

Assemblyman **TOM ABINANTI**

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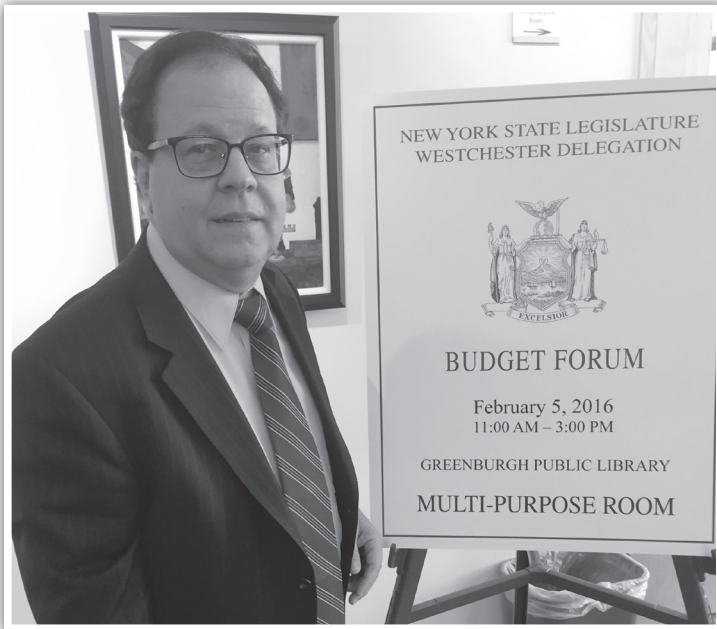


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PROPERTY TAX FAIRNESS

The Legislature passed and the Governor signed, Assemblyman Abinanti's legislation (A.10551-A) to give the Town of Greenburgh the option to phase-in tax increases resulting from the Town's recent town-wide reassessment and revaluation of real property for those property owners facing significant tax increases due solely to the reassessment.

Introduced at the request of the Greenburgh Town Board, the legislation provides that the newly revised assessment rolls will go into effect but the Town may exempt a portion of individual assessments from taxes for the first two years so long as certain eligibility requirements are met.

After a July 12th hearing, the Town Board decided to permit a two-year phase-in of tax increases – 33% of the increase in the first year and 66% of the increase in the second year - for those STAR eligible homeowners whose assessments increased by at least 25 percent. Homeowners must apply by September 15.

For additional information: Greenburgh's website (www.greenburghny.com) – Town Assessor's page, or call Assessor at 989-1520.

The Assembly passed Assemblyman Abinanti's legislation, (A.10635-A) requested by Greenburgh, to permit Greenburgh to increase the maximum income senior citizens and persons with disabilities may earn to be eligible for a property tax exemption. The bill would increase the maximum income to \$50,000. The bill awaits Senate action.

PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

The Legislature passed the Abinanti bill to help keep property taxes in check. Twice.

Yonkers, White Plains, New Rochelle, Peekskill and Rye impose their own sales and hotel taxes – paid largely by out-of-towners – to help cover the costs of public services.

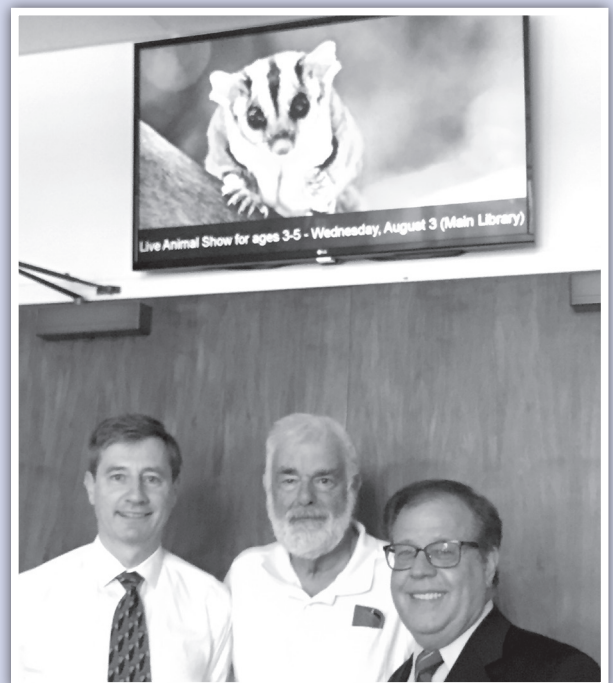
Greenburgh, Tarrytown, Irvington, Dobbs Ferry, Hastings, Elmsford, Ardsley and Sleepy Hollow, don't have their own sales tax or hotel tax.

That's not fair.

Assemblyman Abinanti's bill (A.992) would let these communities impose a small 3% hotel room tax. Greenburgh alone could raise \$1 million.

Out-of-towners who stay in their hotels would contribute to the cost of the public services they use.

Last year the legislature passed Assemblyman Abinanti's bill but the Governor vetoed it. This year the legislature passed it again. It's now up to the Governor!



Assemblyman Abinanti with Mt. Pleasant Public Library Director, John Fearon and Library Board Chair, Jim Calabro, in front of one of the library's electronic monitors funded by the State through Abinanti's efforts.

2016 LEGISLATION

On April 1, 2016, the Legislature passed the 2016-17 state budget. Like last year, the results were mixed-some good, some bad and some in-between.

