

# NEWS FROM

NEW YORK STATE SENATOR  
**BRAD HOYLMAN**  
(D) 27TH SENATE DISTRICT



## February 2014

Dear Neighbor:

Below is an update on some of my recent activities in Albany and the district, plus a call for nominations of outstanding women and veterans from our community deserving of State Senate recognition. Please let me know if you have any questions about these issues or how I can be helpful.

Regards,



Brad Hoylman  
State Senator  
27th District

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### **Victory on 30% Rent Cap for Low-Income People with HIV/AIDS**

At my urging, along with a coalition of advocates, human services organizations, and other elected officials, Governor Cuomo announced his support for a 30%-of-income rent contribution cap ("rent cap") to low-income people in the City's HIV/AIDS Services Administration ("HASA") rental assistance program. Earlier in the month, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced he had included funding for the city's share of the HASA rent cap in his preliminary budget. Please click [here](#) to see my statement thanking the Governor and Mayor for heeding our call to secure this affordable housing protection for approximately 10,000 low-income New Yorkers with HIV/AIDS.

### **Port Authority Records Should be Open to Public Review**

On February 11, I introduced legislation ([S6593](#)) called the "Port Authority Open Government Act," to subject the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to the Freedom of Information Law. The bill will

close a gap in state law that exempts the Port Authority from standard freedom of information requests and help restore public confidence in the agency in the aftermath of reports of politically motivated decisions by some officials. The Port Authority has a major impact on the daily lives of New York and New Jersey residents and is responsible for implementing a multi-billion dollar budget to operate, regulate, and expand regional airspace, water, rail, and bridge capacity. We cannot continue to allow the Port Authority to shield information from the public and the press. Please see a recent Daily News article on my efforts [here](#).

### **Town Hall Meeting on "Vision Zero"**

On February 25, I hosted a capacity crowd at my town hall on "Vision Zero," the Mayor's plan to eliminate traffic fatalities within a decade. According to NYPD statistics, more than 16,000 pedestrians and cyclists were injured in traffic accidents last year, and 178 were killed, a number of those here in our State Senate District. I am grateful to the many constituents and activists who attended and helped to create an engaging and informative dialogue. Our expert panel—DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, Mayor's Community Affairs Unit Manhattan Director Cassandra Perez, NYPD Sergeant Amber Cafaro, CHEKPEDS Co-Founder Christine Berthet, and Transportation Alternatives Organizer Tom DeVito—covered a wide range of issues concerning immediate traffic safety concerns and long-term implementation of the [Mayor's Vision Zero Action Plan](#).

As was discussed, implementing parts of the plan will require State legislative action, and I strongly support the measures the Mayor has proposed. Moreover, I have introduced legislation he has called for that would grant NYC home rule to set its own, lower speed limit ([S6651](#)), and that would require side under-ride guards for large trucks operating in the city to protect pedestrians, cyclists, and smaller vehicles from sliding underneath them ([S6648](#)). You can see the complete Vision Zero state legislative agenda [here](#).

I will continue to work with the de Blasio administration, other colleagues in government, advocates, community organizations, and constituents to help New York City achieve its goal of zero traffic fatalities within a decade. As always, please don't hesitate to contact me at (212) 633-8052 or at [hoylman@nysenate.gov](mailto:hoylman@nysenate.gov) if you have particular traffic safety concerns or any questions.

### **Nominations for NYS Senate Women of Distinction and Veterans Hall of Fame**

Each year, the New York State Senate honors a select group of outstanding women who enrich their communities and strengthen our state as "[Women of Distinction](#)." The Senate also honors outstanding veterans from the Empire State who have distinguished themselves both in military and civilian life by inducting them into the "[New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame](#)." I will soon be selecting the 27th State Senate District's 2014 honorees and I welcome your nominations. Please send me your suggestions at [hoylman@nysenate.gov](mailto:hoylman@nysenate.gov). Please put "Woman of Distinction Nomination" or "Veteran's Hall of Fame Nomination" in the subject line, provide the full name and address of your nominee, and

tell me why you think he or she deserves this recognition. Nominees should be residents of the 27th State Senate District (you can look up the district by address at [www.nysenate.gov](http://www.nysenate.gov)), and nominations will be accepted until Thursday, March 20, 2014.

Last year, I was proud to honor two exceptional constituents: Woman of Distinction Susan Steinberg, whom you can read about [here](#), and Veteran's Hall of Fame inductee Jerry Alperstein, whom you can read about [here](#).

### **Renewable Sources for State Energy Plan**

On February 20, I submitted testimony to the New York State Energy Planning Board regarding its 2014 Draft New York State Energy Plan. I called for the board to reconsider their strategy of reliance on natural gas as a means to displace coal, oil, and nuclear power. I believe fossil fuels should be replaced by renewable sources rather than natural gas extracted through hydrofracking. Please see my testimony [here](#).

### **More HCR Funding & the Stuy Town Experience**

On February 4, at the Joint Legislative Budget Hearing on Housing, I asked New York State Homes and Community Renewal Commissioner Darryl Towns about the need for increased funding for the Office of Rent Administration to prevent its processing backlog from continuing to harm tenants. I cited Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village's recent experiences, including applications for rent reductions for reduced services that languished for nearly a year with the agency, and the five MCI orders tenants were hit with in a matter of weeks, even though the landlord had applied for some of them years before they were processed by the Office of Rent Administration.

