



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Remember to Vote on Tuesday, November 4

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Tuesday is Election Day, and I encourage everyone to go out and vote. Polls are open from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. In addition to the candidates on the ballot, there are three propositions, which I support, for New Yorkers to vote on:

Proposal One - Revising State's Redistricting Procedure: This proposal would reform the process of establishing new state legislative and congressional district lines that the Constitution requires every 10 years. If the proposal is approved, a redistricting commission will be established to determine lines for legislative and congressional districts.

Proposal Two - Permitting Electronic Distribution of State Legislative Bills: This proposal would allow electronic distribution of a state legislative bill to satisfy the constitutional requirement that a bill be printed and on the desks of state legislators at least three days before the Legislature votes on it. Currently, this requirement can only be satisfied by distribution of a physical printed copy.

Proposal Three - The SMART SCHOOLS BOND ACT OF 2014: This proposal would authorize the creation of state debt and the sale of state bonds in the amount of up to \$2 billion to provide money for the single purpose of improving learning and opportunity for public and nonpublic school students in New York.

Not sure where to go to vote? Each county Board of Elections website has a polling place locator, along with full descriptions and explanations of the propositions:

[Madison County](#)

[Oneida County](#)

[Onondaga County](#)

New American/Refugee Coat and Blanket Drive

In partnership with InterFaith Works/Center for New Americans, I am holding a coat and blanket drive in my Syracuse office from November 3-21. Many refugees come from warmer climates and have never experienced the kind of winters that we have in Central New York. Most arrive in the United States with only the clothes they are wearing and the items that they can carry in a suitcase. Please donate your gently used blankets and washable coats, hats, and gloves for toddlers, youth, women, men in the lobby of the State Office Building, 333 E. Washington St., Syracuse.

Taste NY Harvest Fest this Weekend

More than 80 New York-based food and beverage companies will be on hand this Saturday, November 1, to offer samples of their products at the 2014 Taste NY Harvest Fest in the Horticulture Building at the New York State Fairgrounds. The festival takes place in two sessions on Saturday, from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and from 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Ticket info is available on the [Harvest Fest website](#).

Walmart Looking for Local Suppliers

Local Walmart stores are seeking and recruiting suppliers to provide locally sourced merchandise from area businesses. The company is holding a forum on November 8 in Syracuse to educate potential suppliers on the process of becoming a Walmart supplier. Businesses, farmers, and manufacturers interested in attending this forum can [register online](#).

NYS Taxpayer Rights Advocate Helps Citizens

Having difficulty resolving a tax issue through regular channels at the Department of Taxation and Finance? As an independent organization within the department, the [Office of the New York State Taxpayer Rights Advocate](#) is committed to helping New York State taxpayers by balancing taxpayer assistance against enforcement efforts. The office works with taxpayers who are unable to resolve an issue with the department, or whose New York tax debt creates an undue economic hardship.

Grants Support Farmers, Forgive Loans

The New York State New Farmers Grant Fund is now taking applications. The \$614,000 fund will be used to provide grants of up to \$50,000 for beginning farmers who will substantially participate in the production of an agriculture product, and employ the use of innovative agricultural techniques at commercial farm operations throughout the state. Applications for the New York State New Farmers Grant Fund are [available online](#); the deadline for submission is January 28, 2015.

To help encourage recent college graduates to pursue careers in farming in New York State, the New York State Young Farmers Loan Forgiveness Incentive Program is now taking applications. The program provides loan forgiveness awards to individuals who obtain an undergraduate degree from an approved New York State college or university and agree to operate a farm in New York State, on a full-time basis, for five years. Applications for the New York State Young Farmers Loan Forgiveness Program are [available online](#); the deadline for submission is December 15.