

Assemblyman **TOM ABINANTI**

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MEDICAL MARIJUANA FOR THE SERIOUSLY ILL

Following months of negotiations, the Assembly and Senate passed and the Governor signed a new law establishing a medical marijuana program. Assemblyman Abinanti supported the initiative to allow medical marijuana use (in non-smokeable form) through a tightly regulated program by doctor's prescription for those suffering from specified serious medical conditions.



Assemblyman Abinanti met in Albany with two of his staff and other Greenburgh women about the Women's Equality Act.

COMBATING HEROIN ABUSE

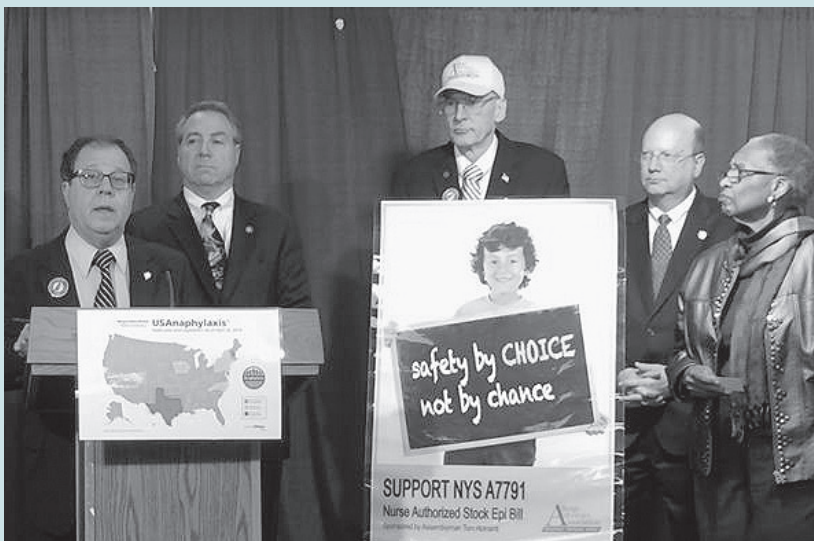
The Assembly and Senate passed and the Governor signed a series of new laws to combat the rapid rise of heroin use:

- New programs and insurance reforms to increase access to treatment
- Improved accessibility to lifesaving naloxone antidote kits
- School drug prevention and public awareness campaigns
- Strengthened State laws to prevent illegal drug distribution

WOMEN'S EQUALITY ACT

It's been over a year since the Governor sent the Legislature his measure to protect women's rights. Since then, the Assembly has passed the full 10-point Women's Equality Act not once, but twice, while the Senate has failed to even bring this legislation up for a vote. The Women's Equality Act contains key protections for women:

- *Safeguarding women's reproductive health rights*
- *Achieving pay equity*
- *Stopping sexual harassment in the workplace*
- *Fighting against human trafficking*
- *Granting domestic violence victims better protections*
- *Ending housing discrimination for domestic violence victims*
- *Stopping employment discrimination*
- *Ending discrimination against pregnant women*
- *Helping discrimination victims recover legal fees*
- *Preventing housing discrimination against those in need*



Assemblyman Abinanti joined by other Assemblymembers and advocates supporting his EpiPen bill.

ABINANTI EPIPEN BILL PASSES LEGISLATURE

Reports show deaths from severe allergic reactions that could have been prevented with epinephrine. Presently, New York schools may not stock EpiPens or use them for anyone who doesn't have a prescription, even in an emergency. Assemblyman Abinanti's legislation permits schools to stock and administer epinephrine without a prescription in an emergency situation. The bill awaits the Governor's action.

2014 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Assemblyman Abinanti is working to improve health services. Everyone should have access to quality, affordable medical care.

HEALTH



Assemblymembers Abinanti and Amy Paulin (Scarsdale) met in Albany with Westchester County Health Commissioner, Sherita Amler to discuss the Health Budget's impact on Westchester.

HEALTH BUDGET

The budget provided \$128.2 billion for two years to the Department of Health, \$14 million more than the Governor proposed, increasing State spending by \$9 billion or 7.5%.

The budget increased support for several significant public health measures including:

- **Rape Crisis Centers:** \$1.8 million
- **Infertility Services:** \$1 million
- **Family Planning Services:** \$750,000
- **Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund:** \$5 million

OUT-OF-NETWORK COVERAGE

The budget expanded consumer rights and protections for those who need and/or receive out-of-network services by providing:

- Protection from "surprise medical bills"
- The right to go out-of-network at the in-network rate in specific medical circumstances
- Improved network adequacy
- Improved disclosure of information
- New options to submit claims

EPIC

To make health care more affordable for New York's elderly population, the budget provided \$4.1 million to expand eligibility for the Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) program and \$5 million for community services for the elderly.

SAFE PATIENT HANDLING

To better protect the health and safety of both patients and health care professionals, the budget established the Safe Patient Handling Act - an initiative the Assembly has supported for many years. Beginning in 2017, healthcare facilities will be required to establish safe patient handling committees to implement appropriate procedures.

CPR AND AED INSTRUCTION IN SCHOOLS

Recognizing that immediate appropriate response to sudden cardiac arrest can double a victim's chance of survival, the Assembly and Senate passed legislation requiring the Commissioner of Education to establish a program to train high school students to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and how to use automated defibrillators (AEDs). The bill awaits the Governor's action.

ADOLESCENT PROBLEM GAMBLING

Following a Council on Problem Gambling study highlighting the prevalence of underage gambling in New York, the Assembly and Senate passed legislation requiring the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services to develop web-based resources available to schools and BOCES to combat adolescent gambling. Despite restrictions, there is still significant underage gambling in New York. The bill awaits the Governor's action.

