

Liz Krueger

New York State Senate | 28th District



November 2014

Message from Liz...

It will shock no one that I am extremely disappointed with the outcome of the most recent election. Republican-controlled Senates in Washington DC and Albany will make it much harder to make progress on many of the significant issues we face in the coming year. My focus must continue to be representing you in Albany.

That said, it is important to recognize that with the governor ostensibly committed to a progressive agenda, and an increased Democratic Assembly majority, there is no reason why we cannot make progress on any number of issues, such as strengthening rent regulation, campaign finance reform, protecting our environment, ensuring an adequate social safety net and a host of other issues.

In the current political configuration, I believe my job and the job of my Senate Democratic colleagues will be to work to identify issues where we can agree with our colleagues in the Republican majority, and work with the governor and Assembly to stand firm on issues of importance to my constituents and all New Yorkers where there is conflict with the Senate Republicans.

Particularly given the role of the governor in shaping the state budget, there is much that can be accomplished if he is willing to aggressively use his constitutional powers. One issue that I will be pushing to be linked to the budget is renewal of our rent laws. Doing so will offer the best opportunity to strengthen tenant protections, because the governor and Assembly will be in a much stronger negotiating position in late March and early April, with a range of other issues linked to the negotiations, than in June, when the laws are about to expire.

While I certainly would have preferred to be in the majority and finally advancing a broad progressive agenda, I am very familiar with the role in which I now find myself. I will continue to fight as I have for the past decade: to build a Democratic conference that takes

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principled stands on the issues; and to work with – and when necessary fight with – the Republican Senate majority, to advance an agenda that meets the needs of all New Yorkers.

To achieve these goals, Senate Democrats will need the partnership of the governor and the Assembly. If we work together, we can still make progress in the coming year on many issues.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Roundtable for Boomers and Seniors Begins November 20th:

Senator Liz Krueger’s Roundtable for Boomers & Seniors is a 5-part program that provides an opportunity for constituents to come together to explore life issues that are relevant across the age span.

This year we will be looking at Caregiving and all its aspects. The first session of this popular program will take place on Thursday morning, November 20th, at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, 331 East 70th Street. The program runs from 8:30 am – 10:30 am. Bagels and coffee will be served.

To kick off this year’s Caregiving series, we are honored to have Jane Gross, author of “A Bittersweet Season: Caring for Our Aging Parents—and Ourselves.” Jane was a correspondent for *The New York Times* for 29 years, and spent her last years there writing about the intersection of adult children and aging parents. She is the creator of, and continues to contribute to, the *Times*’ “New Old Age” blog.

For more information, contact Alice Fisher by email at alicefisher37@gmail.com or call 212-490-9535. RSVPs are required for this event.

Rally to Strengthen New York State’s Rent Laws:

On Tuesday November 18th at 10:00 a.m. the Alliance for Tenant Power is holding a rally and press conference at City Hall to urge lawmakers to strengthen the rent laws before they expire in June 2015. I will be attending and I hope you can join me. For more information, contact Mackenzie at mlew@tandn.org or 212-608-4320, ext. 301.

Health Insurance 101 Workshop:

There will be a Health Insurance 101 Workshop that at Bellevue Hospital Center on November 14, 2014 from 8:30am to 1pm. The workshop will cover:

1. Updates on Medicare Program Parts, A, B, C and D
2. Medicare information and resources now available online
3. Updates on the New York State of Health (Health Insurance Exchange)
4. Enrollment resources for the uninsured.

The event will take place at Bellevue Hospital Center, 12th Floor Conference Room in “H” Building, 462 First Avenue, New York, NY 10016

Seats are limited. Please register online at:
<https://healthinsurance101bellevuehospital.eventbrite.com> or call 212-788-3450.

NY's Health Plan Marketplace - Open Enrollment is Almost Here:

New York's Marketplace, *NY State of Health*, is a way for individuals, families, and small businesses (under 50 employees) to find quality health insurance. It can help if you don't have coverage now, or if you have insurance but want to look at other options under certain conditions (the Marketplace is not for people who have Medicare). The Marketplace is being administered as part of the federal health care reform law.

When Do I Apply? Open enrollment for 2015 runs from November 15, 2014 to February 15, 2015. Coverage starts as early as January 1, 2015. Apply by the 15th of any month for coverage effective the 1st of the following month.

Special Enrollment Day! Friday, November 21, 2014. I am partnering with Lenox Hill Neighborhood House to provide you with an opportunity to meet with an enrollment counselor on November 21st. Lenox Hill has a certified application counselor who can help you understand your options and enroll in a plan. Call to make an appointment: 212-218-0432, 331 E. 70th Street (no walk-ins).

