



Information from Catherine Nolan

Helping our Community

Dear Neighbor,

The 2014 legislative session has started and I look forward to continue advocating for our community. Throughout the session, I have pushed for the state to expand its pre-kindergarten program so that every child can have access to a good quality education. Research has shown that if a child has access to pre-K programs then they are much more likely to do better in school, go to college, and be better prepared for the workforce. I am also the lead sponsor of the Paid Family Insurance Act which would allow individuals to take time off from work to care for a sick relative or bond with a newborn child. Both pre-K and paid family leave are very important and the state must make the necessary investments to these programs.

We were also successful in saving several schools in our district including Long Island City High School. These schools are part of our community and we must continue to fight for them. I am also advocating for other community issues including to extending the Myrtle Avenue BID to Fresh Pond Road, expanding child care access for working mothers, and fixing the implementation of Common Core.

Please feel free to reach out to either of my district offices in Ridgewood and Sunnyside. We are always here to help

Sincerely,

Catherine Nolan
Member of Assembly

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I recently stopped by the United Forties Civic Association January meeting to discuss the current issues facing Western Queens and my priorities for the 2014 Legislative Session in Albany. With Don McCallian, President, United Forties Civic Association and the rest of the board including Mike Stemmer, Carol Burch, and Elizabeth Montenegro. Also pictured, Community Leader Brent O'Leary and Santiago Vargas of my staff.



Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan with this year's LIC/Astoria NAACP Honoree Cynthia Davis, Community Outreach Manager for the Floating Hospital.



I recently co-sponsored an African-American History Month Event and Awards Ceremony at Astoria Houses with Senator Gianaris and Councilman Constantinides. Bishop Mitchell Taylor, T.A. President Claudia Coger, and others were honored.



SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

Growing up Green Charter School Expansion

I was delighted that the New York State Education Department (NYSED) decided to approve an application for the creation of a Growing up Green Middle School. Previously, NYSED ruled against the creation of the middle school while also rejecting the elementary school's application bid to extend their charter for five years by only approving it for three. After hearing from the school and the parents, I sent a letter to the NYS Board of Regents expressing my concern of their decision. A few days later, NYSED reversed course and not only approved the new middle school but also changed their recommendation to extend the charter of the elementary school to five years.

It was wonderful to be able to celebrate a great victory for the community with Councilman Jimmy Van Bramer, Ira & Ellen Greenberg (parents), and others.



Long Island City High School Saved

I am happy to report that we were able to save another great community school. Last year, I spoke out at a Panel for Educational Policy (PEP) meeting against the Department of Education's plan to co-locate another school in with Long Island City High School. This proposed plan would have left LIC High School with less space and resources to accommodate its students.

I would like to congratulate Principal Vivian Selenikas and the Long Island City community for successfully advocating to keep the school as a full, comprehensive high school. This is a victory for parents, students, and our local community. Future generations of local kids will continue to benefit from LIC's award winning Career and Technical Culinary Arts Program, its various sports teams, and its other great programs.



Long Island City Partnership Legislative Breakfast

I was delighted to stop by the Long Island City Partnership Annual Breakfast to hear from the many small business owners that reside in our community. Like I said at the meeting, we need to continue to support our small businesses so they can continue to create jobs and keep our local economy strong. I look forward to working with Borough President Melinda Katz to accomplish these goals.

Extension of Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District

I sent a letter to the New York City Department of Small Business Services to ask that the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District be extended to include the area of Fresh Pond Road. The current conditions along Fresh Pond Road are unacceptable. The New York City Department of Sanitation should be doing more with our tax dollars but we must also work together as a community. The Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District has done great work and extending it to Fresh Pond Road would be a great solution for our community. I look forward to working with the businesses along Fresh Pond and working to set up meetings to explore all options.

UPK

As Chairwoman of the Assembly Education Committee, I am strong supporter of the Mayor's plan to allow for NYC to fully fund full-day universal pre-K and after-school programs. I am pleased that the NYS Assembly recognized the importance of these programs and included the Mayor's plan in its budget proposal. I will continue to push for the Mayor's plan in the final budget so we can create and expand programs in both Queens and the rest of the state.



Chaka Blackman, Judy Zangwill, Maria Chalen (Teacher's Aide), Jennifer Lecler-Fuentes (Assistant Teacher), and Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan along with many of the pre-K students.

Tour of Sunnyside Community Services

I took a tour of the pre-K program at Sunnyside Community Services. Just this year, Sunnyside Community Services won a grant from the New York City Department of Education to hold two part-time classes for 4 year olds. As I said in the opening letter, I want to expand the state's pre-K program to give more opportunities to our students. Pre-K programs like the ones offered in Sunnyside Community Services have shown tremendous promise in helping raise test scores, reducing income inequality, and closing the achievement gap.



