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New York State Senate | 28th District



September 2018

Message from Liz...

For those celebrating Rosh Hashanah, a happy and healthy New Year.

A reminder that primary elections are **Thursday September 13th.**

And there is still time to register to vote for the November 6th general election.

If you are eligible to vote, but not planning to vote, please contact me – **WE NEED TO TALK!**

You can find your poll site and view a sample ballot at <https://nyc.pollsitelocator.com/search>

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As September begins, it is hard not to focus on what is going on in Washington. On the one hand, Senate confirmation hearings on Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh have begun, with Republicans trying to sprint through his nomination – one that will likely create an extreme right-wing majority on the court that could overturn Roe v Wade and Obamacare, roll back civil liberties, and further the trend of using state power to protect corporations rather than people. On the other hand, Bob Woodward has released a book documenting a dizzying level of dysfunction in the Trump administration, and revealing serious misgivings about President Trump's capacities even among members of his own administration. The confluence of these two events demonstrates the depth and gravity of the crisis our nation now finds itself in.

I obviously believe that Judge Kavanaugh's ideological extremism makes him unfit to sit on the Supreme Court, but in some ways the greater concern is that he will be in a position to shield the man who appointed him from due process of law. This is particularly worrisome given that Judge Kavanaugh stated as recently as 2016 that he wanted to "put the final nail" in the court decision that upheld the constitutionality of the independent counsel law. While the independent counsel law expired in 1999, the regulations governing Mueller's appointment as a special counsel, like the independent counsel law itself, prohibit Mueller from being fired without good cause.

The possibility of Supreme Court interference with the Mueller investigation into criminal behavior by the President and/or his associates would be devastating to the concept that no one is above the law. In confirmation hearings, Kavanaugh has also refused to comment about whether the president has the ability to pardon *himself*.

The revelations contained in Bob Woodward's new book *Fear: Trump in the White House* suggest these are hardly hypothetical issues. According to the book, Trump's own attorney told him not to testify before Mueller, saying, "it's either that or an orange jumpsuit." And the stories of the lengths aides would go to try to control Trump, such as removing letters from his desk before he could sign them, as well as their opinions of his intellectual capacity and mental stability, are breathtaking. I knew it was bad, but I didn't imagine it was this bad.

The Republicans have the numbers to confirm Kavanaugh without Democratic votes, but I can only hope that one or more of them will recognize their duty to the country is greater than their duty to Donald Trump. Regardless of what happens I also call on all Democratic Senators to oppose this nomination. We need a Justice who will not reverse existing court decisions in order to serve an elite ultra-conservative agenda. But even more importantly, we need a Justice who will stand for the concept that no one – including and especially the President – is above the law.

POLICY SPOTLIGHT

Economic Development Subsidies

One of the most basic principles of economic development subsidies is that they should only be granted in "but for" situations. That means that "but for" the subsidy, the project would not go forward. Sometimes it can be hard to tell. Unfortunately, New York State has a bad habit of spending money on cases that obviously don't meet this standard.

The current scandal around Crystal Run Healthcare is an example of this. In March 2016, the state awarded \$25.4 million to Crystal Run to build two facilities the company *was already constructing without taxpayer subsidies*. This has become particularly newsworthy this election cycle because the key players in Crystal Run were major donors to Governor Cuomo, but this kind of generosity on the part of the state is all too common.

An analysis conducted last year by Timothy Bartik, a senior economist at the independent, nonpartisan W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, found that New York's incentives cost the state \$8.25 billion in revenue in 2015, the highest level in the nation. This amount was a staggering 75.9% percent of gross business taxes, also the highest level in the nation. In other words, of all the taxes New York State collects from businesses, three quarters are given away directly to a select group of "winners" chosen by the state. This creates serious inequities between businesses, since those who are not getting subsidies (along with individual taxpayers) are effectively paying for these benefits through their taxes. A summary of the findings of the report is available on the Citizen's Budget Commission website at <https://cbcny.org/research/nys-economic-development-programs-costliest-nation>.

