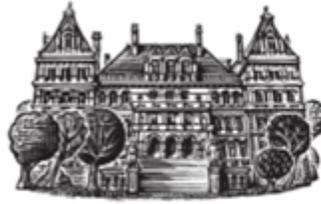


# Liz Krueger

New York State Senate | 28th District



May, 2016

## Message from Liz...

Another election in the city has come and gone, and once again there were major problems at the polls. The most egregious of many issues was the purging of 126,000 voters in Brooklyn in the months prior to the primary. I remember testifying before the City Council after the mishandling of the 2012 presidential election by the Board of Elections resulted in long lines and chaos at poll sites, and this latest election suggests things are only getting worse.

Some of the problems with our elections are related to outdated laws, but hardly all of them. I am pleased that both Attorney General Schneiderman and City Comptroller Stringer have opened investigations. As part of his audit, the Comptroller is seeking reports of issues with voting on his website at <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/nyc-primary-day/>. I encourage you to submit problems you may have had through this website

It has been clear to me for years now that the City Board of Elections needs a complete overhaul, and I am hopeful these investigations will finally force some change. Mayor De Blasio has also committed \$20 million to improving board practices, but only if it accepts outside oversight, which it clearly needs.

We also need laws and procedures that encourage, rather than discourage voting. The Suffolk County Board of Elections recently announced that it would start allowing online voter registration – something that the Attorney General has indicated could be done statewide under existing law. I am also hopeful that the recent election problems will give some momentum to a number of bills that I sponsor or cosponsor to reform our election process. Among these proposals are:

- The Voter Empowerment Act (A5972/S2538): This bill would allow for online updating of registration; allow people to register or change their party up to 10 days before an election; and permit pre-registration for 16- and 17-year-olds, among other reforms. A number of the provisions of this bill have also been introduced separately in standalone bills.
- Same-day registration: In New York, allowing same day registration requires both a constitutional amendment (A5891/S2391) and enacting legislation (A5947/S2483).
- Early voting: This would allow eligible voters to cast their ballots before Election Day. A8582/S3813 would establish a 12-day early voting period ending the Sunday before Election Day.

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- Voting by mail: I sponsor legislation (S2739) to authorize a study of the feasibility of voting by mail and allow for a pilot program. Vote by mail has been successfully implemented in Oregon and other states.

Like the ethics issues that continue to arise in Albany and elsewhere, the chaos that occurred both during this primary election and the 2012 general election only undermine people's faith in the value of political participation and in the legitimacy of our democracy. Just as it is critical that the legislature act on ethics reform in the wake of Albany scandals, it is also critical that we reform the way we conduct elections. Doing so will require both legislative action to encourage participation through a more open electoral process as well as audits and investigations of the practices of the Board of Elections to identify those who for reasons of malfeasance or incompetence are not capable of doing their jobs.

## **POLICY SPOTLIGHT**

### *Boss Bill*

On April 3rd, the Senate Labor Committee passed my legislation banning employers from discriminating against employees on the basis of their personal reproductive health decisions (S. 2709A).

Known as the "Boss Bill," this legislation would close a glaring loophole in New York's existing workplace anti-discrimination laws. The bill's introduction was prompted by the proliferation of more than 100 federal lawsuits by employers seeking to deny their employees the birth control coverage benefits they are guaranteed through their healthcare plans under the federal Affordable Care Act, including the infamous US Supreme Court "Hobby Lobby" decision. Hobby Lobby is among the growing number of employers intent on cutting employees off from access to birth control and other reproductive health services and the ability to make their own healthcare decisions.

The Boss Bill would protect all workers, both men and women, from being discriminated against by their employers for their reproductive healthcare decisions or their use of the available range of reproductive care services, whether covered by insurance or otherwise. This would include, for example, women who have become pregnant and are accessing pregnancy-related healthcare services, regardless of their marital status or sexual orientation.

In New York, in the 21st century, no boss should be able to tell employees whether they can have access to birth control, or whether they have the right to be pregnant. This bill to protect women and men's basic rights to make their own reproductive health decisions, free from reprisals from their bosses, should pass quickly in both houses.