If you cannot make the enrollment day, contact Lenox Hill to make an appointment for another time. For a complete list of health care navigators and counselors, go to <http://info.nystateofhealth.ny.gov/IPANavigatorSiteLocations> or call 1-855-355-5777. These services are free for you. For more information or to apply for a plan call the Marketplace toll-free at 1-855-355-5777, go online to the Marketplace's website at <http://www.nystateofhealth.ny.gov>, or contact my office with additional questions at 212-490-9535.

Free and low-cost options are available, including Medicaid, Child Health Plus, and financial aid. Financial aid to buy insurance is available for certain small businesses, individuals who earn up to \$46,680 a year, or \$95,400 a year for a family of 4. All plans provide essential care, including doctor visits, emergency care, and prescription drugs.

You cannot be denied coverage for a pre-existing condition.

Public Hearing on Plans for 1 Vanderbilt Avenue and the Vanderbilt Corridor:

The Department of City Planning is proposing zoning changes to facilitate new commercial development along Madison and Vanderbilt Avenues between 42nd and 47th Streets (the "Vanderbilt Corridor"). Concurrently, developer SL Green is seeking special permits to redevelop the block between 42nd and 43rd Streets and Madison and Vanderbilt Avenues (the "One Vanderbilt" site).

The Tri-Board Task Force on East Midtown and Community Boards Five and Six are holding a Public Hearing to hear public comment on the proposals for One Vanderbilt and the Vanderbilt Corridor. Come hear first-hand from the City, SL Green, and the MTA about these proposals, ask questions, and let your voice be heard.

The hearing will take place on Monday, November 17 at 6 p.m. at the South Court Auditorium at the New York Public Library, 5th Avenue and 42nd Street (entrance on 42nd Street).

Parent Conferences for Middle and High School Families:

Chancellor Carmen Fariña opens the doors of Tweed Courthouse and invites you to attend the Fall 2014 Parent Conferences. These free, grade specific and informative events were created to support parents and to help them have an impact on their child's education, both in school and at home.

There will be free breakfast, free childcare (for kids 5 and older) and plenty of giveaways, including free books. Plus, the Bronx Children's Museum will have their wonderful interactive mobile exhibit that teaches kids about the Harlem River and The Bronx River.

Topics Include:

- The IEP Process Step by Step
- Bullying – What to Look For, What to Know, What to Say
- Activities You Can Do at Home with Your Pre-K Child
- Help Your Teen Organize and Prioritize
- Managing Teen Stress
- Get the Most Out of Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Calling All Parents – How to Organize and Advocate for Yourself and Your Child
- Reading with Your Children
- Getting the Most from Museum Visits
- Bilingual Education for Elementary School Students
- College for English Language Learners

The conferences will take place from 8 AM to 1 PM at Tweed Courthouse • 52 Chambers Street.

- To Register for the Saturday, November 15 High School Conference visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/nyc-chancellors-parent-conference-for-high-school-parents-tickets-13437342453>.
- To Register for the Saturday, December 6 School Conference visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/nyc-chancellors-parent-conference-for-middle-school-parents-tickets-13437139847>.

These conferences will fill up fast, so act quickly while seats are still available!

Help Improve the NYC Dept. of Education's "Blue Book":

The Blue Book Working Group is soliciting ideas and suggestions to improve the NYC Department of Education's (DOE) Enrollment, Capacity and Utilization Report, also known as the "Blue Book." The Working Group has been meeting monthly since March 2014, and at this time is seeking input from members of the public on specific ways they think the Blue Book can be revised to provide a more accurate reflection of space in NYC DOE school buildings, and the learning environment in which City public school students are educated every day.

Please send your ideas to BlueBookWG@gmail.com by November 26th, 2014 so that we can consider your input prior to presenting draft preliminary BBWG recommendations at a Town Hall in December.

Kindergarten Orientation Meetings for Families of Children with Disabilities:

Children born in 2010 will start kindergarten in the fall of 2015. The Department of Education has scheduled meetings for families of students with disabilities to make the transition to kindergarten as seamless as possible. The meetings will provide information about the transition to school-age special education and the process of applying to kindergarten.

Nineteen meetings will take place throughout the city in November and December; the presentations will all be the same, and families are welcome to attend any meeting that is convenient. The full meeting schedule is available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/KindergartenSpecialEducation>.

The meeting schedule for Manhattan is as follows:

- Tuesday, November 18, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., CSE #10, 388 West 125th Street.
- Wednesday, November 19, 9:30-11:30 a.m., IS 289, 201 Warren Street.
- Monday, December 1, 6:00-8:00 p.m., PS 40, 319 East 19th Street.