New York State's overreliance on economic development incentives is not new – in fact levels were even higher before modest reforms to one of the most expensive programs were instituted in 2008. Before those reforms were implemented I introduced the Corporate Accountability for Tax Expenditures Act (S3364-A) which I have continued to carry and refine over the years, and

unfortunately revelations such as those surrounding Crystal Run highlight the continued need for reform.

My legislation would create a Unified Economic Development Budget to improve transparency. It would also require that State economic assistance provided by any state agency or public authority must be based on the terms of a standardized written incentive agreement, and provide that if a business fails to create or retain the specified number of jobs and breaks the contract, the business will no longer qualify for State economic assistance.

Economic development programs create great opportunities for ribbon cuttings, but they have offered false hope for addressing underlying economic issues. A much better model involves a fair tax structure that doesn't reward well connected businesses at the expense of other taxpayers, and the investments in infrastructure and human capital that create the conditions for a thriving workforce and a vibrant business climate for everyone.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

NY State of the Climate Event September 27th:

Senator Brad Hoylman and I are hosting a panel discussion on what New York State can do to fight climate change, on Thursday, September 27th, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Marble Collegiate Church Loft, 276 Fifth Avenue at 29th Street.

With Washington abdicating its responsibility to join every other nation on Earth in the fight against climate change, it's more important than ever that New York take a leading role in the transition to a carbon-free future.

Join a panel of advocates for a discussion of where New York fits in the global context, and what state-level solutions should look like, with an emphasis on environmental justice and just transition for workers.

Panelists will include Payal Parekh, Global Programme Director of 350.org; Peggy Shepard, Co-Founder and Executive Director of WE ACT for Environmental Justice; Lara Skinner, Executive Director of the Worker Institute at Cornell University; and Alex Tindal Wiesendanger, Campaign Coordinator at NY Renews.

Space is limited. Please RSVP at <http://tinyurl.com/NYStateoftheClimate>.

Senator Krueger's 12th Annual Senior Resource Fair October 18th:

My 12th Annual Senior Resource Fair will take place on Thursday, October 18th from 2:00 to 5:00 pm at Temple Emanu-El, 1 East 65th Street. Last year's fair was attended by more than 500 people and this year we expect around 100 non-profit senior service providers and advocacy groups to participate and provide information about a range of issues including healthcare, housing, and volunteer opportunities. No RSVP necessary.

Get Rid of Your Harmful Household Products Safely:

On Sunday, September 23, from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM in Union Square, North Plaza (south side of 17th St, between Park Ave South and Broadway), get rid of your harmful household products including solvents, automotive products, electronics, flammable waste, medical items and other household products safely. Cars can approach from Park Ave South and 20th St and there is a walk-in area available for residents taking public transportation. For more information, visit <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/site/services/harmful-products/safe-disposal>.

New Website Offers Information on Challenging Ageism:

Anti-Ageism activist Ashton Applewhite and a group of advocates have created the website Old School, a clearinghouse of free and carefully vetted resources to educate people about ageism and help dismantle it. You'll find blogs, books, articles, videos, speakers, and other tools (workshops, handouts, curricula etc.) that are accessible to the general public. The goal is to help catalyze a movement to make ageism (discrimination on the basis of age) as unacceptable as any other kind of prejudice. You can access the site at <https://www.oldschool.info/>.

Clergy Abuse Hotline Established by Attorney General Underwood:

New York Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood has established a clergy abuse hotline and online complaint form through which victims and anyone can provide information – part of the Attorney General's ongoing investigation into sexual abuse of children within the New York dioceses of the Catholic Church.

Victims and anyone with information about abuse can call the hotline at 1-800-771-7755 or file a complaint online at ag.ny.gov/ClergyAbuse. An investigator will review all allegations; the Attorney General and her law enforcement partners will seek to protect victims' and witnesses' identities.

