

NEWS FROM

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



July 2014

Dear Neighbor:

We're entering the height of summer but there's still a great deal going on in the neighborhoods across our Senate District. Below is an update on some of my recent activities and information on three SCRIE and DRIE enrollment workshops I'm co-sponsoring in August with area elected officials.

As always, call me at 212-633-8052 if you have any questions about these issues or you think there are other ways I might be helpful.

All best,



Brad Hoylman
State Senator
27th District



Exposing Times Square Scammers

There's been a lot of attention lately on professional panhandlers who seek donations from visitors to Times Square. This month, I announced an investigation [in conjunction with ABC7 Eyewitness News](#) into the "New York Times Square News" (TSN), a for-profit organization soliciting donations from tourists in Times Square and falsely holding itself out as a charity. The operators of TSN are the former directors of the sham not-for-profit United Homeless Organization. As part of a June 2010 judgment [obtained by the Attorney General](#) shutting down the fraudulent group, they were permanently barred from operating a not-for-profit in

New York State. These professional panhandlers posing as charity workers have no place in Times Square or anywhere in New York. My investigation with Eyewitness News has once again exposed the operators as con artists and I have alerted the Attorney General as a result. Their deceptive practices must be barred once and for all.

NYCHA Draft Annual Plan

On July 24, I submitted testimony to the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) on its 2015 Draft Annual Plan. While NYCHA has certainly made strides to reform its operations under Mayor de Blasio, there's still more that must be addressed in its final Annual Plan. I expressed my support for the concerns and recommendations expressed in the [Alliance to Preserve Public Housing's position paper](#), which I endorsed, and highlighted several areas of particular concern, including the need for rigorous public review before any NYCHA land disposition and the need for code enforcement complaints by NYCHA tenants to be handled in the same manner as those of private housing residents. Please see my testimony [here](#).

Meeting with the Mayor about Keeping ST-PCV Affordable

I joined Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village (ST-PCV) Tenants Association Board members and my fellow local elected officials at a meeting in Council Member Dan Garodnick's apartment with Mayor Bill de Blasio to discuss ways to protect and preserve the long-term affordability of ST-PCV on July 15. While a preservation strategy was not decided upon, I appreciate Mayor de Blasio's engagement in this vitally important issue and am gratified that he shares our commitment to ensuring ST-PCV remains affordable to middle-class New Yorkers. I look forward to his continued partnership as we work to secure this crucial bastion of affordable housing for present and future generations.

Workshops on Applying for SCRIE or DRIE

As a result of action taken at the state and local level, the household income cap for New York City's Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption ([SCRIE](#)) and Disability Rent Increase Exemption ([DRIE](#)) programs have been increased to \$50,000. To be eligible for SCRIE, you must be a rent-regulated tenant-of-record, 62 years of age or older, have a household income of \$50,000 or less, and a rent amount that exceeds one-third of your household income. To be eligible for DRIE, you must be a rent-regulated tenant-of-record, receive eligible state or federal disability-related assistance, have a household income of \$50,000 or less, and a rent amount that exceeds one-third of your household income.

In August, I'll be co-hosting three workshops with Assembly Member Brian Kavanagh to help senior and disabled constituents apply for SCRIE and DRIE. Other area elected officials are co-sponsoring. The first workshop will be held on **Monday, August 11 from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. at Tompkins Square Library, 331 East 10th Street between Avenues A and B**. The next will be on **Tuesday, August 12 from 1:30 – 4:30 p.m. at the Stuyvesant Town Community Center, 449 East 14th Street**. The last one will take place on **Thursday, August 21 from 1:00 - 3:30 p.m. at Stein Senior Center, 204 East 23rd Street between Second and Third Avenues**. If you have questions about the workshop or applying for SCRIE or DRIE, please contact me at hoylman@nysenate.gov.



Be Alert: Two Stuy Town Sexual Assaults

I was very concerned to learn earlier this month that the New York Police Department (NYPD) is [seeking a suspect](#) in two sexual assaults that had taken place at Stuyvesant Town in the prior two months. The day the NYPD made the announcement I distributed information at the complex in an effort to raise awareness and engage community assistance in bringing the assailant to justice. Please click [here](#) to see the wanted poster and a letter advising residents about what had happened. According to the NYPD, the suspect is still at large and anyone with information regarding the suspect or the attacks should call Crime Stoppers at 800-577-8477.

Illegal Addition at 515 East 5th Street

On July 15, I was joined by Council Member Rosie Mendez, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and Assembly Member Brian Kavanagh in submitting joint testimony to the New York City Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) opposing a variance to legalize the sixth and seventh floor addition landlord Ben Shaoul built without proper permits at 515 East 5th Street. Residents and their advocates have been fighting this illegal addition since it was constructed in 2006. We noted Mr. Shaoul's pattern of flouting Department of Buildings' rules, and the occupancy and building code violations at the property, which put tenants at risk. Please see our testimony [here](#).

Renovation of the Port Authority Bus Terminal

Last Wednesday, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Board of Commissioners [voted to approve](#) \$90 million to renovate the Port Authority Bus Terminal. I applaud the Port Authority and its Executive Director Patrick Foye for this commitment, and look forward to working with the Authority and Community Board 4 as it continues to press forward with the Bus Terminal Master Plan, which would modernize and expand the capacity of the depot to help keep idling buses off our city's streets.

