



## Assemblyman

# Jeffrey Dinowitz

### Reports to the People of the 81<sup>st</sup> Assembly District

FALL 2015

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*Serving the communities of Kingsbridge, Kingsbridge Heights, Marble Hill, Norwood, Riverdale, Van Cortlandt Village, Wakefield and Woodlawn*

Dear Neighbor:

As we approach the holiday season and the new legislative session, I wanted to take this opportunity to reach out and review recent events in our community and in Albany. Though this year's legislative session was marked by some turmoil due to the election of a new speaker, we were able to hit the ground running and accomplished a lot. Under the leadership of Speaker Carl Heastie, not only did we renew the rent protection laws, we strengthened them. We prevented some terrible so-called education reforms from becoming a reality. And yet again, we passed an on-time state budget that reflected many of the priorities of our community and New York City as a whole. There is still, however, an urgent need to pass additional reforms in Albany. I am a long-time advocate and supporter of banning the LLC loophole, which essentially allows corporations to give unlimited campaign contributions; and I also believe steps need to be taken to ban outside income for state officials. We must rid the legislature of the corrupting influences that outside money brings in.

Locally, much has happened in the past few months. I staunchly oppose the city's proposals to revamp the zoning laws. I do not want to see taller and fatter buildings, causing less green space, less open space, and reducing the already low amount of parking in our neighborhoods. After speaking to all three Community Boards in my district, Boards 7, 8, 12, in opposition to zoning change proposals, I was pleased that all three boards voted overwhelmingly in opposition to this ill-advised plan.

The unnecessary loss of the PS 24 Annex is yet another example of our community having to deal with the result of incompetent bureaucrats. Every level of the bureaucracy at the NYC Department of Education sat on their hands, which may cause the crowding of over 140 additional school children into an already over capacity school building. I have been working with parent leaders and my colleagues in government to do everything we can to resolve this unfortunate situation.

With so many issues facing each of the neighborhoods in our community, I am fortunate to have a superb staff, expert at dealing with and resolving every conceivable constituent issue brought to our attention, as well as cutting through bureaucratic red tape. If our office can be of assistance to you, or you have a concern about our community, please don't hesitate to call, fax, email, mail, or walk in and let us know about it.

Happy holidays to all!

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Dinowitz  
Member of Assembly

## Assemblyman Dinowitz Co-Releases Kingsbridge Report



*Assemblyman Dinowitz, local elected officials and community leaders including: State Senator Gustavo Rivera, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr, Community Board 8 President Daniel Padernacht, and Council Member Andrew Cohen, announced new initiatives to revitalize and strengthen the Kingsbridge shopping district along 231st and Broadway.*

This Fall I, along with my colleagues in government, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., Council Member Andrew Cohen, Bronx Community Board #8 and the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, issued a joint report examining the Kingsbridge/Broadway retail corridor.

This well-known commercial corridor has seen two new retail shopping centers open at each end in recent months, and is slated for more retail, commercial and residential development in the near future. Given this activity, this group sought to identify issues affecting the corridor and put forth recommendations, which they believe will help maintain the area's status as a vibrant, active and relevant shopping corridor for both local residents and those beyond. These recommendations include a renewed focus on graffiti removal, standardized street furniture and sanitation receptacles, increased lighting and the creation of new parks and public interaction spaces, among others.

Having lived in the Northwest Bronx for most of my life, I have seen the Broadway corridor during some of its best and its worst times. It is exciting to see the amazing renaissance that has taken place along Broadway in recent years. New developments, including the construction of two new shopping malls, bring a new vitality to this corridor. There is so much more potential for growth along Broadway, but it must be done in a smart and coordinated fashion. While I have no doubt that Broadway's rebirth and revitalization will continue, we need to do everything we can to make common-sense improvements along the corridor. This includes better lighting, more seating areas, pedestrian- and bike-friendly pathways, improved parking, graffiti removal, and better sanitation. I am confident that all of us working as a team will have a tremendously positive impact on Broadway.

The complete report on the Kingsbridge/Broadway business district can be read at <http://on.nyc.gov/1fRNJcA>.



*Assemblyman Dinowitz and several of his colleagues met with Governor Cuomo and former Vice President Al Gore to announce a new major initiative to combat climate change.*



## Increasing Jerome Park Reservoir Access

As a longtime leader in the movement to create greater and closer access to the Jerome Park Reservoir, I was pleased that the NYC Department of Environmental Protection finally fulfilled its promise to grant a weekend-long pilot access program this November. After taking a tour of the park along the perimeter of the reservoir itself, I am more convinced than ever that the Jerome Park Reservoir is an invaluable and beautiful resource that our community is being kept from.

