



Assemblyman Cymbrowitz Reports to the Community



Dear Neighbor,

When I meet constituents on the street or at events, one issue invariably comes up for discussion. That issue? Quality of life. Everyone—myself included—wants clean streets, good schools, and a safe neighborhood where crime is low and vehicles are mindful of pedestrians. We want to live in a place where people watch out for each other, where our children and grandchildren can play outside, and where mom-and-pop businesses, the backbone of any economy, are allowed to thrive. Quality of life is the factor that determines loyalty to a community and whether families want to set down roots and stay for generations.

In the 13 years I've been in the Assembly, I've been privileged to represent people who are willing to share their thoughts about quality of life and many other issues that affect their lives and our community.

Please take a few minutes to read this newsletter, which spotlights some of the things I've been doing to help the community both in Brooklyn and in Albany. I'm pleased to report that we passed an on-time budget that provides significant tax relief for middle-class residents, ensures universal Pre-K for four-year-olds across the state, and addresses many of the current and future challenges faced by New York State's hardworking residents. We made great headway in addressing the rise in heroin and opiate abuse that has swept not just New York State but the entire nation, destroying too many lives.

In Brooklyn, we declared victory in the eight-year-battle over the Homecrest "horror house," saved Sheepshead Bay's mute swans from the state's extermination plan, and fought for Brighton Beach to be cleaned up and returned in tip-top shape to you, the people of our community. As you can see, your quality of life remains my number-one concern.

I'm always interested in hearing your thoughts and ideas.

Feel free to visit my district office any Monday through Thursday, 9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., and Fridays until 5:00 p.m. You can reach me at (718) 743-4078 or email cymbros@assembly.state.ny.us. If you're on social media, please "like" my page on Facebook and visit me on Twitter @stevecym.

Sincerely,

Steven H. Cymbrowitz
Member of Assembly



Legislature Passes Bill Introduced by Assemblyman Cymbrowitz to Save New York's Mute Swans

The Legislature passed a bill introduced by Assemblyman Steven Cymbrowitz that would save the state's 2,200 mute swans from a state-mandated death sentence.

The legislation (A.8790A/S.6589A) establishes a moratorium on the Department of Environmental Conservation's plan to declare the graceful bird—as iconic to Sheepshead Bay as the fishing boats and the Emmons Avenue promenade—a "prohibited invasive species" and eliminate the state's entire population by 2025.

In late January, Assemblyman Cymbrowitz launched a well-publicized outcry when DEC announced that it would kill the swans because of the damage they purportedly cause to the environment and other species such as ducks and geese. But experts remain conflicted about whether the birds inflict much damage at all, the lawmaker said, making it imperative to examine the issue further.

Assemblyman Cymbrowitz' pro-swan advocacy has attracted the attention of animal advocacy organizations like GooseWatch NYC and Save Our Swans. Locals from Sheepshead Bay and Brighton Beach, especially those well-versed in the daily struggles of non-native residents, also feel a kinship to the plight of the immigrant species.

"We know all too well the challenges that make acceptance difficult in a new and sometimes unforgiving land. For people, and for every living being, we need to extend a helping hand," he said. The bill is awaiting the Governor's signature.

"We know all too well the challenges that make acceptance difficult in a new and sometimes unforgiving land. For people, and for every living being, we need to extend a helping hand..."

Assemblyman Cymbrowitz Says Newly-Passed Budget Meets Challenges Faced by New York’s Hardworking Residents

Assemblyman Cymbrowitz said the newly-passed budget provides significant tax relief for middle-class families, ensures universal Pre-K for four-year-olds across the state, and “addresses many of the current and future challenges faced by New York State’s hardworking residents.”

“This budget keeps our promise to create jobs, to provide working families with tax relief, to alleviate the child care crisis, to provide long-ago promised cost of living increases to our direct care workers, and to honor our long-standing obligation to provide affordable housing, to protect public health, and to care for our most vulnerable citizens,” he said.

