
News from STATE SENATOR
Liz Krueger



**COMMUNITY
BULLETIN**

July 2009

Message from Liz . . .

First, let me thank the hundreds of you who have written in response to my updates on the saga in Albany. Whether you offered criticism or support, I accept both. For while I believe we will eventually resolve this partisan leadership fight and address the critical issues facing New Yorkers, there is no question that this stalemate has left us all frustrated and wondering how we could have reached such an impasse.

In previous letters (<http://www.lizkrueger.com/AlbanyUpdateLetter.html> and <http://www.lizkrueger.com/AlbanyUpdateLetter2.html>) I have offered my thoughts on the answer to that question, so here I will simply focus on where I think we go from here. I think one positive outcome that may result from this crisis will be fundamental changes in the way the Senate does business. Both Democrats and Republicans have offered proposals for more equitable distribution of resources and rules that allow for greater participation of rank and file members in the legislative process. While we all know promises are easy to break, I am hopeful that one result of the lack of a clear majority for either party in the Senate will be that no one will be in a position to impose unfair rules on the weaker party. As someone who has been advocating for rules reform since I first ran for the Senate in 2000 (<http://www.lizkrueger.com/wakingup.html>), I believe that this may be the most significant silver lining in the dark cloud we now find ourselves in. I also believe that the greater scrutiny by the media and public of how Albany operates will force changes in ethics and campaign finance laws that are critical.

I know there are many urgent issues left to address in Albany, including school governance, revenue-raisers for New York City and other local communities, vacancy decontrol, marriage equality and unemployment reform. How these get addressed is part of what the current fight is about. While I believe that all of these issues are critical to the future of our city and state, I fear that many of these issues will be ignored if some of my colleagues prevail in the current fight. The coalitions vary, and are more or less tied to partisan divisions depending on the issue. The key to progress will be finding ways to build coalitions across party lines, and see what bills we can actually find the necessary thirty-two votes we need to get them passed. Bipartisanship will no doubt be difficult, given our current polarized state, but hopefully my colleagues will recognize that the only way to redeem this situation with the voters will be to make real progress on these and other critical issues.

I do worry that all the attention and over the top headlines about the current stalemate and the bad behavior of a small number of members will discourage our best and brightest from choosing

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careers in public service. That would be the completely wrong lesson for young people. I was in high school during Watergate, and I know that so many of my generation rejected government because of our profound disappointment in President Nixon. We must reinforce the message that we should increase our expectations, demand better and participate more actively. Not turn away from government. Democracy only works when it is participatory!

While New York State's Senate has been dysfunctional for decades, we now appear to have hit rock-bottom – at least I hope so! My goal now is to see if it is possible to take this new low and get some bounce – to get all my colleagues (or at least a majority) to recognize that we cannot simply return to the status quo. Instead, we must all take this shock to the system and build a new way of doing business in Albany that is better than how we operated under the recent Democratic majority and the many decades of Republican control.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Community Conversation with State Senator Liz Krueger:

Stay tuned for a community conversation with Liz once she's back from Albany. Date and time to be determined.

Small Business Forum on July 13th:

On July 13, Borough President Scott Stringer will host a forum, Straight Talk: Rescue and Recovery for Small Businesses, designed to provide practical and immediate survival strategies for small businesses in today's economy. Workshops will include:

- Tackling Federal and State Tax Issues
- Marketing and Publicity From Brick to Click
- Show Me the Money! Getting the Numbers Right to Access Capital
- Business Cred: Getting Certified
- Winning Government and Corporate Clients
- How Going Green Can Save You \$\$: Energy Efficiency for Your Small Business.

The forum will take place at the New York Academy of Medicine (1216 Fifth Avenue bet. 102nd and 103rd Streets), from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. To attend, guests must RSVP at (212) 669-4465 or conference@mbpo.org. For more information, visit http://mbpo.org/calendar_details.asp?id=450.

Fitness Resources in New York City:

The New York City Department of Parks and Recreation offers an online resource for finding out about ways to stay fit in the City. In addition to places to go, classes to take, and teams to join within Parks & Recreation, they'll include programs from their partners and tips from the wise folks at the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) on how to keep yourself healthy while having fun. For more information, visit <http://www.nycgovparks.org/befitnyc> online.

Become a Middle School Mentor:

Big Brother Big Sisters of New York City is sponsoring a middle school mentor program. The school-based mentoring program meets weekly during the school lunch time or breakfast hour; the program is designed to allow students to meet with an adult mentor with the goal of building skills and developing lasting friendships. In this structured

program, volunteers are matched with elementary or middle school students. Our professional staff carefully screens and trains each volunteer who wishes to be a mentor. After the interview process, adult volunteers are matched with a student for a one-to-one mentoring relationship. Volunteer must be 18 years and older and must have resided in the tri-state area New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey for 6 months or longer and be able to commit to 1 year as a mentor. For more information, contact Patrick McCullough, Volunteer Support Coordinator, at (646) 688-1252.

Help Preserve the History of the Garment Center:

The Garment Industry History Initiative, a partnership of the Gotham Center and the Leon Levy Foundation, is looking for first-hand accounts, stories, and anecdotes about life and work in the Garment Center of Manhattan. The Gotham Center's Web site will collect all reminiscences and discussion of the Garment Industry. To participate, go to <http://www.gothamcenter.org/garment/discussion>. To spark old memories, download a video or a podcast of historian Warren Shaw's 50-minute illustrated talk about the Garment District and popular culture given at the Graduate Center in March 2009. Shaw examined the Garment Center from the 1920s through the 1970s through plays, movies, novels, and books related to the famous neighborhood. For more information please visit the Gotham Center's Web site at www.gothamcenter.org.

Census Jobs Available:

The New York Regional Office of the Census is currently hiring temporary employees at various levels. Current openings include:

- Field Representative: \$13.19 to \$16.57 per hour, depending upon location
- Survey Statistician: GS-07 - \$38,378, GS-09 - \$46,944

For more information on these jobs and how to apply, visit <http://www.census.gov/ronyc/www/employ.html> or call 1-(800) 991-2520. Check this site for regular announcements of additional census positions.

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