

ASSEMBLYMAN

Andrew Hevesi



Summer 2013

Dear Neighbor,

The 2013 Legislative session was successful in a number of different areas. My colleagues and I were able to pass an early budget, despite a significant deficit, for a third consecutive year. While funding for the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), which is vital in providing services for our most vulnerable citizens, was initially reduced, at the end of session the Assembly and Senate voted to restore the full amount of funds for the crucial services provided through this agency.

There was also a new funding allocation in the state budget this year, which was the first time the environmental impact of diesel engine freight locomotives in our community has been acknowledged. New York City has been transitioning away from the use of trucks to rail for waste transport for many years. Our community has suffered from the unintended environmental impacts of increased freight rail transportation. For this reason, a coalition of local elected officials and community activists, including myself, successfully inserted a \$3 million allocation in this year's budget to fund a pilot program that will upgrade antiquated freight engines that operate in our community. My office is now in the process of ensuring that this money is spent properly and in a timely manner in order to alleviate some of the adverse effects of this problem. While more will need to be done in the coming years, this initial funding commitment sets a new precedent, making clean rail transport a priority in New York State.



Assemblyman Hevesi joins Representative Meng to march in the Forest Hills Memorial Day Parade.

While a variety of other important issues were not successfully addressed this session, I am committed to continuing to work as hard as possible to represent the views and achieve the results that many of you and our neighbors have taken the time to share. I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the guidance and perspective on local and statewide policy matters that thousands of residents in our communities have expressed to both myself and my staff.

I am honored to serve as your elected representative in the State Assembly, and as always, both myself and my staff are available to assist with any issues or concerns that you may have. Please feel free to stop by the office, call us at (718) 263-5595, or e-mail me at hevesia@assembly.state.ny.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Andrew Hevesi'. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Andrew Hevesi

Hevesi Calls on Governor to Support Tech Growth in Queens

Assemblyman Hevesi led a coalition of virtually every Queens Assemblymember calling upon the Governor to develop a Technology Innovation Hot Spot in Queens. These technology business incubation zones, which were inserted into this year's state budget, provide resources, such as accounting and legal counsel, to technology start-ups during their initial development period. Queens is an ideal location to promote growth in the technology industry through the use of Innovation Hot Spots. With a diverse and talented workforce, premier aca-

demie institutions, and developed infrastructure, our borough is perfectly situated to implement this program. Assemblyman Hevesi advocated that the Governor consider the plans put forward by the organization Coalition for Queens. Job growth in the technology sector has rapidly expanded over the past few years in our borough. The plan proposed by Coalition for Queens will help continue this trend, and ensure that Queens residents will have the necessary resources to grow their technology start-up business.

Upgrades to Queens' Wastewater Abatement Infrastructure

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is introducing Bioswales as part of the NYC Green Infrastructure Plan. Bioswales capture stormwater from the curb before it enters the sewer, and help reduce the volume of stormwater directed to wastewater treatment plants during wet weather as well as combined sewer overflows. This plan

includes a total investment of \$2.4 billion in green infrastructure to improve neighborhood storm drainage. This project will keep more than 7,200 gallons of stormwater out of the sewer system each time it rains. Several portions of Assemblyman Hevesi's district are currently in the design phase of this project.



Assemblyman Hevesi co-hosts the 4th Jewish Community Leadership Breakfast with local elected officials.

Hevesi and Coalition Secure Funding to Reduce Environmental Impact of Freight Locomotives

In this year's budget negotiations, Assemblyman Hevesi, along with a coalition of local elected officials and community activists, successfully secured a \$3 million budget allocation for the creation of a pilot program to upgrade antiquated engines on freight locomotives that run through his district, as well as other parts of Queens, Brooklyn, Nassau, and Suffolk counties. For years, these locomotives have had a significant adverse environmental impact on communities that surround these tracks due to pollution from excessive emissions. This pilot program will begin to address this problem as New York increasingly relies on locomotive freight transport.

New York City has been transitioning from the use of trucks to rail transport for municipal waste over the past number of years as part of the city's sustainability initiative PlaNYC. This

change was implemented to gain environmental benefits by reducing diesel truck traffic congestion on our roads and highways. While reduced truck traffic has been achieved, the unintended consequence of this plan includes the idling of antiquated state owned locomotives in residents' backyards, near schools, beaches, and parks. This is causing environmental degradation and contributing to myriad health problems in these areas.

This pilot program will significantly reduce noxious toxins emitted from these locomotives by as much as 120 tons per train over 10 years, which would otherwise continue to pollute the air in these surrounding communities. The funds will provide relief to families that live along these railways. This is the first step in the fight for environmental justice, and transitioning New York State into a leader in clean rail transport.



Assemblyman Hevesi discusses the findings of a joint Health and Oversight Committee hearing he co-chaired at Community Board 6.