My long-term goal is for the community to be able to get closer to the reservoir. Currently, there are two fences surrounding the reservoir, but there is no reason the outer fence couldn't be taken down or moved closer without compromising security. Additionally, I believe the community should be able to walk across the dividing wall between the north and south basins, which we call the Unity Bridge. The Hudson River Park, the Highline, and Brooklyn Bridge Park, to name a few, have cost New York's taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars, and I believe it's time the city spent money to create this great new park for the people of the Bronx.



*Mayor Bill de Blasio, Assemblyman Dinowitz, Senator Jeff Klein, and other officials are pictured here at JFK high school surveying the damage and progress in rebuilding, after the horrific explosion that took place at the school this August.*

## Assemblyman Dinowitz Co-Hosts Shred Day with City Comptroller Stringer



*Assemblyman Dinowitz cosponsored "Shred Day" with City Comptroller Scott Stringer, AARP, and other elected officials. Community members brought hundreds and hundreds of pounds of important documents that needed to be securely disposed of.*

Identity theft is a very real threat in this day and age, and protecting yourself from it is more important than ever. That is why this September I was excited to co-host Shred Day outside my office along with AARP, NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer, Council Member Andrew Cohen, and State Senator Jeff Klein. Over 150 people came to our shredding event with boxes and bags packed to the brim with old documents containing sensitive information, which could have catastrophic consequences if they fell in to the wrong hands. I was ecstatic to see so many community residents stop by and have their documents shredded right in front of their eyes!

Identity theft is unfortunately all too common, especially among those over 50. By doing something as simple as shredding their documents, New Yorkers can safeguard their identity along with their hard earned credit ratings and retirement savings from unscrupulous people who mean to do harm. In the coming year I hope to work with my colleagues and other community organizations to provide this service again.

## REMINDER: The Rent Freeze Program, formerly known as the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE), Has Expanded

The New York State legislature has expanded the SCRIE and DRIE income eligibility from \$29,000 a year to \$50,000 a year. If you qualify, your monthly rent amount will be frozen and the City of New York will give your landlord a property tax credit equal to the amount of your increase. If you would like more information or would like help filling out an initial application, please feel free to call or stop by our office. To be eligible you must be at least 62 years of age, your income must not exceed \$50,000, and your annual rent must be greater than one third of your annual income.

If you would like assistance with applying to the program, or would like to know if you are eligible, please contact our office at (718) 796-5345.

## NYC Department of Transportation Installs Dinowitz Requested Speed Hump in Kingsbridge

After a significant amount of feedback from the community about vehicles traveling at dangerously high speeds along the residential corridor of Kingsbridge Avenue, I strongly urged the City Department of Transportation to install a speed hump on the street. After conducting a survey of the area last Fall, the DOT decided to address these serious safety concerns by installing a speed hump. High speed vehicles on Kingsbridge Avenue pose a great danger to many residents of this area, including many seniors and children. This speed hump will help keep car speeds down on Kingsbridge Avenue, keeping pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers in our community safer. If you are concerned about a dangerous or unsafe road condition please do not hesitate to contact my office at (718) 796-5345.



*Hundreds of people received free flu shots from Assemblyman Dinowitz's annual free flu shot program, which was cosponsored by Council Member Andrew Cohen, Congressman Engel, and State Senator Jeff Klein. A big thank you to NewYork-Presbyterian/Allen Ambulatory Care Network, New York-Presbyterian/Allen Hospital, the Riverspring Certified Home Health Agency, Montefiore Hospital, and Walgreens for providing the shots.*



## Albany Update

### WARNING: Be Sure to Secure Household Furniture

Following Ikea's recent announcement that they will be offering free wall anchoring kits to customers who have purchased certain products, I would like to remind the community of the dangers of leaving heavy furniture unsecured. Nearly every two weeks a child dies when a TV or some other large piece of furniture falls on them. In fact, according to one study from the federal Consumer Product Safety Commission, over 349 consumers were killed between 2000 and 2011 as a result of furniture toppling over; 84% of those deaths were children younger than nine years old. This is exactly why I sponsored a bill earlier this year requiring the New York State Department of State's Division of Consumer Protection to create a public awareness campaign about the dangers of unsecured furniture (A.7018).

### Keeping NY Healthy

This summer I proudly introduced a bill that would eliminate all non-medical exemptions for immunizations for children, giving New York State the strongest immunization law in the country. This past winter we were all reminded of the dangers of not vaccinating our children when a measles outbreak that started with just one person in California made its way across the country, infecting over 141 people. While some may question the science behind immunizations, the fact is that vaccinations are endorsed by the United States Surgeon General, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as a necessary public health measure to ensure the general health and welfare for everybody. When you decide not to vaccinate your children, you're not just putting them at risk; you're putting everyone they'll ever meet at risk. Because not every child can be vaccinated for legitimate medical reasons, it is incredibly important that we make sure that every child who can, receive the proper immunizations. This bill will ensure that every child across the state is properly vaccinated, not just to protect them, but to protect the community around them.