Mayor Bill de Blasio visits Sunnyside Community Services

I was delighted to join Mayor Bill de Blasio for a tour of Sunnyside Community Services to highlight their pre-K programs.

State Senator Michael Gianaris, Mayor Bill de Blasio, Councilman Jimmy Van Bramer, Judy Zangwill, Executive Director, Sunnyside Community Services, and Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan.

NEWS FROM ALBANY

NYS Assembly Child Care Workgroup/Paid Family Leave Insurance

As Chair of the Assembly Education Committee and one of the few working mothers elected to the legislature, I was pleased to be appointed by Speaker Silver to the Assembly Child Care Workgroup. This workgroup conducted several roundtables on New York's child care system and recently announced its recommendations for improvement. The detailed Child Care Workgroup report, which can be found online at <http://assembly.state.ny.us/comm/ChildCare/20131220/index.pdf>, examines the challenges working families face finding child care.

The Child Care Workgroup recommends:

- Increasing access to subsidized child care;
- Providing paid family leave;
- Enhancing the quality of New York's child care system; and
- Improving child care administration.

The NYS Assembly has acted on these recommendations by passing a package of these bills just this past March. Study after study has shown that the earlier children begin to learn, the better their academic performance will be in the long run. That's why we must invest in our children today because New York's child care crisis will not only weaken our economy, but will hinder the development of our children as they enter the workforce in the future.

Paid family leave is another important recommendation found in the report that needs to be passed this year. I re-introduced my bill last year (A.1793-Nolan) which would enact a paid family leave insurance system and allow New York to join other states like California and New Jersey who currently have this policy in place. We must give all parents the ability to be with their newborn during their early years.

I will keep the community up to date on these issues as the legislative session moves forward. It is important that we give working families the stability and opportunity they deserve.



UPK Rally in Albany

I was happy to be the Master of Ceremonies at Mayor Bill de Blasio's UPK rally in Albany. The Mayor along with over 1,000 supporters traveled up to Albany to raise awareness about UPK and convince state lawmakers to approve the Mayor's plan to allow NYC to expand their pre-K programs. I am happy to announce that over \$300 million was included in this year's state budget to help our city and our children.



NEWS FROM ALBANY

Concerns addressed in A.8929

The Assembly recently took a huge step to address many concerns that parents had in relation to the implementation of Common Core and student privacy by passing A.8929. As the Chair of the Assembly Education Committee and the prime sponsor of this legislation, this bill would delay the use of test scores as a factor in teacher and principal evaluations for two years, as well as prevent certain test scores from becoming part of students' permanent records. This bill has the best approach to issues with the Common Core because it wouldn't jeopardize over \$1 billion in annual federal funding New York needs for education.

This legislation is a direct response to concerns that have been raised because education is about so much more than tests. We need to give teachers and students time to creatively learn in the classroom and cut down on the use of high-stakes testing that does more harm than good. The flawed Common Core rollout has caused unbelievable frustration and unneeded stress and

anxiety and we need to put the brakes on, take a breath and fix the Common Core implementation. By delaying its effects for two years, teachers can get the Common Core training they need to make sure our children get the first-rate education they deserve. And unlike other so-called 'legislative fixes,' this approach does not cost taxpayers billions and trigger immediate requirements on schools and students by the end of this school year.

This legislation also prohibits the State Education Department from providing student data to a third-party vendor, delaying the implementation until July 2015. Parents will also be given the choice to opt out of disclosing students' information. The legislation also requires third-party vendors to develop a breach remediation plan and to immediately notify schools or the State Education Department of suspected or actual security breaches. Sensitive student data shouldn't be handed over to anyone without a 100 percent guarantee it's safeguarded.



Chancellor Carmen Farina

I was delighted to hear Chancellor Farina give testimony about the Governor's Executive Budget in Albany. I look forward to working with the Chancellor to ensure that our students in NYC get the necessary funding they need. I also look forward to working with her on expanding Career and Technical education, expanding the arts, and ending the use of temporary classroom units or trailers.



Assemblywoman
**Catherine
NOLAN**
*Helping our
Community*

Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan receives prestigious award from the American Irish Legislative Society



I was honored to receive the Charles Parnell Award from the American Irish Legislative Society at their annual dinner ceremony at Hibernian Hall in Albany. Both Speaker Silver and Assemblyman Michael Cusick, President of the Legislative Society, were on hand to present the award. The Legislative Society also honored Lieutenant Governor Robert Duffy and State Senator John Flanagan.