The federal Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires that health insurance plans cover all FDA-approved birth control methods without out-of-pocket costs and is intended to provide broad-based health insurance coverage to millions of currently uninsured Americans. This represents a huge step forward for women's health and equality, expanding coverage and eliminating costs for literally millions of women. However, as has been made obvious by the myriad lawsuits from businesses seeking to strip this coverage, some bosses are committed to inserting themselves into their employees' private healthcare decisions. In addition, news reports and women's health advocates have recently

highlighted a number of examples from across the country of bosses retaliating against employees for their reproductive health care decisions.

New York State has demonstrated a commitment to outlawing discrimination in the workplace by passing laws protecting individuals from various forms of discrimination, but discrimination on the basis of individuals' reproductive healthcare decisions can fall into a gap in the existing law. To address this, S2709A adds a new Section 203-e to the New York State Labor Law, prohibiting an employer from discriminating against an employee on the basis of the employee's (or a dependent's) reproductive health decisions, including a decision to use or access a particular drug, device or medical service. It also prohibits discrimination based on an employer's personal beliefs about such services, and it prohibits an employer from accessing an employee's personal information regarding the employee's reproductive health decision-making.

The bill passed the Assembly in June of last year, garnering bipartisan support, but died in the Senate after it was prevented from receiving a committee vote. The Assembly version of the bill is carried by Assemblymember Ellen Jaffee.

By supporting the Boss Bill, the Labor Committee took a stand to protect New York's working families. The right of women and men to make their own reproductive health decisions is fundamental, and no boss should be able to tell an employee whether they or their family can have access to birth control. I thank my colleagues for their votes.

However, despite the fact that this legislation does not alter insurance law, it has been referred to the Senate Insurance Committee. I am concerned that this may be an attempt by my Republican colleagues to prevent further progress on the bill. Therefore I have urged Senator Seward, the chair of the Insurance Committee, to demonstrate that this is not the case by quickly scheduling a vote. Failure to do so would send a disturbing message to workers across this state.

## **COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT**

### **HEAP Cooling Assistance Program:**

The HEAP Cooling Assistance program provides for the purchase and installation of air conditioners or a fan to eligible households. (If an air conditioner cannot be safely installed, a fan will be provided.) Only one air conditioner or fan, not to exceed \$800 with installation, will be provided per dwelling.

A household may be eligible for a Cooling Assistance program benefit if all of the following requirements are met:

- The applicant and household members are United States Citizens or qualified aliens, and the household includes an individual with a documented medical condition that is exacerbated by heat;
- The household's gross monthly income is at or below \$2,244 for an individual and \$2,935 for a couple;
- The applicant receives SNAP benefits or Temporary Assistance or SSI or a regular HEAP benefit greater than \$21 in the current heating season;
- The applicant currently does not have a working air conditioner or the air conditioner s/he has is five years old or older;
- The applicant did not receive a HEAP funded air conditioner within the past ten years.

HRAs Cooling Assistance Component Application and Inquiry Line is (212) 835-7216 or you can find information online at <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/program.asp#cooling>.

The Center at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House is holding an information session on the HEAP Cooling Benefit on Thursday May 11th at 12:30 p.m. in the Dining Room at 343 East 70th Street.

### **The Radical Age Movement Event on NYC Budget:**

On Thursday, May 19th, The Radical Age Movement will host “The Impact of Ageism on Budget Decisions in NYC.” The issues that are impacted by ageist attitudes during the NYC budget process include: Access to Services, Caregiving, Cultural Competence, Disability, Economic Security, Elder Abuse, Healthcare, Housing, Hunger, Mental Health, Social Isolation, and Transportation. Bobbie Sackman, M.S.W., Director of Public Policy at LiveOn NY will present at the event, which will take place from 6:30 pm – 8 pm at NYPH / Health Outreach, 420 E 76 St. (bet York & 1st), 1st floor. RSVP at

<http://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-impact-of-ageism-on-budget-decisions-in-nyc-tickets-25026164933..>

### **Pre-K Registration and Round 2 of Applications:**

Offer letters for New York City pre-k programs were sent out early this month, over a month earlier than last year. A record 85 percent of families are receiving an offer to one of their top three free, full-day, high-quality pre-K program choices, and 71 percent of families are receiving an offer to their top choice. All 67,689 applicants received an offer for a Pre-K for All seat.

