

Dear Neighbor:

I would like to take this opportunity to provide an update on the 2014 Legislative Session in Albany. I am pleased to have voted for an on-time, balanced state budget for the 4th year in a row. This year's budget provides a significant increase in funding for NYC schools; vastly increases the maximum eligible income for the EPIC and SCRIE programs; and offers \$85 million in tax credits for NYC homeowners, condo and co-op owners, and renters.

As always, my office is available to assist you. If you are having trouble with state or local government issues, please do not hesitate to contact us. My staff and I are always here to help you obtain benefits, provide information on government programs, and develop legislative solutions to community problems.



*Edward C. Braunstein
Member of Assembly, 26th District*



Assemblyman
***Edward C.
Braunstein***
Reports to the People

Spring 2014



Assemblyman Braunstein, along with Principal Michael LaForgia, inducted the Student Council Representatives and Officers at Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy – Bayside, and also inducted the Student Council Representatives at Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy's campus in Douglaston.



Assemblyman Braunstein visited the Chabad Lubavitch of Northeast Queens Early Childhood Center in Bay Terrace. Assemblyman Braunstein is pictured with Rabbi Yossi Blesofsky and Director Dina Blesofsky.

Around the Community



Assemblyman Braunstein donated toys from his annual Holiday Toy Drive to the QSAC Preschool & Early Childhood Center of Douglaston.



Assemblyman Braunstein received donations from Girl Scout Troop 4563 for our community's 18th Annual Valentines for Vets Gift Drive.



Assemblyman Braunstein welcomed Sacred Heart Cub Scout Pack 49 to his District Office, where he explained how a bill becomes a law in New York State, and helped the scouts earn their Citizenship pins.



Congratulations to the winners of Assemblyman Braunstein's Halloween Essay and Drawing Contest 2013. Assemblyman Braunstein is pictured (L-R) with winners Ilana Kulyev of PS 169 and Abigail Stein of PS 221. Not pictured are Kevin Lin of PS 21, and Joyce Zheng of PS 32.

Assemblyman Edward C. Braunstein

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Progress in fight against airplane noise

Northeast Queens residents' fight against airplane noise is beginning to produce results. On March 24, 2014, Governor Cuomo announced that the Port Authority will double the number of noise monitors, establish aviation community roundtables, and conduct an environmental study to determine the impact new flight paths are having on our neighborhoods. It will also take a comprehensive series of actions in coordination with local communities to address noise issues at its airports and will be stepping up the review of noise data with the FAA. "It is great news that Governor Cuomo and the Port Authority are following up on their promise to address the airplane noise problems plaguing our community for the last few years," said Assemblyman Braunstein.



"These initiatives are a good first step and I look forward to working with my colleagues and advocates such as Queens Quiet Skies to ensure that our community's quality of life remains intact."

Assemblyman Braunstein at a press conference in support of legislation mandating the Port Authority to study the impact of aircraft noise in Queens and Long Island.

Assemblyman Braunstein's Legislative Update

In 2013, Governor Cuomo signed five of Assemblyman Braunstein's bills into law. Among these bills was legislation that strengthens Assemblyman Braunstein's 2011 law banning the sale or distribution of drugs being marketed as bath salts (A.717-A). After the initial ban was passed in 2011, there was an explosion in sales of bath salts made from new compounds created by drug dealers to circumvent the law. The newly signed legislation bans these new bath salt compounds, imposes criminal penalties on those who sell, use or possess these drugs, and makes it a felony to sell the substances to minors, or on school grounds.

Another bill signed into law requires the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to notify community boards in NYC of new brownfield site cleanups (A.5990). Brownfields are properties affected by the presence of contaminants, including hazardous waste or petroleum. "Community boards are our first line of defense

in protecting our quality of life and this law helps ensure that all remediation is done appropriately," said Assemblyman Braunstein.

In the current legislative session, the Assembly has passed Assemblyman Braunstein's legislation prohibiting consumer reporting agencies from selling individuals' detailed payroll and earning information, consumer history, and health insurance information to third parties (A.6790-A).

Assemblyman Braunstein has also introduced legislation prohibiting level 2 and 3 sex offenders from residing within 1500 feet of the residence of a victim of their abuse (A.9025). Assemblyman Braunstein previously introduced legislation banning sex offenders from residing within 1000 feet of a school (A.718). Assemblyman Braunstein also introduced legislation protecting women whose explicit photos are posted on the Internet by former partners (A.8214).

Assemblyman Braunstein, in partnership with Services Now for Adult Persons, Inc. (SNAP), is offering benefits and entitlements counseling to persons 60 years of age and older, including Food Stamps, Medicaid, Medicare Part D and SCRIE. Please call Assemblyman Braunstein's office at 718-357-3588 to schedule an appointment with SNAP Case Worker Gail Brown.



Assemblyman Braunstein hosted a Bayside Community Summer Blood Drive, sponsored in conjunction with the New York Blood Center. Nearly one hundred people turned out for the drive in the Bay Terrace Shopping Center.



Assemblyman Braunstein celebrated National Night Out Against Crime at the 105th Precinct, and also attended the 109th and 111th Precincts' festivities.

Assemblyman Braunstein helps pass state budget that invests in New York's future

The 2014-15 state budget makes a historic investment in education, expands the EPIC and SCRIE programs, and provides tax relief to homeowners and renters. The spending plan continues the state's fiscal discipline by holding spending growth to less than 2% for the 4th consecutive year.

HISTORIC INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION

"Every child deserves to benefit from a great education. This year's budget represents New York's largest investment in our children's future in recent memory by allocating more than \$8.6 billion to NYC schools, an increase of over \$435 million more than last year, and beginning a five-year \$1.5 billion expansion of full-day universal pre-kindergarten (UPK) in NYC, including \$600 million in the next two years," said Assemblyman Braunstein.

The budget also provides a \$16 million increase for nonpublic school aid related to the Comprehensive Attendance Policy (CAP) program, for a total of \$158.8 million. The Legislature also continues \$4.5 million for safety equipment and allows nonpublic schools to be considered for full-day UPK funding.



Principal Joyce Bush welcomed Assemblyman Braunstein as he served as Principal for a Day at PS 193 in Whitestone.

"Every child deserves to benefit from a great education. This year's budget represents New York's largest investment in our children's future in recent memory"

EXPANDING EPIC AND SCRIE COVERAGE

The budget assists seniors by vastly increasing the maximum eligible income for the Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) and Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) programs. "The income limit for EPIC rises from \$35,000 to \$75,000 for individuals and from \$50,000 to \$100,000 for married couples. For SCRIE, the income limit increases from \$29,000 to \$50,000 for a two-year period," said Assemblyman Braunstein.

MAKING HOUSING MORE AFFORDABLE

This year's budget provides tax relief for NYC residents by providing \$85 million in tax credits for homeowners, condominium and co-op owners, and renters by implementing a "circuit breaker" plan. The "circuit breaker" will run for 2 years and will factor in household income for the property tax break.



Assemblyman Braunstein delivered donations from his annual Veterans' Gift Drive to the St. Albans VA and the NYS Veterans' Home at St. Albans. Assemblyman Braunstein is pictured with staff and volunteers from the St. Albans VA.



Assemblyman Braunstein presented a resolution honoring the Kupferberg Holocaust Resource Center & Archives at Queensborough Community College and Korean American Civic Empowerment (KACE) for their work on behalf of Comfort Women. Assemblyman Braunstein and Senator Toby Ann Stavisky also introduced legislation requiring that all school textbooks refer to the Sea of Japan also as the East Sea (A.8742).