Among the highlights:

- \$1.1 billion in school aid and \$1.5 billion over five years for universal, full-day Pre-K in New York City and after-school programs.
- \$2 billion Smart School Bond Act, which, if approved by voters, will include loans of educational technology hardware to public and non-public schools, will fund the construction of new classroom space for full day pre-kindergarten, and enhance education technology.
- Increases Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) Awards to \$25.7 million, the first increase in 14 years.
- Two-year property tax freeze, a homeowners and renters tax credit for New York City residents, and the revision of the estate, corporate, and mortgage taxes resulting in \$770 million in savings for taxpayers.
- \$85 million in relief for New York City homeowners, condominium owners and renters with a “circuit breaker” plan,

which will generate tax relief in the form of rebate checks. The “circuit breaker” will run for two years and will factor in household income for the property tax break.

- \$2 million for opiate and heroin prevention treatment and recovery programs, the first time in the state’s history that funding has been allocated for this purpose.
- \$34 million in child care funding to support safe, reliable, quality care for 4,500 children.
- Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) restoration for human services workers at state-funded human services agencies.
- \$10 million to preserve the Spousal Refusal program.
- \$1.6 million for the Displaced Homemakers program to provide counseling and job training to homemakers so they can secure employment and economic independence.
- \$1.2 million to the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) Program to increase the income limit from \$29,000 to \$50,000 for a two year period.
- \$4.1 million to expand eligibility for the Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Program (EPIC).
- \$5 million for Community Services for the Elderly.
- \$1.4 million for the Housing Opportunity Program for the Elderly, a \$1 million increase over last year.
- \$2.2 million for the Neighborhood Preservation Program (NPP) and Rural Preservation Program (RPP), which serve as the lifeblood of neighborhood groups.



Assemblyman Cymbrowitz Sponsors Annual Health Fair on Emmons Avenue

Hundreds of residents took advantage of free screenings, giveaways, health-related information, and family-friendly entertainment during Assemblyman Steven Cymbrowitz’ 11th annual Lena Cymbrowitz Community Health Fair on Emmons Avenue. Sponsored by Assemblyman Cymbrowitz, along with Maimonides Medical Center, Mount Sinai Beth Israel Brooklyn, Kiwanis International, Net Cost Market, All Car Rent-a-Car, MJHS, and the event raised funds for Dynamic Youth Community.



Brighton Beach Belongs to the Public, Assemblyman Cymbrowitz Says

Brighton Beach belongs to the public—and Assemblyman Cymbrowitz said he was willing to help ensure that residents had a beach that was looking its best.

In a letter to Mayor de Blasio, Assemblyman Cymbrowitz said he wanted to “repurpose” some of the unused money he allocated for the renovation of Brighton Beach to remove the unsightly pilings that remain at the abandoned construction site of the Brighton comfort station.

Assemblyman Cymbrowitz allocated the funds in 2009 with Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny. He said that he already discussed the matter with staff at Assembly Ways and Means Committee and they suggested the idea of using the funds to remove the pilings.

Last year, the lawmaker led community opposition to placing the 20-foot-high comfort station in front of the Oceana condominiums after the Parks Department initially failed to perform an environmental impact study. He and others testified that the bathroom would better serve the public if it were moved farther west to Coney Island Avenue and the



boardwalk. Following pressure from Assemblyman Cymbrowitz and the community, the Parks Department included that option in its Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Assemblyman Cymbrowitz said using funds he allocated would effectively silence the critics who don't want to see FEMA money spent on relocating the comfort station. “Now, with FEMA incurring no additional expense, there is no reason to delay removing the old pilings and following the well-articulated wishes of the community,” he said.

It's a Win! Long-standing Homecrest Eyesore to Get the Wrecking Ball

In a victory for residents' quality of life, the Department of Buildings ordered the demolition of a hulking, half-built home at 1882 East 12th Street that ensnared neighbors in a legal battle for eight years, marking a win for the community and Assemblyman Steven Cymbrowitz (D-Brooklyn), who fought the city on their behalf.