All families that receive an offer must pre-register by May 20 following the instructions in their offer letter in order to reserve their seat.

The second pre-K application period opened May 2 and runs until May 20. The second round features additional, newly awarded fall 2016 pre-K programs as well as programs with remaining available seats. All families with children born in 2012 – including those who received offers yesterday – are eligible to apply in the second round. Submitting a Round 2 application does not affect a family’s current offer or waitlist status; families can apply in Round 2 even if they accept their offer and will remain eligible to receive waitlist offers.

Families can use a variety of resources to explore pre-K options. They are encouraged to use the online Pre-K Finder ([maps.nyc.gov/prek](http://maps.nyc.gov/prek)) for the latest information and program updates, as well as the 2016 Pre-K for All Round 2 Program List available on the pre-K website ([nyc.gov/prek](http://nyc.gov/prek)) in ten languages. Enrollment specialists will also be available to help families throughout the process.

Families can apply in one of three ways:

- Online at [nyc.gov/prek](http://nyc.gov/prek)
- Over the phone by calling 718-935-2067 (8am – 6pm, Mon – Fri)
- In person at a Family Welcome Center (8am – 3pm, Mon – Fri). For locations, visit [schools.nyc.gov/welcomecenters](http://schools.nyc.gov/welcomecenters).

### **Update on Zika Virus:**

The New York City Department of Health is coordinating efforts to protect New Yorkers and prevent the spread of the Zika virus. The mosquito that carries Zika, *Aedes aegypti*, has never been found in New York City. In addition, Zika is not spreading in New York City; the New York City cases so far have been people who were infected while visiting other countries.

There is a concern, however, that a similar species of mosquito, *Aedes albopictus*, which can carry Zika, is found in New York City. The health department has stated that experts are still learning whether it is likely to spread Zika to people and that just because a mosquito can carry the virus does not mean that it will cause an outbreak. To take precautions against a local outbreak, the City is focusing on mosquito eradication efforts and aggressively addressing standing water where mosquitoes can breed. New Yorkers should call 311 to report any standing water they cannot manage themselves.

While Zika is not dangerous for most people, it is primarily a risk for pregnant women as it can cause severe birth defects. If you are pregnant it is recommended that you postpone travel to a Zika-affected area until health experts say it's safe. If you have already visited a Zika-affected area while pregnant, ask your healthcare provider about testing for Zika.

It is rare but possible to spread Zika through sexual contact and blood. If you are pregnant and your male sexual partner visited an affected area, plan together to abstain from sexual activity or use condoms correctly every time you have vaginal, anal and/or oral sex for the duration of your pregnancy. If you're pregnant and had condomless vaginal, anal or oral sex with a man who spent time in a Zika-affected area, contact your health care provider to discuss Zika testing.

#### **Adelphi NY Statewide Breast Cancer Hotline & Support Program:**

Anyone in New York State with breast cancer concerns can call the Adelphi NY Statewide Breast Cancer Hotline and Support Program's toll free number (800-877-8077) and speak with someone who has "been there." Their highly trained volunteers offer emotional support, information and referrals. Social work staff provides professional services. There is no charge for any of these services, which Adelphi has been providing for 36 years.

#### **JASA Free Senior Advocacy & Resource Fair:**

Learn about dozens of community organizations, volunteer and advocacy opportunities, and resources for older adults in New York. Connect with professionals to learn about services such as home care, caregiver support, legal assistance, and benefits & entitlements available to you, your friends and family.

Monday, May 23, 10am - 2pm, at UJA-Federation of New York, 130 East 59th Street, 7th floor, Manhattan. Space is limited. RSVP required at <http://www.jasa.org/advocacy/advocacy-resource-fair>

#### **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:

Saturday, May 7 and Sunday, May 8, 12-5pm:  
ACC's Mobile Adoption Center at Petco, Union Square, 860 Broadway.

Friday, May 27, 1-5PM  
Mirador Real Estate, 100 E 13th Street

Saturday, May 28, 12-4PM: Rabbit Adoptions hosted by NYPD  
Inside Central Park (64th St & 5th Ave.) \*\*This event will be rabbits only!\*\*

Saturday, May 28 and Sunday, May 29, 12-4pm:

ACC's Mobile Adoption Center at Petco, Union Square, 860 Broadway.