Volunteer Opportunity with the Court Navigator Program:

The Court Navigator Program trains college students and other volunteers to provide non-legal assistance to unrepresented litigants in New York City Housing Court, connecting them to all resources available to them in the courthouse and community to empower them to better advocate for themselves. Since its inception this program has proved to be an invaluable resource for unrepresented litigants in the Court's efforts to ensure access to justice to all court users.

A minimum of 30 volunteer hours are required to participate in the Court Navigator Program. Hours may be completed Monday to Friday from 9:15am to 1pm in Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan and Bronx Housing Courts except for court holidays. Volunteers are encouraged to complete more than 30 volunteer hours.

The next training will take place on Tuesday, September 18th at 111 Centre Street, New York, NY 10013, Room 107 from 10:00 a.m to 1:00 p.m. with registration beginning at 9:30 a.m. Please use the court's entrance at White Street (between Lafayette St. and Centre St.)

An application is required. If you are interested in volunteering, please email a copy of your resume to courtnavigator@nycourts.gov.

Volunteer Opportunity for Retired Persons:

The Community Service Society's Advocacy Counseling and Entitlement Service (ACES) Project is recruiting retired individuals to help clients with public benefit applications and issues. There will be an information orientation held on this volunteer opportunity on Thursday, September 20th from 10:00

AM to 1:00 PM at the Community Service Society office (633 3rd Avenue, which is on 3rd Avenue between 40th and 41st Streets). The training for this opportunity would begin on October 2, and it will take place at 633 3rd Avenue (3rd Avenue between 40th and 41st Streets). Those who are interested can read the Community Service Society's volunteer description here: <http://cssny.org/pages/the-aces-project-volunteer-description>. For a full description of the ACES Project, visit <http://cssny.org/programs/entry/the-aces-project>.

Upcoming Pet Adoption Events:

Animal Care Centers of NYC (ACC) is sponsoring several Pet Adoption events around the district in December. Upcoming dates and locations are:

Sunday, September 16, 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Adoptapalooza
Union Square Union Square Park (North Plaza), 17th Street b/t Broadway and Park

Upcoming events are also listed at <http://nycacc.org/Events.htm>

Free Financial Empowerment Workshops:

In partnership with Neighborhood Trust Financial Partners, Lenox Hill Neighborhood House is offering a free Financial Empowerment Workshop. See your credit report, meet one-on-one with a financial advisor, get help with credit and debt issues and create a personalized financial action plan. The next session is open to everyone and will take place on Thursdays, October 18th – November 8th (4 sessions), from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at 331 E 70th Street. Registration is required. Space is limited. Register by Friday, February 16th. To enroll, please contact Hannah Roucher: 212-218-0328 or hroucher@lenoxhill.org.

Legal Advocacy Clinics At Lenox Hill Neighborhood House:

The Lenox Hill Neighborhood House Legal Advocacy Center Offers assistance on a number of different issues. Here is a list of their ongoing programs and clinics:

- SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) Clinics: Wednesdays from 10am to 1pm at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, 331 East 70th Street. First come, first served. Bring proof of identity, income information, utility bill, proof of housing costs, information on any dependents and if you are 60 or over or on SSI/SSD, information on medical costs. For more information, call [212-218-0431](tel:212-218-0431).
- SCRIE Clinics: Walk-in Clinic. The next clinic will take place Tuesday, October 16 from 10:00 a.m to 1:00 p.m at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, 331 East 70th Street. You must arrive before Noon to ensure you can be seen. If you are 62 years or older, live in a rent regulated apartment and have an annual household income of \$50,000 or less you may be eligible for the Rent Freeze Program. Find out if you are eligible and get assistance applying or recertifying for SCRIE.
- Tenants Rights Advice Clinic: Walk-in clinic, now at 2 locations.
 - October 4 from 10am to 1pm at 331 East 70th Street. First come-first Served, arrive by Noon.
 - September 19 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the East Harlem Health Action Center, 158 East 115th Street. First come, first served, arrive by 4 p.m.