LIFE CARE AT HOME

The Assembly and Senate passed legislation co-sponsored by Assemblyman Abinanti to expand seniors' options for life care at home. The bill permits continuing care retirement communities (CCRC), like Kendal on the Hudson in Sleepy Hollow, to expand their services into the community so that non-CCRC residents can use CCRC resources and facilities -- providing CCRCs added income while allowing others to stay in their homes. The bill awaits the Governor's action.



Assemblyman Abinanti met in Albany with pharmacy students about pending legislation.

Assemblyman Abinanti stands up for our community. Safety is more than a good police department. It's also strengthening families, preventing violence and providing choice.

WORKERS AND FAMILIES

ABINANTI WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION BILLS

Assemblyman Abinanti introduced two bills to protect employees against employer retaliation. Current law protects employees only where the illegal behavior creates a substantial danger to public health or safety.

The first bill protects employees in the financial services industry who report financial misconduct or illegal behavior to a supervisor or a public body. The bill was pending a vote at the end of session.

The second bill protects public and private sector employees who report public officials who violate the public officers law or penal law including bribetaking, official misconduct and defrauding the government.

CHILD CARE FOR WORKING FAMILIES

The budget provides over \$41 million to increase working families' access to subsidized child care by dedicating an additional \$34 million to add more than 4,500 child care slots statewide. These initiatives came after several months of extensive research, roundtables and discussions that the Assembly's Child Care Workgroup conducted with parents, child care professionals and advocates.

YOUTH FINANCIAL LITERACY

To strengthen our youth's financial abilities, the Assembly and Senate passed legislation to set up a financial literacy education program to teach teenagers and young adults the basics of finances such as managing income, balancing a budget and using bank accounts. It is designed for those in summer youth employment programs, where thousands of youth have their first exposure to a job and a paycheck. The bill awaits the Governor's action.



Assemblyman Abinanti participated in the Hastings Mothers' Club 100th Anniversary celebration.

SAFETY

CORRECTION REFORM

The budget requires that local correctional facilities house inmates under age 18 separately from those over 18.

ABINANTI UNDETECTABLE FIREARMS BILL

Responding to manufacturing technology advances such as 3-dimensional printers and laser cutting machines, Assemblyman Abinanti proposed legislation to prohibit the manufacture, possession, sale and transport of operational firearms that are undetectable by traditional metal detectors. The bill was pending a vote at the end of session.



ABINANTI EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION LEGISLATION

The Assembly passed Assemblyman Abinanti's legislation that would require county health commissioners to notify appropriate local officials in the event of a health emergency. Designed to insure that county and municipal officials are notified as soon as possible so they can quickly put in place appropriate emergency responses, the bill is modeled on a Westchester law that Abinanti passed when he was a Westchester County Legislator. The bill is pending in the Senate.



CONSUMER PROTECTION

UTILITY CONSUMER ADVOCATE

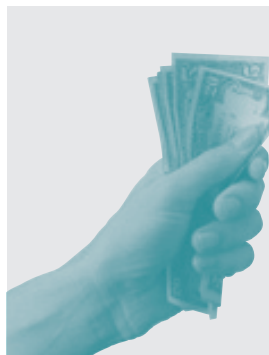
The Assembly passed legislation to create the Office of the Utility Consumer Advocate to provide an independent representative to advocate for residential utility consumers at state and federal regulatory proceedings involving utility companies that offer electric, natural gas, internet, cable television, telephone and wireless communication services. The bill is pending in the Senate.

ABINANTI PET OWNERS' PROTECTION

The Assembly passed Assemblyman Abinanti's legislation to insure that pet cemeteries can continue their long-accepted practice of burying pet owner's ashes next to their pet's remains. The bill was designed to prevent interference by State agencies wrongfully attempting to regulate the pet cemeteries' long-accepted practice. The bill is pending in the Senate.

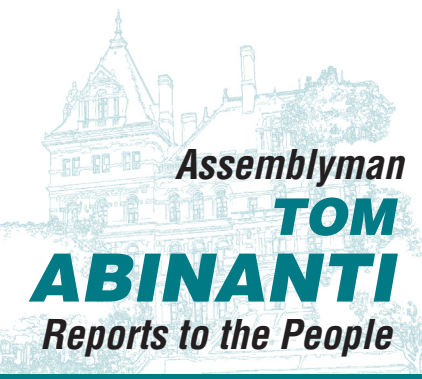



Assemblyman Abinanti met in Albany with employees and patients from Open Door in Sleepy Hollow who were concerned about the State budget.



UNCLAIMED MONEY

The New York Comptroller may have money that belongs to you! There is over \$12 billion dollars of unclaimed money from bank accounts, stocks and bonds, utility deposits, income tax refunds, and inheritances to name a few. To see if the State has your money, go to the Comptroller's website www.osc.state.ny.us and click on Unclaimed Funds. All you have to do is enter your name and your city.



Assemblyman
TOM
ABINANTI
Reports to the People

SEPTEMBER 2014

Dear Neighbor

This is my second report to you since our 2014 legislative session.

In my first newsletter, I discussed some of my efforts to preserve our environment, make government function better and strengthen New York's transportation system and infrastructure.

In this newsletter, I highlight some of my efforts to: (1) protect community health and safety; (2) better our health care system; (3) add some consumer protections; and (4) help our workers and families.

As in the areas that I previously discussed, we made some good progress but more needs to be done. I look forward to making further progress in the next legislative session.

In the meantime, I continue to work here in Westchester for our community. If I may be of any assistance to you, please don't hesitate to contact my office.