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

### **Free Feldenkrais Classes:**

As part of International Feldenkrais Week, there are a number of free events to celebrate Moshe Feldenkrais' birthday and his contribution to learning, movement and possibilities. Feldenkrais is a method that aims to improve people's quality of movement, their overall physical function, and their general wellbeing by increasing students' awareness of themselves and by expanding their movement capabilities. Among the free classes happening as part of this event are:

FREE Feldenkrais Awareness Through Movement® class with Rachel Potasznik at the BetterBodyLab

Wednesdays in May from 5:15- 6:15 PM

Location: 40 Exchange Place at Williams St

For more details or to preregister visit [www.BetterBodyLab.com](http://www.BetterBodyLab.com)

SAGE First Annual LGBT Feldenkrais® Festival,

Co-presented by Robert Sussuma, Kate Conroy and Frederick Schjang

Thursday May 5 from 6:30- 8:00 PM

Discussion followed by Awareness Through Movement lessons

SAGE Elders Center for LGBT Elders

305 Seventh Avenue, 15 Floor

Contact [FeldenkraisFestival@gmail.com](mailto:FeldenkraisFestival@gmail.com)

JASA /Margot Townsend

Monday May 9, 11:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.

Location: JASA: 120 West 76th Street, Manhattan

Contact [Townarla@aol.com](mailto:Townarla@aol.com)

### **World Trade Center Health Screenings and Treatment Still Available:**

Individuals may be eligible for a medical evaluation if they were in the New York City disaster area in Lower Manhattan and northwest parts of Brooklyn on September 11, 2001, or if they lived, worked, went to school or day care, or were otherwise in the area for some time afterward.

If the screening shows that you or your children have a condition covered by the WTC Health Program, the doctor will certify that. Everyone with a certification can enroll in the WTC Health Program, and will continue to receive medical monitoring and treatment at no cost. Use the links below to learn more about the eligibility criteria and download an application:

<http://www.cdc.gov/wtc/documentation.html#survivors>

[http://www.cdc.gov/wtc/pdfs/Eligibility\\_Form\\_for\\_Survivors.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/wtc/pdfs/Eligibility_Form_for_Survivors.pdf)

Then mail or fax your form and copies of your documents (or your report saying why you couldn't get them) to:

WTC Health Program

P.O. Box 7001

Rensselaer, NY 12144

Fax number: 1-877-646-5308

If you have questions about completing the form or submitting it or need a paper copy, please call the World Trade Center Health Program at 1-888-982-4748 (1-888-WTC-HP4U).

**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: call [212-218-0503 ext. 6](tel:212-218-0503) for assistance in applying or recertifying for the Senior Citizens Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) program. The SCRIE clinic is open to tenants city-wide. Please note that due to the volume of calls, it sometimes takes up to two weeks for staff to respond to messages.
- Eviction Prevention: Walk-in clinic, every 2nd and 4th Monday of the month, from 10am to 1pm at 331 East 70th Street, for tenants who live, work, or go to school on Manhattan's East Side above 59th Street and on Roosevelt Island.
- 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 ext 4](tel:212-218-0503).
- Health Care Access/Medicare/Medicaid: call [212-218-0503 ext 3](tel:212-218-0503). 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.

**And, just across the Park on the Westside: Monthly Housing Clinics and Workshops:**

Council Member Helen Rosenthal, Goddard Riverside's SRO Law Project, and the Urban Justice Center co-sponsor monthly housing clinics and workshops at the Goddard Riverside Community Center, 593 Columbus Avenue (between 88th and 89th Streets). On the first Wednesday of each month, from 6pm – 8pm, the clinic offers a presentation on a variety of topics, followed by a question and answer session. Each evening, at least one staff attorney will meet with individuals who are seeking specific legal advice.

For questions, contact the Office of Council Member Rosenthal at [212 873-0282 ext. 206](tel:212-873-0282) or [Helen@helenrosenthal.com](mailto:Helen@helenrosenthal.com). Sign-up sheet starting at 6pm each evening.