*Assemblyman Dinowitz joined Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul and several other female legislators to watch Governor Cuomo sign the Women's Equality Agenda in to law. Assemblyman Dinowitz was the chief sponsor of one of the bills in this very important package.*

### Governor Cuomo Signs Dinowitz Women's Equality Measure in to Law

I am proud to announce that after both houses of the State Legislature passed my bill allowing for reasonable attorney's fees in housing, employment, and credit discrimination cases when sex is a basis of discrimination (A.7189), Governor Cuomo signed this important legislation in to law this fall. Whether at home or at work, women have historically faced unfair barriers to success, economic security and even safety; these new laws represent significant progress in making full women's equality a reality; however the fight will go on.

## RENEWED RENT LAWS

In my last newsletter I wrote about the pending expiration of the state's rent laws. Since then, we managed to pass a bill renewing the laws, though it was not everything we had hoped for. The legislation we passed, which I supported, extends the rent regulations for four years, and to a very limited extent, strengthens protections for tenants. The legislation also stretches out the Major Capital Improvement (MCI) repayment period, so as to lower the monthly payments tenants make for MCI's; it raises the vacancy deregulation threshold from \$2,500 to \$2,700 and indexes future increases to Rent Guidelines Board increases. Additionally, the law limits the amount a landlord can increase rents when a tenant with a preferential rent vacates an apartment; such increases will depend on how long the previous tenant lived there.



*Assemblyman Dinowitz presented his community service award to Bryanna Castaneda-Flores upon her graduation at P.S. 7 where she was one of the top students. Also pictured is P.S. 7 Principal Frank Patterson.*



*Assemblyman Dinowitz recently received his IDNYC card at the Fordham Library Center. He has urged all New Yorkers to apply for this card.*

## REMINDER: IDNYC Cards Are Now Available!

New York City residents are now able to sign up for IDNYC – a government-issued identification card that is available to all City residents age 14 and older, regardless of immigration status. Mayor Bill de Blasio announced this initiative in his State of the City address last year and the program is now the largest municipal identification card program in the nation. Applicants must complete an application and submit it at an IDNYC Enrollment Center. The process is quick and easy! The IDNYC card is an accessible and secure document that enables residents to access City services and grant admission to City buildings, such as schools, and even better, you are able to use your IDNYC card at any public library in New York. For more information call 311.

## REMINDER: The NYC Speed Limit Has Been Reduced to 25 MPH

As of last fall the speed limit on ALL NEW YORK CITY STREETS was reduced to 25 mph unless otherwise posted. The reduced speed limit is an integral part of Mayor de Blasio's comprehensive Vision Zero Action Plan, and will be enforced by the NYPD. On average, a New Yorker is killed or seriously

injured every two hours in a traffic crash. Moreover, a pedestrian struck by a vehicle traveling at 25 mph is half as likely to die as a pedestrian who is struck by a 30 mph vehicle. Reducing the speed limit in New York will make our streets safer not only for pedestrians, but for motorists as well.

## Hundreds Attend Dinowitz Sponsored Summer Concerts

I was thrilled to see the hundreds of community members who came out, rain or shine, to attend this year's "Free Summer Concerts for the Community" series which I host along with the Bronx Council on the Arts. This year was the most successful concert series yet, with a total of eight concerts throughout our community. The concerts were held in several locations including the Amalgamated Train Park, the Riverdale YM-YWHA, the Williamsbridge Oval, and Henry Hudson Park. Residents sang

and danced to the music of returning favorites such as The Gene DiNapoli Variety All-Star Show, John Benitez and his Latin Jazz Band, Just Nuts Party Dance Band, Orquesta SCC, and Ginetta's Vendetta. Making both of their debuts this year, The Mystery Tour Beatle Tribute Band and NY Skyscrapers and Friends packed their respective venues and left each crowd begging for more. Thank you to all the participants this year and look forward to an even better Summer 2016 season!



### Beatles Tribute Band Pack the Riverdale Y

*As part of this year's "Free Summer Concerts for the Community," which Assemblyman Dinowitz hosts each year with the Bronx Council on the Arts, The Mystery Tour Beatles Tribute Band pulled in a large crowd at the Riverdale YM-YWHA.*

## Free Notary Service

Our office provides free notary service during regular office hours, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please bring two forms of identification, at least one with your photo and signature, if you would like your signature notarized.



*Assemblyman Dinowitz helped celebrate the 100th birthday of Johanna Zurndorfer at the Riverdale YM-YWHA. Pictured are Council Member Andrew Cohen, Johanna Zurndorfer, and Berta Rubinsztejn at the Riverdale YM-YWHA.*



*Assemblyman Dinowitz stood with 50th Precinct Commanding Officer Terence O'Toole and Council Member Andrew Cohen and hundreds of community members to celebrate this year's annual National Night Out against crime.*