that studies have consistently shown that each dollar invested in pre-K results in a long-term benefit of at least \$7 in terms of increased earnings, and reduced costs for later government benefits or incarceration.

Other countries are making pre-K a higher priority. In 2011, the U.S. ranked 25th out of 36 OECD countries in terms of the percentage of four year-olds participating in public or

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private education. By 2020, China will enroll 70 percent of children in three years of pre-school. As a global city, New York has the opportunity to be a leader in helping our country develop a more competitive educational system.

Improving opportunities also means providing better options for students in later years, and middle-school-aged children are a particularly vulnerable population. Working New York parents need to know there are safe options for their kids that will keep them off the streets while providing an educationally and emotionally supportive environment. Unfortunately, over the last several years in New York City, afterschool programs have been dramatically cut from 87,000 slots in 2008 to roughly 20,000 slots for FY 2014.

As with pre-K, there is plenty of evidence of the value of afterschool programs. Studies have shown improved attendance rates, test scores and grades, reduced drug and alcohol use, and reduced participation in criminal activity for students in afterschool programs.

Mayor de Blasio faces many challenges in achieving his commendable and ambitious agenda, but for this critical piece he requires the cooperation and leadership of those of us who represent New York City in Albany. I will be making the case to my colleagues that we need to give the Mayor the opportunity to move this critical piece of his agenda forward this year.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Senator Liz Krueger's Roundtable for Boomers & Seniors:

Senator Liz Krueger's Roundtable for Boomers & Seniors provides an opportunity for constituents to come together to explore life issues that are relevant across the age span. At each session, attendees hear from and engage with professionals who are knowledgeable on topics that are of concern to the growing population of older adults in New York City. Over five sessions in five months, the roundtable looks at a specific issue from five unique perspectives. Past programs have addressed issues surrounding financial issues for older adults, caregiving, and employment. Last year, we examined longevity and its impact on society. This year's topic, How We Age, will look at issues around how we age physically, mentally, emotionally, creatively, and socially.

The next roundtable will take place on Thursday, January 23rd from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, 331 East 70th Street. It will focus on mental wellness. Call [212-490-9535](tel:212-490-9535) or email anrielle.georgenyc@gmail.com to RSVP.

Kindergarten Admissions Start January 13, 2014:

If you live in New York City and your child is turning five years old in 2014, your child is eligible to begin kindergarten in September. Starting Monday, January 13, 2014, the application will be available online at <http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/Elementary/Kindergarten>. You can also apply over the phone by calling 718-935-2400, or in person at the District 2 Enrollment Office, located at 333 Seventh Avenue (12th Floor), between 28th and 29th Street.

The application deadline is Friday, February 14, and placement offers will be distributed in early April. Most students attend their zoned school for kindergarten. Your zoned school is determined by your home address. If you don't know your zoned school, call 311 or visit School Search at <http://schools.nyc.gov/schoolsearch> and enter your home address in the search bar.

For more information, visit the Kindergarten Admissions website above. If you need additional help, contact ES_Enrollment@schools.nyc.gov or call (718) 935-2009.

Information Session on New Middle School on the Upper East Side:

On Tuesday January 14th Community School District 2 is hosting an information MS 177, the new District 2 middle school opening in 2014. It will be co-located with PS 158 in the Bayard Taylor School building at 1458 York Avenue, between 77th and 78th street. Meet Christina Riggio, the proposed new leader, learn about what's being planned for the new school, and share your ideas and questions to help shape the vision for this new addition to the community. The session will begin at 6:00 p.m. and be held at the Bayard Taylor School, 1458 York Avenue, between 77th and 78th Street in the Auditorium.

College Financial Aid Forum:

On January 16th, the Center for New York City Affairs at the New School is hosting a forum entitled "Taking the Fear Out of Financial Aid: Making Higher Education Easier to Achieve for NYC Students." Join the Center for New York City Affairs for the release of its latest "FAFSA: How-To Guide for High School Students" and a discussion about what needs to happen nationally and locally to ensure that the next generation of college students can afford to matriculate. The event will take place from 8:30 a.m to 10:30 a.m at the Theresa Lang Community & Student Center, 55 W 13th Street (between 5th and 6th Avenues), 2nd floor. The forum is free, but you must RSVP at <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/taking-the-fear-out-of-financial-aid-making-higher-ed-easier-to-achieve-tickets-9735185201>.

Healthcare Marketplace Update & Application Help:

New York's Healthcare Marketplace, NY State of Health, is a new way for individuals, families, and small businesses to find quality health insurance. It can help if you don't have coverage now or if you have insurance, but want to look at other options, under certain conditions (the Marketplace is not for people who have Medicare).

Need Help Applying? We have another source of help in the area! Lenox Hill Neighborhood House has a certified application counselor who can help you understand your options and enroll in a plan. Call to make an appointment: [212-744-5022](tel:212-744-5022), ext. 1205 (331 E. 70th Street). For a complete list of navigators and counselors, go to <https://nystateofhealth.ny.gov/> or call [1-855-355-5777](tel:1-855-355-5777). These services are free for you.