2016-17 STATE BUDGET

EDUCATION

The final budget provides \$24.7 billion in education aid – \$1.4 billion (5.9%) more than last year. While the increase is almost \$1 billion less than the Assembly had proposed and less than the 2008 record increase of \$1.7 billion, it is \$500 million more than the Governor had proposed.

The budget fully restores the Gap Elimination Adjustment (\$434 million) and allocates \$627 million in Foundation Aid, with \$100 million of that earmarked for Community Schools. The enacted budget also:

- increases 4201 Schools (Blind and Deaf) funding by \$2.3 million to \$101 million;
- increases Bilingual Education Services funding by \$1 million to \$15.5 million;
- restores \$903,000 for the New York School for the Deaf;
- restores \$903,000 for the Henry Viscardi School; and
- restores \$500,000 for the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at SUNY Albany.

HIGHER EDUCATION

The budget freezes SUNY and CUNY tuition for this year and provides over \$1 billion for the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP). It also boosts funding for SUNY and CUNY community colleges by \$20 million.

MINIMUM WAGE

The budget raises the minimum wage for all New Yorkers – incrementally, with implementation varying by region. In Westchester, the current \$9/hour minimum wage will rise to \$10 at the end of 2016 and then rise by one dollar annually until reaching \$15 in 2021.



Assemblyman Abinanti spoke at a rally of home care workers urging a minimum wage increase.

PAID FAMILY LEAVE

The budget provides that starting in 2018 New Yorkers will be able to take up to 12 weeks of paid family leave to care for a loved one in need. Funded through a small weekly employee contribution, the measure permits workers to receive up to two-thirds of their salary during their absence after working six months at their jobs.

TICKET SCALPING

Assemblyman Abinanti introduced legislation (A.9181) designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous ticketing practices for sporting events and concerts. The bill follows a report by New York’s Attorney General detailing significant consumer abuses by the live entertainment ticket industry. Among its provisions, the bill would ban “ticket bots.”

ETHICS

The Assembly and the Senate gave first passage to a constitutional amendment to provide that elected and high ranking public officials forfeit their taxpayer funded pensions upon conviction of felonies betraying the public trust. Upon second passage by the Legislature the measure will be placed on the ballot for a public vote.

The Legislature also passed additional measures to reform campaign financing, including additional disclosure by lobbyists and political consultants and increased penalties for violations. This legislation awaits the Governor’s action.

Assemblyman Abinanti introduced several measures to crack down on public corruption in New York:

- A.1137– to prohibit retaliation against employees who report unlawful activity;
- A.7173 – to require members of economic development councils (even volunteers) to file annual financial disclosures; and
- A.10096 – to prohibit former members of the State’s Ethics Board (JCOPE) from practicing before or taking a job with any state agency for a period of two years.

TIVE SESSION

Libraries are our community centers. They are the great equalizers.

LIBRARIES

BUDGET

As Chair of the Assembly Committee on Libraries and Education Technology, Assemblyman Abinanti led successful efforts to increase (1) state library operating aid \$4 million to \$95.6 million, and (2) state library construction aid \$5 million to \$19 million, a 35% capital funding increase over last year and the first increase in nearly a decade.



Assembly Libraries Committee Chair Abinanti spoke to New York Library Association members in Albany.

AWARD

Assemblyman Abinanti was honored to receive a "Library Champion" award for his steadfast support of libraries.



Assemblyman Abinanti with Westchester Library System Executive Director Terri Kirschner.

LOCAL CAPITAL GRANTS

The New York State Library awarded construction grants to three public libraries in the 92nd District. The grants are supported by a \$14 million capital fund appropriation in the 2015 state budget.

Warner Public Library

\$30,734 for interior renovations to increase public meeting space.

Mt. Pleasant Public Library

\$32,500 for a renovation to make five restrooms American with Disabilities Act compliant.

Greenburgh Public Library

\$44,868 for interior renovations to create four individual and group study rooms.

ROUNDTABLE

As the digital divide continues to grow while the reliance on advanced technologies continues to expand, Committee Chair Abinanti convened a roundtable of library experts to examine the use of 21st century technology in libraries. The roundtable sought testimony to understand what resources libraries already have and what libraries currently need to fulfill the technological needs of their communities.



Assembly Libraries Committee Chair Abinanti led a roundtable discussion of leaders of the State's public and university libraries.

Around the Community



Sleepy Hollow St. Patrick's Day Parade.



Mt. Pleasant-Blythedale with Regents Kathleen Cashin and Judith Johnson and Assemblymember Shelley Mayer.



Hartsdale with striking workers.



Hastings Memorial Day Parade.



Assemblyman
TOM
ABINANTI
Reports to the People

Summer 2016

Dear Neighbor,

I've been privileged to represent you in the Assembly for the last 6 years. I've worked diligently to advocate for our suburban needs and concerns. I've tried to use state government to make our community better.

This is my first report to you since our 2016 legislative session concluded. I highlight some crucial property tax issues including two measures requested by the Town of Greenburgh to facilitate the implementation of its revaluation. I note passage as part of our budget legislation new laws to increase the minimum wage and implement paid family leave. I also note the impact of the State budget on education and libraries and my efforts as Assembly Libraries Chair to improve our library services. Finally, I describe some steps we took to stop unethical activities by public officials.

I look forward to our next legislative session which begins in January. 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.