Serving Our Community

My office is here to assist with your concerns. Below are examples of recent constituent cases:

- Helped a constituent navigate the guidelines for valuation and assessment of property taxes through the New York City Department of Finance.
- Assisted constituents in applying for the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE).
- Arranged in-home Medicaid social worker assessment interview for a limited-mobility constituent.
- Helped a constituent navigate the CityBench program requirements and application process to obtain more public seating.
- Assisted several constituents in receiving delayed state income tax refund payments.

New Energy Efficiency Standards for Government Agency Purchases Pass Assembly and Senate

Assemblyman Hevesi, working with Senator George Maziarz (R-Niagara), Chair of the Senate Energy Committee, ushered the passage of A.1829 through the legislature, requiring that consumer audio and video appliances purchased by or for state agencies meet certain environmental assessment standards. By applying an evaluation tool currently used by the federal government, this legislation will require that 95% of state purchases of audio and video products meet increased efficiency standards.

EPEAT® is the definitive global registry for greener electronics. It's an easy-to-use resource for purchasers, manufacturers, resellers and others wanting to find and promote environmentally preferable products. Appliances covered under the new standard include PCs and monitors, imaging

equipment, and televisions. Standards through which these products will be graded include: reduction/elimination of environmentally sensitive materials, material selection, design for end of life, product longevity/life extension, energy conservation, end-of-life management, corporate performance, and packaging.

This vital legislation updates provisions of current law that are impracticable and outdated, due largely to the rapid innovation and technology shifts within the consumer electronics industry. By adopting the global EPEAT standards, the bill moves New York State in line with current federal environmental and efficiency practices and ensures that the state will purchase products that adhere to the highest standard for these technologies.

Hevesi's Oversight, Analysis, and Investigation Committee Begins Providing Local Government Mandate Relief

Assembly bill A.7187, which repeals several defunct sections of the general municipal law, represents the first legislative proposal from a new ongoing legislative initiative that is specifically aimed at making government more efficient. The New York State Assembly Committee on Oversight, Analysis and Investigation, in coordination with other standing committees, is undertaking a comprehensive review of tens of thousands of reporting requirements currently written into every area of New York State Law.

The purpose of this extensive review is to enhance government efficiency. After the first several months of review, it has become clear that many of these local mandate requirements are outdated, duplicative, or unused and unnecessary. This bill is the first in what is projected to be a very long

series of repeal bills that address these superfluous sections of law.

Specifically, this bill repeals reporting requirements pertaining to The Board of Railroad Commissioners which is no longer active. The bill also eliminates provisions of the general municipal law with regard to the temporary state commission on local government ethics and its reporting requirements. This is necessary because the commission sunset in 1993; however, legal references and cross-references have left these reporting requirements scattered throughout the general municipal law, resulting in various agencies and commissions having to still abide by these requirements. Assembly bill A.7187, introduced this year, unanimously passed the Assembly on June 17, 2013.

Hevesi Boosts Statewide Commerce with Passage of the Repower New York Farms Act

Assemblyman Hevesi's Repower New York Farms Act, bill A.4997C, passed both houses of the legislature this session and currently awaits the Governor's signature to become law. This legislation increases the amount of solar power that farms throughout New York State can use by four times the cap that exists currently. The bill is specifically designed to take advantage of the large amounts of farmland throughout New York State to bolster renewable energy production and provide farms and New York's agricultural industry the ability to lower utility costs for agricultural operations.

New York State is an agricultural leader when it comes to the production of dairy products, apples, and many other important commodities. The state has also seen an explosion in the growth of wineries, farm breweries and other businesses that are tied directly

to our state's farming economy. This agricultural economic engine in upstate New York has increased demand for fresh agricultural products in and around New York City, including an expansion of green markets and farmers markets. Investing in these enterprises allows farmers to have more access to the millions of consumers in the New York City Metro area.

In order to provide farmers with more capital to invest in their farm operations and to help expand their lines of distribution and retail sales into New York City and throughout the state, we must provide more relief from the ever-increasing cost of energy through new generation initiatives. This bill, by increasing the size of solar units that can be deployed to farm operations with residential meters, will lead to more on-farm renewable generation, lower utility bills, and leave more investment capital for New York's farmers.



ASSEMBLYMAN
**ANDREW
HEVESI**

Reports to the People

Summer 2013

PRSR STD.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Albany, New York
Permit No. 75

Hurricane Preparedness

Hurricane season has officially begun, with August through October providing the greatest potential for extreme weather in the New York region. Below is a list of suggestions on how to prepare for if and when a storm hits.

Keep a go bag ready. Prepare a bag for each member of your household should you need to evacuate quickly. Make a checklist of what you may need, including medicines, money and food, prior to a storm to ensure a quick evacuation.

Know where you will go. New York City provides hurricane shelters throughout each borough. Before a storm hits, find out where the closest shelter is near you in case of emergency.

Assemble an emergency kit. You may be unable to leave your home after a storm for a number of days. Make sure you have enough food, water and supplies to survive in your home for at least three days.

Secure your home. Bring inside furniture or objects that may be affected by storm winds. Close windows and outside doors securely, and board up windows if necessary.

To find out if you live in a Hurricane Evacuation Zone and for the latest evacuation information, visit nyc.gov/oem or call 311.