No RSVP is required.

One Day Pass Sunday at JASA:

Sundays at JASA is a college level continuing education program for adults 55+.

Explore Sundays at JASA for Only \$10. I will be speaking on politics as part of the Sunday November 16th offerings, which also include:

- 19th Century Philosophy
- Poetry is for Everyone
- Genealogy 101
- Get a Clue! Crossword Construction
- Golden Age of Hollywood Musicals
- Laughter Yoga
- Shakespeare: An Actor Speaks
- And many, many more

A complete list of courses is available at jasa.org/sundays-at-jasa-one-day-pass. These programs are offered Sunday, November 16, 9:00 am - 3:30 pm, John Jay College, North Hall, 445 West 59th Street, 3rd floor.

Assistance With Medicare Part D Enrollment:

Lenox Hill Neighborhood House is also offering individual counseling to help choose a Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan. Counseling is available to anyone who lives, works or goes to school between 14th Street and 143rd Street on the East Side. The Medicare Part D open enrollment period runs from October 15 and December 7, 2014, and this is the only period during which you can choose or change your prescription drug plan. For more information or to sign up for an appointment please call Lauren Binder at (212) 218-0427.

The Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP) can also answer questions and provide counseling on Medicare, including Medicare Advantage, and Medicare D Prescription Plans. You can talk to a trained counselor at 212-602-4108 Monday to Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Additional Legal Advocacy Clinics From 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 schedule of upcoming clinics:

- **SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) Clinics** Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. 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.
- **SCRIE Clinics:** call 212-218-0503 ext. 6 from assistance in applying or recertifying for the Senior Citizens Rent Increase Exemption Program (SCRIE).
- **Eviction Prevention:** Walk-in clinic, every third Monday of the month, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at 331 East 70th Street,. For more information, call 212-218-0429.
- **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, please call our intake hotline at 212-218-0503 (choose option #4).

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 (November 14, December 12). 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 (November 21, December 19). 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 (November 24, December 22). Call Sister Margaret Rose at [212-581-2910, ext 118](tel:212-581-2910) for information.

Monthly Housing Clinics and Workshops:

Council Member Helen Rosenthal, Goddard Riverside's SRO Law Project, and The Urban Justice Center present FREE 2014-2015 Monthly Housing Clinics and Workshops from October 2014 - June 2015 (6:00PM-8:00PM) at Goddard Riverside Community Center, 593 Columbus Avenue (between 88th and 89th Streets), Manhattan. On the first Wednesday of

each month, the clinic will offer a presentation on a variety of topics, to be followed by a question and answer session. The funding is provided by the Housing Preservation Initiative of the New York City Council. Each evening, at least one staff attorney will meet with individuals who are seeking specific legal advice. (Bilingue: Español)

For questions, contact the Urban Justice Center at (646) 459-3017 or the Office of Council Member Rosenthal at (212) 873-0282. Sign-up sheet starting at 6pm each evening.

- **December 3, 2014:** HPs, Repairs, Reduction in Services, Bedbugs & Cockroaches
- **January 7, 2015:** Harrassment
- **February 4, 2015:** City-Wide Housing Related Campaigns
- **March 4, 2015:** DHCR Overview, including MCIs and 1/40ths
- **April 1, 2015:** Housing Court 101
- **May 6, 2015:** SCRIE and DRIE
- **June 3, 2015:** Succession Rights, Preferential Rights and Non-Primary Residence

Affordable Housing Opportunities in Manhattan:

552 Academy Street is now accepting applications for 40 affordable 1- and 2-bedroom apartments under construction at 552 Academy Street in the Inwood neighborhood in Manhattan. Rents for these apartments range from \$720 to \$1059 depending on income and unit size. To be eligible, applicants must have incomes between \$25,200 and \$50,340, depending on unit and family size. Preference will be given to Community Board 12 residents for 50% of units, mobility-impaired persons for 5% of units, visual- and/or hearing-impaired units 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 <http://www.nyc.gov/html/hpd/downloads/pdf/552-academy-street.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: 552 Academy Street,

c/o PWB Management Corp., 3092 Hull Avenue, Bronx NY 10467.

Completed applications must be submitted online or returned by regular mail only the post office box that will be listed on the application. Applications must be submitted online or postmarked by November 24, 2014. Applicants who submit more than one application will be disqualified.