Pedestrians Need a Safer Riverside Boulevard

I spearheaded a letter last month with my colleagues Congressman Jerry Nadler, Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal and Council Member Helen Rosenthal to Department of Transportation (DOT) Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, asking the agency to address safety concerns on Riverside Boulevard. Though the DOT instituted a traffic-calming plan on the Boulevard between West 62nd and West 72nd Streets in 2011, we've heard from the community that these measures have proven insufficient, especially considering the concentration of early childhood education institutions and the high pedestrian traffic of local families. I thank the Coalition for a Livable West Side and the Committee for Pedestrian Safety on Riverside Boulevard for bringing these concerns to our attention. Please see our letter [here](#).

Crackdown on Illegal Intercity Buses

On July 18, I wrote to the New York City Police Department (NYPD) and the New York City Department of Transportation to bring their attention to several bus companies operating in Community Board 4 whose permits have lapsed. Since then, I'm happy to report the NYPD has begun a crackdown on illegal intercity buses in this area. The companies, including Fuji, Three Aces, and Galaxy, have continued to load and unload passengers on 42nd Street between 8th and 9th Avenues, idling and blocking an MTA dedicated lane. Please see my letter [here](#).

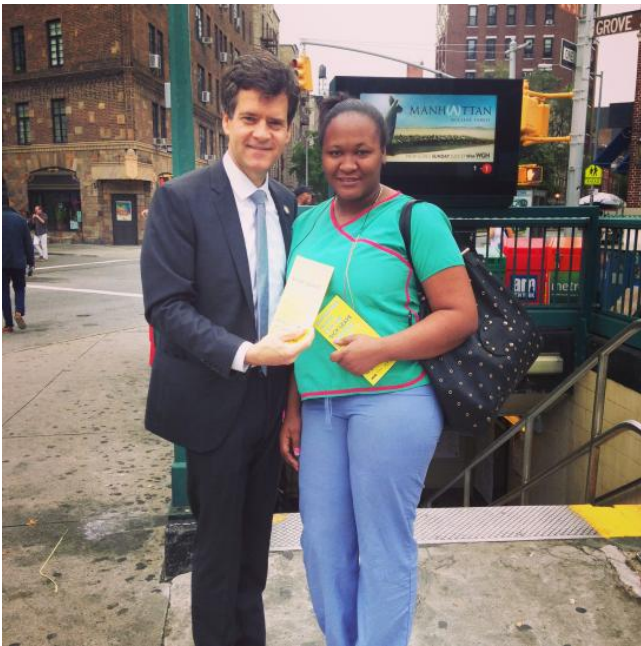


Promoting Community Composting Programs

I joined Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and Assembly Member Brian Kavanagh on July 12 at the announcement by the Borough President's Solid Waste Advisory Board and the Citizens Committee for New York City of their 2014 Community-Scale Composting Grants. In addition to La Plaza Cultural Community Garden, where the announcement was held, I'm pleased to inform you that three other programs in our Senate District were among the grantees: East Side Community High School, Green Oasis Community Garden and P.S. 3. A complete list of grantees can be seen [here](#). Thanks to these grants, more New Yorkers in neighborhoods across our city will learn that composting is a great way to reduce kitchen waste and help the environment at the same time.

West Village Slow Zone Update

On June 25, I received a response from the Department of Transportation (DOT) to my letter echoing Community Board 2's call for an expansion of the West Village Slow Zone one block east to Sixth Avenue. While I'm disappointed that the DOT did not commit to an expansion at this time due to planning and time constraints, I'm encouraged by the agency's commitment to consider the additional area as a second phase to the slow zone. Additionally, to alleviate risk in the short-term, the DOT will be conducting a feasibility study for the placement of speed humps near the schools within the additional area. On July 9, I sent a letter to DOT requesting a timeframe for when these actions will be undertaken, and also asked for consideration of a pedestrian-friendly "complete streets" redesign of 7th Avenue South. Please see my letter [here](#).



Spreading the Word about NYC's Paid Sick Leave Law

On July 16, I joined Mayor de Blasio, other elected officials, agency heads and more than 1,000 volunteers in a Paid Sick Leave Day of Action to distribute information about New York City's new law requiring employers with five or more employees to provide those who work at least 80 hours a year up to 40 hours of sick leave to care for themselves or a loved one. Paid sick leave allows employees to stay home and get better instead of going to work sick, and means workers no longer have to choose between providing for their families financially and taking care of a sick child or parent. The law took effect in April and employees were able to start using the time they had accrued on July 30. If you have any questions about the new paid sick leave law please visit nyc.gov/PaidSickLeave or call me at 212-633-8052.

Supporting the Call for Policies to Promote Electric Vehicles

On July 2, I joined Environment New York, as well as Assembly Members Linda Rosenthal and David Buchwald, as the organization unveiled its new report, "[Driving Cleaner: More Electric Vehicles Mean Less Pollution](#)." The report finds that more than 220,000 electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles are on America's roads today and in just the last two years, annual sales of electric vehicles have increased by 500 percent. Still the report underscores the need for our state and federal governments to do even more to encourage car companies to produce zero emission vehicles, and make it easier for consumers to drive them. I look forward to working with Environment New York and my colleagues in government to get more clean-energy electric vehicles on our roads and deliver real benefits for our health and environment.

Lenox Hill HealthPlex Opens

I helped cut the ribbon on the Lenox Hill HealthPlex on July 9, a new emergency medical center now open in the O'Toole Building at 30 7th Avenue, between West 12th and 13th Streets. This 30,000 square foot facility with 138 staff members, including board-certified emergency physicians, is open 24 hours a day and is equipped to handle up to 45,000 emergency visits annually and available to all regardless of insurance or ability to pay.

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