When Do I Apply? Individuals must apply by January 15th for coverage effective February 1st. Apply by the 15th of any month for coverage effective the 1st of the following month. Open enrollment for 2014 ends on March 31, 2014.

Need More Information? Download my health care bulletin at <http://www.nysenate.gov/senator/liz-krueger> or contact Susannah Pasquantonio in my office with additional questions.

Remember:

- Free and low-cost options are available, including Medicaid and financial aid.
- All plans provide essential care, including doctor visits, emergency care, and prescription drugs.
- You cannot be denied coverage for a pre-existing condition.

Lenox Hill Neighborhood House Monthly Workshops:

The Legal Advocacy and Organizing Project at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House is sponsoring monthly workshops on a variety of issues. The February workshops will focus on SNAP benefits (Food Stamps) and the topic for the March workshops will be Medicare HMOs and Supplemental Plans. Dates for the workshops are as follows:

SNAP benefits:

Monday, February 3, 11 a.m. to Noon at the Senior Center at St Peter's Church, 619 Lexington Avenue at 54th Street.

Thursday, February 6, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the Center at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, 343 East 70th Street.

Medicare HMOs and Supplemental Plans:

Monday, March 3, 11 a.m. to Noon at the Senior Center at St Peter's Church, 619 Lexington Avenue at 54th Street.

Thursday, March 6, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the Center at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, 343 East 70th Street.

Apply to Join the District 2 Community Education Council:

There are two vacancies on the Community Education Council District 2. Community and Education Councils are deliberative bodies that help to shape educational policies and priorities in their districts. Members are parent volunteers who provide hands-on leadership and support for their community's public schools. Participation on these councils is an important responsibility that we encourage every public school parent to consider. One open position is for a parent with a child receiving (ELL) English Language Learner services, and the other is for a parent with a child in a District 2 elementary or middle school, or a parent whose child graduated within the last two years from a District 2 elementary or middle school. If you are interested in applying, you can access the application at <http://www.cecd2.net/www/cecd2/site/hosting/CEC%202013-15%20APPLICATION.pdf>.

Performance Art Space Location Tool:

Back in 2001, Exploring the Metropolis created, developed and launched NYC Music Places, a searchable database of affordable rehearsal and performance spaces for musicians. It caught on and they later added NYC Dance Places, then NYC Theater Spaces, and finally consolidated it all into NYC Performing Arts Spaces. Now Fractured Atlas has added a reservation feature. To access the database, visit <http://nycpaspaces.org/>.

VOLS Legal Clinics for Low-Income Residents Over Age 60:

The Volunteers of Legal Services (VOLS) Elderly Project provides pro-bono legal services to low-income people over age 60 who live in Manhattan. VOLS conducts legal clinics each month at senior centers where seniors can discuss their legal concerns in confidence, receive legal advice and, where appropriate, obtain referrals to a volunteer lawyer for representation. Areas of legal assistance include wills, medical directives, powers of attorney, housing, consumer matters and Medicaid. Over 150 lawyers serve on their Elderly Project volunteer attorney roster.

Upcoming clinic dates and locations are below:

Burden Center for the Aging, 1484 First Avenue (between 77th & 78th Streets) — 2 pm — second Friday of each month (January 10th, February 14th). Call Velda Murad at [212-879-7400](tel:212-879-7400) for information.

Stanley Isaacs Senior Center, 415 East 93rd Street (east of 1st Avenue) — 10 am — third Friday of each month (January 17th, February 21st). Call Amy Loewenberg at [212-360-7620](tel:212-360-7620) ext. 112 for information.

Encore Community Services Senior Center, St. Malachy's Church - 239 West 49th Street (between Broadway and 8th Avenue) — 10 am — fourth Monday of Each Month (January 27th, February 24th). Call Sister Margaret Rose at [212-581-2910](tel:212-581-2910), ext 118 for information.

Affordable Housing Opportunities in Manhattan:

Alphabet Plaza is now accepting applications for 30 affordable studio, 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom apartments under construction at 310 East 2nd Street on the Lower East Side neighborhood in Manhattan. Rents for these apartments range from \$847 to \$1263 depending on unit size. To be eligible, applicants must have incomes between \$30,960 and \$59,820, depending on unit and family size. Preference will be given to Community Board 3 residents for 50% of units, mobility-impaired persons for 5% of units, visual- and/or hearing-impaired units for 2% of units, and City of New York municipal employees for 5% of units.

Households may elect to submit an application by one of two methods: EITHER Online OR by mail. To submit your application online now, please visit NYC Housing Connect at www.nyc.gov/housingconnect and select "Apply for Housing." To request an application by mail, mail a self-addressed and stamped envelope with .66 cents Postage to: Alphabet Plaza Apartments, c/o Housing Partnership Development Corporation, 242 West 3 6th Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10018.

Completed applications must be submitted online or returned by regular mail only the post office box that will be listed on the application. Applications must be submitted online or postmarked by February 18, 2014. Applicants who submit more than one application will be disqualified.