Please bring all relevant housing-related documents with you.

- End-of-Life Planning/Advance Directives: volunteer attorneys may be able to assist you with one-on-one counseling and individualized drafting of Advance Directives including Health Care Proxies, Living Wills, Powers of Attorney, and simple, low-asset Wills. If you are interested in being screened for a possible appointment, call the intake hotline at [212-218-0503](tel:212-218-0503) ext 4.
- Health Care Access/Medicare/Medicaid: call [212-218-0503](tel:212-218-0503) ext 3. Find out about Medicare Savings Programs, Medicaid home care, Medicare Part D, Medicaid Spend-down, EPIC and if you are eligible for Medicaid.

- Health Insurance Enrollment: call [212-218-0432](tel:212-218-0432). Assistance with finding and enrolling in an affordable health insurance plan.

VOLS Legal Clinics for Seniors:

The VOLS Elderly Project will be at one location in my district this month. The Elderly Project staff and pro bono attorneys provide free legal advice, information, document drafting, and other brief services to low-income Manhattan residents aged 60 and over, and to the social workers and advocates who assist them. Their schedule includes

Tuesday, September 18th - 2:00 pm, Legal Clinic,
Burden Center for the Aging, 415 East 73rd Street (b/t 1st and York)

Friday, September 21st - 10:00 am, Legal Clinic,
Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center, 415 East 93rd Street

Monday, September 24th - 10:00 am, Legal Clinic,
Encore Community Services Center, 239 West 49th Street (b/t Broadway and 8th Ave.)

Affordable Housing Opportunities in Manhattan:

Fulton Houses is now accepting applications for 159 affordable studio, 1- and 2-bedroom apartments newly constructed at 425 West 18th Street in the Chelsea neighborhood in Manhattan. Rents for these apartments range from \$702 to \$3,216 depending on income and unit size. To be eligible, applicants must have incomes between \$26,400 and \$185,955 depending on unit and family size. Asset limits also apply. Preference will be given to Community Board 4 residents for 50% of units, NYCHA Residents for 25% of units, mobility-impaired persons for 5% of units, visual- and/or hearing-impaired persons for 2% of units, and City of New York municipal employees for 5% of units. A full description of the building and application process is available at <https://a806-housingconnect.nyc.gov/nyclottery/AdvertisementPdf/549.pdf>.

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 envelope to: FULTON HOUSES, 316 West 118th Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10026.

Applications must be submitted online or postmarked by September 24, 2018. Applicants who submit more than one application may 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:

September 11, 9 - 10:30 am, 92 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
September 11, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm., 86 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
September 11, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 68 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus

September 19, 9 – 10:30 am, 79 Street & Third Avenue - Bus
September 19, 11 am - 1 pm, 79 Street & York Avenue – Bus
September 19, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 72 Street & York Avenue – Bus
September 20, 8:00 - 10:30 am, 47 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
September 20, 11:30 am – 2:00 pm, 28 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
September 25, 9 - 10:30 am, 92 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
September 25, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm., 86 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
September 25, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 68 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
October 3, 9 - 10:30 am, 79 Street & Third Avenue – Bus
October 3, 11 am - 1 pm, 79 Street & York Avenue – Bus
October 3, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 72 Street & York Avenue – Bus
October 4, 7 – 9 am, 91 Street and York Avenue - Van
October 4, 8:00 - 10:30 am, 47 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
October 4 11:30 am - 2:00 pm, 28 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
October 5, 9 - 10 am, 57 Street and 1 Avenue – Van
October 5, 10:30 - 11:30 am, 57 Street and 3 Avenue – Van
October 5, 12:30 - 2:00 pm, 68 Street and 1 Avenue – Van

The full mobile MetroCard schedule is available at <http://mta.info/metrocard/mms.htm>. Please note that MetroCard buses and vans do not take credit cards.