“At last, justice has prevailed,” said Assemblyman Cymbrowitz. “This was a significant quality of life issue that ended up costing neighbors many thousands of dollars to fix and many nights of lost sleep. They can finally rest easy.”

The problem of out-of-scale development has been heard in neighborhoods throughout the city. Assemblyman Cymbrowitz has introduced legislation (A.1536) that would suspend the licenses of professional engineers and architects who abuse their privileges allowed under New York City's self-certification program. Self-certification allows licensed architects and engineers to approve the plans themselves and avoid a full-scale review by a Department of Buildings inspector.

Assemblyman Cymbrowitz is also looking into the absence of oversight of BSA that led to the nightmare on East 12th Street. In a letter to Mayor de Blasio in January, he sharply criticized BSA, saying that “middle-class homeowners are being victimized by a body with no accountability.”

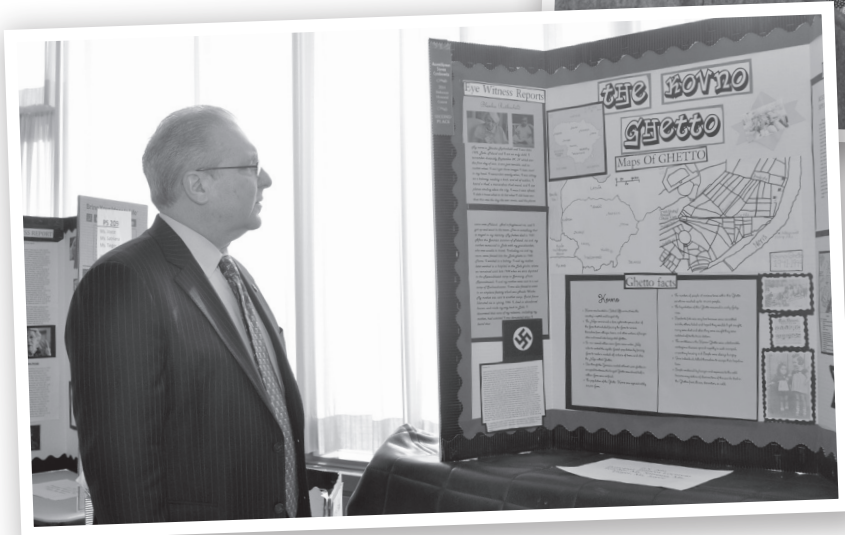


Assemblyman Cymbrowitz Honors Student Winners of Holocaust Essay, Poetry, Performance and Art Contest

Assemblyman Steven Cymbrowitz held his annual Holocaust Essay, Poetry, Performance and Art Contest ceremony at Kingsborough Community College, showcasing more than 400 submissions that revealed the students' understanding of civilization's darkest era. Zipora Yakuboff, a Holocaust survivor, shared her poignant story of loss and her eventual escape from a Nazi death camp. A candle-lighting ceremony paid tribute to the six million Jewish people who perished.



Girls from the Prospect Park Yeshiva, who won third prize in the elementary school division, present flowers to Holocaust survivor Zipora Yakuboff, the guest speaker at Assemblyman Cymbrowitz' awards ceremony.



Assemblyman Cymbrowitz looks at the many exhibits contributed by local students that depicted history's darkest era.



Assemblyman Steven Cymbrowitz

Reports to the Community

Inside

Assembly passes bill introduced by Assemblyman Cymbrowitz to save New York's mute swans **Page 1**

Assemblyman Cymbrowitz says newly-passed budget meets challenges faced by New York's hardworking residents **Page 2**

Assemblyman Cymbrowitz sponsors Annual Health Fair on Emmons Avenue **Page 2**

Brighton Beach belongs to the public, Assemblyman Cymbrowitz says **Page 3**

It's a win! Long-standing Homecrest eyesore to get the wrecking ball **Page 3**