June 1, 2016: Succession Rights

**VOLS Legal Clinics for Low-Income Residents Over Age 60:**

The Volunteers of Legal Services (VOLS) Elderly Project provides pro-bono legal services to low-income people over age 60 who live in Manhattan. VOLS conducts legal clinics each month at senior centers where seniors can discuss their legal concerns in confidence, receive legal advice and, where appropriate, obtain referrals to a volunteer lawyer for representation. Areas of legal assistance include wills, medical directives, powers of attorney, housing, consumer matters and Medicaid. Over 150 lawyers serve on their Elderly Project volunteer attorney roster.

Upcoming Clinic dates and locations are below:

Burden Center for the Aging, 1484 First Avenue (between 77th & 78th Streets) — 2 pm — second Friday of each month (May 13, June 10). Call Velda Murad at [212-879-7400](tel:212-879-7400) for information.

Stanley Isaacs Senior Center, 415 East 93rd Street (east of 1st Avenue) — 10 am — third Friday of each month (May 20, June 17). Call Amy Loewenberg at [212-360-7620](tel:212-360-7620) ext. 112 for information.

Encore Community Services Senior Center, St. Malachy's Church - 239 West 49th Street (between Broadway and 8th Avenue) — 10 am — fourth Monday of Each Month (May 23, June 27). Call Elvira Yanes at [212-581-2910](tel:212-581-2910), ext 123 for information.

**Affordable Housing Opportunities in Manhattan:**

**Harlem Dowling Alembic LLC** is now accepting applications for 47 affordable 1- and 2-bedroom apartments newly constructed at 2139 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd. in the Central Harlem neighborhood in Manhattan. Rents for these apartments range from \$847 to \$1025 depending on unit size. To be eligible, applicants must have incomes between \$30,412 and \$51,780, depending on unit and family size. Preference will be given to Community Board 10 residents for 50% 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/231.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](http://www.nyc.gov/housingconnect) and select “Apply for Housing.” To request an application by mail, mail a self-addressed envelope to: Lemle & Wolff Inc. 5925 Broadway, Bronx, NY 10463

Completed applications must be submitted online or returned by regular mail only to the post office box that will be listed on the application. Applications must be submitted online or postmarked by May 10, 2016. Applicants who submit more than one application may be disqualified.

**1674 PARK AVENUE APARTMENTS** is now accepting applications for 3 affordable studio apartments newly constructed at 1674 Park Avenue in the East Harlem neighborhood in Manhattan. Rents for these apartments are \$822. To be eligible, applicants must have incomes between \$28,183 and \$36,300. Preference will be given to Community Board 11 residents for 50% 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/248.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](http://www.nyc.gov/housingconnect) and select “Apply for Housing.” To request an application by mail, mail a self-addressed envelope to 1674 Park LLC c/o SJP Tax Consultants Inc, 149-41 14th Avenue, Whitestone NY 11357.

Completed applications must be submitted online or returned by regular mail only to the post office box that will be listed on the application. Applications must be submitted online or postmarked by May 17, 2016. 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:

- May 10, 9 - 10:30 am, 92 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- May 10, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm., 86 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- May 10, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 68 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- May 18, 9 - 10:30 am, 79 Street & 3 Avenue – Bus
- May 18, 11 am - 1 pm, 79 Street & York Avenue – Bus
- May 18, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 72 Street & York Avenue – Bus
- May 19, 8:30 - 10:30 am, 47 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
- May 19, 1:30 - 3:30 pm, 28 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
- May 24, 9 - 10:30 am, 92 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- May 24, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm., 86 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- May 24, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 68 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- June 1, 9 - 10:30 am, 79 Street & 3 Avenue – Bus
- June 1, 11 am - 1 pm, 79 Street & York Avenue – Bus
- June 1, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 72 Street & York Avenue – Bus
- June 2, 7 – 9 am, 90 Street and York Avenue - Van
- June 2, 8:30 - 10:30 am, 47 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
- June 2, 1:30 - 3:30 pm, 28 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
- June 3, 9 - 10 am, 57 Street and 1 Avenue – Van
- June 3, 10:30 - 11:30 am, 57 Street and 3 Avenue – Van
- June 3, 12:30 - 2:30 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.