Metrocard Bus and Van Schedule:

The MTA offers Metrocard-related services throughout New York City through mobile buses and vans. Buses provide a full range of services, including applying for or refilling a Reduced-Fare MetroCard, buying or refilling a regular MetroCard, or getting answers to a MetroCard-related question. Vans sell Unlimited Ride MetroCards and Pay-Per-Ride MetroCards, and they refill MetroCards and Reduced-Fare MetroCards.

Buses and vans will be in my district on the following dates and locations:

- January 14, 10:30 am, 92 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- January 14, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm., 86 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- January 14, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 68 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- January 15, 9 - 10:30 am, 79 Street & 3 Avenue – Bus
- January 15, 11 am - 1 pm, 79 Street & York Avenue – Bus
- January 15, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 72 Street & York Avenue – Bus
- January 16, 8:30 - 10:30 am, 47 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
- January 16, 1:30 - 3:30 pm, 28 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
- January 28, 10:30 am, 92 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- January 28, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm., 86 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- January 28, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 68 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- February 4, 9 - 10:30 am, 79 Street & 3 Avenue – Bus
- February 4, 11 am - 1 pm, 79 Street & York Avenue – Bus
- February 4, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 72 Street & York Avenue – Bus
- February 5, 9 - 10:30 am, 79 Street & 3 Avenue – Bus
- February 5, 11 am - 1 pm, 79 Street & York Avenue – Bus
- February 5, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 72 Street & York Avenue – Bus
- February 6, 9 - 10 am, 57 Street and 1 Avenue – Van
- February 6, 10:30 - 11:30 am, 57 Street and 3 Avenue – Van
- February 6, 12:30 - 2:30 pm, 68 Street and 1 Avenue – Van

The full mobile Metrocard schedule is available at <http://mta.info/metrocard/mms.htm>.

Heat Season Rules:

The City Housing Maintenance Code and State Multiple Dwelling Law require building owners to provide heat and hot water to all tenants. Building owners are required to provide hot water 365 days a year at a constant minimum temperature of 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

Between October 1st and May 31st, a period designated as “Heat Season”, building owners are also required to provide tenants with heat under the following conditions:

- Between the hours of 6AM and 10PM, if the outside temperature falls below 55 degrees, the inside temperature is required to be at least 68 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Between the hours of 10PM and 6AM, if the temperature outside falls below 40 degrees, the inside temperature is required to be at least 55 degrees Fahrenheit.

Tenants who are cold in their apartments should first attempt to notify the building owner, managing agent or superintendent. If heat is not restored, the tenant should call the City’s

Citizen Service Center at 311. For the hearing-impaired, the TTY number is [\(212\) 504-4115](tel:(212)504-4115). The Center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

POLICY SPOTLIGHT

Primary Elections

Late last year, a federal judge established June 24 as the date for the Congressional primary election in 2014. This was done in order to ensure New York was compliant with the federal Military Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act, passed in 2009 to provide protections for the voting rights of military personnel serving overseas.

Among other provisions, the MOVE Act requires states to transmit validly-requested absentee ballots to overseas voters no later than 45 days before a federal election. Until this law took effect, New York's practice for the past few decades had been to hold federal, state, and local primaries on the Tuesday following the second Monday in September. Unfortunately, under this schedule New York could not guarantee compliance with the MOVE Act's 45-day provision, and as a result, beginning in 2012, the courts have required an earlier primary date for congressional elections.

Unfortunately, because the state legislature has not passed a bill moving the primary for state elections, this resulted in two separate primaries in 2012. Our state and local governments had to spend approximately \$50 million to hold an extra primary election for state and local races in September, when we already needed to move the congressional primary to June anyway.

Having two primaries isn't just costly. It violates the spirit, if not the letter, of the MOVE Act, which for technical reasons only applies to elections for federal offices, but which was passed specifically so that overseas servicemembers' right to vote would be protected.

For this reason, I have signed on as a cosponsor of S.6204 / A.8918, legislation which would move the primary for state elections to also be held on the fourth Tuesday in June, the same day as the primary for congressional elections. But as of now, both the Senate Republicans and their coalition partners in the Independent Democratic Conference have indicated they oppose changing the primary date.

The Republican and IDC leaders argue that it is too difficult to run for reelection in primaries during the legislative session. But many states hold their primaries during their legislative sessions, and in fact New York State itself had a June primary until 1974. Also, we could easily reconfigure the legislative calendar, ending the spring session a few weeks early and then reconvening for a post-primary session over the summer or in the early fall. It may be inconvenient for legislators to have a June primary, but that difficulty is much less important than the voting rights and cost issues raised by the current system of multiple primaries.

Deciding to comply with this law by spinning off our federal elections from our state and local elections should be seen for what it is – an insult both to the taxpayers and to the men and women serving our country overseas, and a deliberate failure by the Senate Majority Coalition to put our servicemembers' right to vote ahead of their own scheduling headaches.

I am hopeful that public pressure will help convince the members of the Senate Majority Coalition to put the interests of taxpayers and military personnel ahead of the interests of incumbents, but my experience in Albany does make me question whether I'm being too optimistic.