Commissioner Towns acknowledged that Stuy Town-Peter Cooper is an area that needs more attention and he pledged to continue conversations with me and State Assembly Member Brian Kavanaugh about how to meet the complex's challenges. You can see video of my exchange with Commissioner Towns [here](#).

### **Municipal Control of Minimum Wage**

On February 11, I joined Democratic Conference Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and the statewide "Raise Up" Coalition in advocating for legislation to allow municipalities to set their own local minimum wage rates above the current state floor of \$8 an hour. At a time when the number of low-wage jobs in our state is increasing, allowing municipalities to enact higher minimum wages to better align with local living costs could greatly improve the lives of millions of low-income workers. Giving local governments direct control over their minimum wages is a great first step toward reducing income inequality in our state.

### **LPC Should Deny Proposed St. Luke's Tower**

On February 4, Assembly Member Deborah Glick, Council Member Corey Johnson, and I submitted testimony to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission in opposition to the application submitted by the Church of St. Luke in the Fields ("St. Luke's") to construct a new building at 100 Barrow Street. While St. Luke's has been an important part of the Village community for many years, we share Community Board 2's belief that the proposed tower is not contextually appropriate for construction within the Greenwich Village Historic District. Specifically, the heavy use of glass covering the midsection of the structure represents an architectural design that is incongruous with the rest of the neighborhood, and its height is imposing relative to the rest of the district. Please see our testimony [here](#).

### **A New Location for Stile's Market**

On February 5, I joined Council Member Corey Johnson, Congress Member Jerry Nadler, and Assembly Member Dick Gottfried in writing to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to open a discussion about securing a viable location for Stile's Farmers Market in Hell's Kitchen. We would like to explore the possibility of space for this affordable grocery store on Port Authority property at 551 Ninth Avenue near 42nd Street to ensure the health and well-being of residents along Manhattan's West Side. Please see our letter to the Port Authority [here](#) and a recent DNAinfo article on our efforts [here](#).

### **Pushing for New Avenue A Entrance to the L Train**

Extell Development recently announced plans for a mixed-use, as-of-right development on the block of 14th Street between Avenues A and B. On February 10, I wrote to Extell to request that it contribute toward the construction of a second entrance to the 1st Avenue L train subway station. As area residents know, the western end of the platform has become a serious safety concern as straphangers mass near the station's only entrance/exit, creating dangerous overcrowding at the platform's edge and potential obstruction of egress in the case of emergency. This station requires a second point of entry and exit at its eastern end near Avenue A, and I encouraged Extell to help make this a reality to benefit its new developments' residents as well as the neighborhood as a whole. Please see my letter [here](#).

### **Success: Equinox Removes Illegal Signage**

Last month I wrote to Equinox CEO Harvey Spevak asking that the company's illegal billboard be removed from its Greenwich Avenue location, situated within the Greenwich Village Historic District. Later in the month, I spoke directly to Mr. Spevak and sent an additional letter to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission ("LPC"), urging that it levy the maximum fine possible against the gym in order to set a strong precedent against such behavior in the future, by Equinox or any other company operating within the District. I am happy to report that the billboard has since been removed, and I want to thank the community for speaking out so strongly against such egregious behavior. Please find my letter to the LPC [here](#).

### **Preserving LGBT History**

On January 28, I wrote to the Landmarks Preservation Commission in support of the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation's proposal that it begin formally recognizing sites of significance to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender ("LGBT") movement within previously designated New York City Historic Districts. While the LPC has begun acknowledging LGBT history in its more recent designation reports, there are numerous sites in existing historic districts that have not received such recognition. Amending existing designation reports to reflect places of significance to the LGBT movement would go a long way toward preserving this chapter of civil rights history, as would consideration of designating these and other sites as individual landmarks based upon their place in LGBT history. Please see my letter [here](#).

### **End Ban on Medicaid Coverage for Transgender Health Services**

On February 5, I sent a letter to Governor Andrew Cuomo and State Health Commissioner Nirav Shah, urging them to repeal a state regulation banning Medicaid coverage of transgender-related health services. The regulation, which dates from the late 1990s, effectively denies low-income transgender New Yorkers access to vital transition-related health care. California has permitted Medicaid coverage for transgender health care and services since 2001 and five states, including Connecticut, now require health insurance providers to cover treatments related to gender transition. Transgender people receiving Medicaid deserve the same access to essential care as all other eligible New Yorkers. Please see my letter [here](#).

### **IRS Free File**

With fewer than two months until Tax Day (April 15), you should know that if you made \$58,000 or less in 2013, you're eligible for free preparation and e-filing of your taxes through IRS Free File. This program is made possible through a public-private partnership between the IRS and the Free File Alliance, a non-profit coalition of leading tax software companies. To learn more about the program or to see if you qualify, visit [www.irs.gov/freefile](http://www.irs.gov/freefile) or call me at (212) 633-8052.

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