Affordable Housing at Hunters Point South in Queens:

Applications for the first phase of the Hunters Point South affordable housing development in Long Island City, Queens will be available starting in mid-October. This phase will offer 738 "moderate income" units ranging from studios to 3-bedrooms, with rents from \$1561 to \$4346 depending on units size and income. Income requirements for these units will range from \$55,200 to \$224,020, depending on unit size. 186 "low income units will also be available with rents between \$494 and \$959 depending on unit size and income. Income requirements for these units will range from approximately \$19,000 to approximately \$48,000, depending on unit size.

Preference will be given to Queens Community Board 2 residents for 50% of units, mobility-impaired persons for 5% of units, visual- and/or hearing-impaired units for 2% of units, and City of New York municipal employees for 5% of units. For more information visit HuntersPointSouthLiving.com. . 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: Hunter's Point South Living, 1357 Broadway, Box 308, New York, NY 10018.

Completed applications must be submitted online or returned by regular mail only the post office box that will be listed on the application. Applications must be submitted online or postmarked by December 15, 2014. Applicants who submit more than one application will 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. Vans

Buses and vans will be in my district on the following dates and locations:

- November 13, 8:30 - 10:30 am, 47 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
- November 13, 1:30 - 3:30 pm, 28 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
- November 25, 10:30 am, 92 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- November 25, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm., 86 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- November 25, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 68 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- December 3, 9 - 10:30 am, 79 Street & 3 Avenue – Bus
- December 3, 11 am - 1 pm, 79 Street & York Avenue – Bus
- December 3, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 72 Street & York Avenue – Bus
- December 4, 7 – 9 am, 90 Street and York Avenue - Van
- December 4, 8:30 - 10:30 am, 47 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
- December 4, 1:30 - 3:30 pm, 28 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
- December 5, 9 - 10 am, 57 Street and 1 Avenue – Van
- December 5, 10:30 - 11:30 am, 57 Street and 3 Avenue – Van
- December 5, 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.

Heat Season Rules:

The City Housing Maintenance Code and State Multiple Dwelling Law require building owners to provide heat and hot water to all tenants. Building owners are required to provide hot water 365 days a year at a constant minimum temperature of 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

Between October 1st and May 31st, a period designated as "Heat Season," building owners are also required to provide tenants with heat under the following conditions:

- Between the hours of 6AM and 10PM, if the outside temperature falls below 55 degrees, the inside temperature is required to be at least 68 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Between the hours of 10PM and 6AM, if the temperature outside falls below 40 degrees, the inside temperature is required to be at least 55 degrees Fahrenheit.

Tenants who are cold in their apartments should first attempt to notify the building owner, managing agent or superintendent. If heat is not restored, the tenant should call the City's Citizen Service Center at 311. For the hearing-impaired, the TTY number is [\(212\) 504-4115](tel:2125044115). The Center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

POLICY SPOTLIGHT

Voter Turnout

One of the key takeaways from the last election was that voters simply did not vote. Turnout in New York was less than one third of registered voters, the lowest level for a gubernatorial election since the Board of Elections began keeping exact numbers. There were undoubtedly a number of reasons for this, including lack of enthusiasm for the candidates and overwhelming amounts of negative mail and broadcast ads in some races, as independent campaign expenditures brought the levels of spending in campaigns to new heights. But one additional contributor to low turnout is voting procedures that are discouraging voting rather than encouraging it.

Except under certain, very limited circumstances, voting early is not legal in New York, while many other states have adopted early voting for all voters with great success. Some other states, such as Oregon, have adopted universal mail-in voting. This year Oregon's turnout was almost 70 percent, while New York's was less than 30 percent.

There have been a number of proposals to make it easier to vote in New York state. While this is another of those issues where it will be hard to get the Republican Senate majority to take action, particularly since they are happy with the results of this low-turnout election, it is an issue worth fighting for. Our democracy loses legitimacy when such a small part of the electorate is engaged in choosing our leaders.

Among the proposals currently floating around to increase participation are:

- **S619B**, which would change voter registration deadlines and allow 16- and 17-year olds to preregister;
- **S1461** and **S2634**, which would allow for early voting;
- **S1549**, which would provide for same-day voter registration;
- **S2631**, which would restore voting rights for convicted felons.

While there is not currently legislation in New York to establish mail-in voting, I do believe this is worth exploring. I have some concerns about ballot security with mail-in voting but I believe lack of participation now constitutes a greater threat to our democracy. Oregon has had mail-in voting since 2000 with no serious problems, and strong public support from both Republicans and Democrats. Washington and Colorado have recently joined in enacting mail-in voting systems.

There are many reasons why turnout is so low in New York, but we need to make sure that access to the ballot is not one of them.