

COMMUNITY NEWS

from Assemblyman

**J. Gary
PRETLOW**

Summer 2010

INVESTING IN OUR YOUTH



Now that the school year has come to an end, I am pleased to announce the Assembly's Summer Reading Challenge. Children who participate receive a New York State Assembly Excellence in reading Certificate for their work. This year, the Assembly is again coordinating its efforts with the New York State Library's "Summer Reading at New York Libraries" to get the word out about summer reading and the value of our local libraries.

It is important that we ensure our children get a quality education and the Summer Reading Challenge

is a part of that effort. Reading improves a child's critical thinking and vocabulary and studies show that kids who read do better in school. In today's tough economic climate, picking up a book also makes financial sense. The only cost is a trip to the library and a few minutes of your time.

To participate in the program, children must read alone or with someone else for at least 15 minutes each day for 40 days during July and August. Then mark the days off on a calendar and send it to me. Once received, participants will be rewarded with a reading certificate.

Here are some local libraries to visit:

MOUNT VERNON LIBRARY

28 So. 1st Avenue, Mount Vernon, NY 10550 • (914) 668-1840

Yonkers Public Libraries

Riverfront Library

1 Larkin Center
Yonkers, New York 10701

Grinton I. Will Branch

1500 Central Park Avenue
Yonkers, New York 10710
(914) 337-1500

Crestwood Branch

16 Thompson Street
Yonkers, NY 10701

For more information, please feel free to call my Mount Vernon District Office at (914) 667-0127 or Yonkers District Office at (914) 375-0456.

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN SAFEGUARDING OUR COMMUNITY

When sex offenders move into our neighborhoods, it can pose a serious threat to the safety and well-being of our children. That's why last year I helped pass a new law that makes it easier for families to find out if sexual predators are residing in their community.

In the past, concerned residents-if not otherwise specifically notified-would have to continually check the sex offender registry for updates themselves. Through this new law, called E-Alert, Mount Vernon and Yonkers residents will be able to receive free automatic e-mail updates about

level 2 and level 3 sex offenders who reside in our communities. This law, allows any New York State resident who signs up with the Division of Criminal Justice Services to receive automatic e-mail notifications when a registered sex offender moves into his or her neighborhood.

Giving families more information about sex offenders who live in our communities will help them keep their children safe. E-Alert is an innovative and invaluable tool that will help prevent future victimization.

HEALTH CARE

Unfortunately, there may come a time when we are unable to make sound decisions regarding our health care if we are faced with a serious accident or illness. On June 1, 2010, the Family Health Care Decisions Act took effect that establishes the right of family members and others close to an incapacitated patient to make health care decisions on that patient's behalf when he or she is no longer able to

do so. With the passing of this law, any debilitated person who has not signed a Health Care Proxy will benefit from having a surrogate make health care decisions on his or her behalf.

If you prefer to complete a Health Care Proxy which will allow you to appoint someone you trust to make health care decisions on your behalf, please give my office a call and we will mail you a Proxy.

YOUR HEALTH - SPOTLIGHT ON PROSTATE CANCER

According to the New York State Dept. of Health, Prostate Cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed among men in New York State. 1 in 6 men developed prostate cancer in his lifetime and each year, more than 13,000 men are diagnosed.

Prostate cancer is more common among black men and the risk of getting prostate cancer for all men increases as men get older. If your father, brother or son had the disease, please contact your doctor.

Symptoms of Prostate cancer are: not able to pass

urine; not able to start or stop the flow; urinating frequently; weak flow; and pain or burning during urination.

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms it is imperative that you speak to your doctor immediately for a thorough exam and diagnosis. If you are diagnosed with prostate cancer and do not have insurance, you may be eligible for cancer treatment through the NYS Medicaid Cancer Treatment Program. For more information, please contact the NYS Dept. of Health at (518) 486-1383.



Assemblyman Pretlow meeting with college students and Registered Nurses to address their concerns.

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

There are times in many of our lives when we are in need of viable assistance for a wide range of issues affecting our lives at any given time. Unfortunately, many of us do not know where to turn or who to call. I am pleased to inform you of the Hudson Valley Region 2-1-1 information and referral telephone assistance. 2-1-1 is a free,

confidential information helpline operated by knowledgeable and caring specialists who will put you in touch with agencies and services that can assist you. 2-1-1 is available from 8:00am-8:00pm, 365 days a year. If you have trouble accessing 2-1-1, please call 1-800-899-1479 or give my office a call and we will assist you.

PROTECTING RENT TO OWN CUSTOMERS

Some consumers turn to rent-to-own businesses when they don't qualify for traditional credit that they need to buy household appliances, furniture and electronic goods. Too often people make decisions about renting not realizing how much they may ultimately pay-seduced by the low weekly rental price, but failing to understand that they will actually pay double or triple the cost of an item if they choose to make all the payments necessary to acquire ownership.

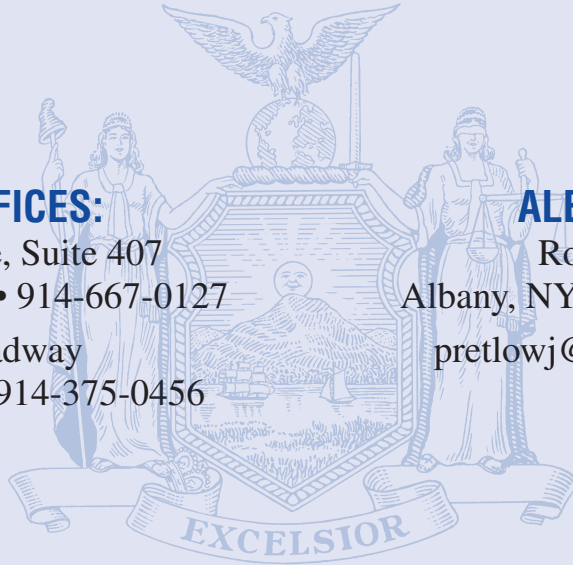
I am pleased to announce that the New York State Assembly passed legislation to increase consumer protections in the rent-to-own industry. This legislation establishes well-defined price controls and requires rent-to-own merchants to provide consumers with much more information. Under the current law, the total amount a rent-to-own customer must pay in order to acquire ownership of the merchandise is limited to twice the cash price of the merchandise. This bill requires rent-to-own merchants to: include the total

amount of payments, cost of rental, cash price, amount of each payment, number of payments and the rental period on all merchandise; provide notice to consumers of the early purchase option, including the total amount necessary to acquire ownership or exercise the early purchase option on each payment receipt; and provide customers with a copy of the signed rental-purchase agreement; and require merchants to offer consumers that suffer an interruption or reduction of income the option of paying temporarily reduced rental payments in certain situations.

By providing consumers with information about the actual cost of an item, they can make an informed decision about how much they are willing to pay. While rent-to-own merchants provide a unique service utilized by many New Yorkers, this legislation ensures consumers are aware of their rights and obligations prior to entering into a rent-to-own agreement, and that they pay reasonable prices for merchandise.



ASSEMBLYMAN J. GARY PRETLOW



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Albany, NY 12248 • 518-455-5291
pretlowj@assembly.state.ny.us



CLIP AND RETURN

Your questions or comments are important to me. If you have any concerns or issues you would like to discuss with me, please indicate and return to:

Assemblyman J. Gary Pretlow, 87TH District
6 Gramatan Avenue, Suite 407, Mt. Vernon, New York 10550
or
48 North Broadway, Yonkers, New York 10701

Name _____

Address _____

