



Legislative Update for Rockland Women from Assemblymember Ellen Jaffee

SEPTEMBER 2014

Dear Friends,

As your Assemblymember I have worked to promote solutions to concerns impacting the lives of Rockland women, youth and families including high quality, affordable child care and early childhood education, reproductive rights, pay equity, workforce training for women, early detection of breast cancer, protective treatment for victims of sexual assault, strengthening treatment for women struggling with substance abuse, alleviating homelessness among women veterans, and increasing awareness of sensitive topics affecting women at every age.

This year partnering with the PTAC Program at the Rockland Economic Development Corporation (REDC), I organized valuable and informative workshops for minority- and women-owned businesses that are so vital in our communities. My goal was to assist these businesses in getting MWBE Certification and to strengthen their capacity to bid and participate in government subcontracting opportunities.

I took on a leadership role in advocating for the passage of the full 10-Point Women's Equality Act (WEA), which I am pleased to report passed the Assembly two years in a row. We await the Senate's passage of this important legislation.

This newsletter provides more detailed information about legislative accomplishments. My priority will always be working for what matters to Rockland women, youth and families. Please let me know what is most important to you. Your feedback is essential. I hope you take a few moments to share your thoughts and concerns. Phone me at 845-624-4601 or email me at jaffee@assembly.state.ny.us.

You can also visit my Assembly website to sign up for email updates at: <http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/Ellen-Jaffee>.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Warmest regards,

Ellen C. Jaffee
NYS Assemblymember, 97th District

Bills to Protect Our Families, Our Health, Our Jobs

Jaffee Sponsors Equal Pay Legislation

Ellen Jaffee, an outspoken advocate for pay equity, has sponsored legislation to help close the gender wage gap including the Workforce Training Law, which you can read more about in this newsletter.

"When more than one million households in New York State are headed by hardworking women who are responsible for the economic security of their families, and often struggling to make ends meet, our silence on the issue of income inequality is offensive in and of itself," Jaffee said. "Women cannot be truly independent without economic independence. Closing the gender wage gap will give women the critical economic boost they deserve, enable families to be more financially secure, and help our local economy grow. By taking strong action to correct income disparity we help ensure equality and freedom from discrimination for all women who call New York home."

The Women's 10- Point Equality Act (WEA) includes multiple pay equity provisions to ensure that women are being paid equal pay for equal work, including a modification of the terms and conditions in which an employer can pay different wages to different employees. The adjustment would clearly state that an employer cannot determine wages on a sex-based differential and the determination must be related to the duties and requirements of the job and should be consistent with business necessity.



Assemblymember Jaffee urges the Assembly to recognize the full value of women's skills and contributions to the work force by passing a resolution memorializing the Governor to proclaim April 8, 2014, Equal Pay Day in New York State.

Did you know? According to the National Partnership for Women and Families, in New York State for every dollar paid to men, women earn 84 cents, which amounts to a yearly wage gap of \$8,275. On average a woman in New York State who holds a full-time job is paid \$42,113 per year while a man who holds a full-time job is paid \$50,388. If the gap were eliminated, a working woman in New York would have enough money for approximately:

- 63 more weeks of food (1.2 years' worth)
- Four more months of mortgage and utilities payments
- Eight more months of rent

ASSEMBLYMEMBER ELLEN JAFFEE

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Women's 10-Point Equality Act Passes Assembly a Second Time

For the second consecutive year, the Assembly passed all 10 points of the Women's Equality Act (WEA), which the Governor first proposed in his 2013 State of the State address. The bill (A.8070) would help provide a path to women's full equality by: securing equal pay and fair access to housing; combating employment discrimination, sexual harassment, domestic violence and human trafficking; protecting women's health. Despite polls showing overwhelming support for the full 10-point package, the Senate once again refused to vote on the legislation.

"All 10 points are vital to women in attaining full equality and autonomy over their bodies," Jaffee said. "I am disappointed that the Senate again let down the women of New York."

New York State's outdated law protecting women's reproductive rights was written before the landmark 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade* and does not comply with federal law. The proposed reproductive health component in the 10-point package would bring New York State law up to date with federal law and allow a woman and her doctor to make personal health decisions when necessary to protect her life or health. If federal law were to be overturned, this legislation would guarantee reproductive rights to women in New York State.

To learn more about WEA visit Ellen Jaffee's Assembly website: <http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/Ellen-Jaffee> then click on the WEA icon on the homepage.



National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) members from across New York State visited with members of the Assembly and Senate on April 28, 2014, to promote the passage of the Women's Equality Act (WEA) in its entirety, with a focus on bringing all 10 points to a vote in the Senate, including the tenth point, the Reproductive Health Act.

(Left to right): NCJW Rockland Section: Rhoda Appel, Vice President of State Policy Advocacy; Judith Hoffman and Ellen Levine, members; Assemblymembers, Ellen Jaffee and Ken Zebrowski; Janet Stravitz, member; Rochelle Welsh, President.

Assemblymember Jaffee Sponsors Bill to Exclude Teen Income from Child Care Subsidy Calculations

"It is important for the safety of our children and families to ensure reliable, affordable and accessible child care is available to every family in New York State, regardless of their income," Ellen Jaffee said. "High co-pays and lack of available subsidies hurt families in a myriad of ways, from loss of wages to inadequate care for their children. It is up to us in New York State to fix this problem for our families and the children, who are our future."

The 2014-15 state budget includes Jaffee's bill (A.01077-A), which requires local social services districts to disregard the income of teens under the age of 18 for the purposes of determining a household's eligibility for child care subsidies.

Jaffee's bill is part of a larger package included in the budget to help alleviate the child care crisis in the state.

"Assemblywoman Jaffee has been a staunch supporter of children, their families and their teachers for her entire career. She realizes that the most important years are the early years for childhood growth and development and that we must invest in young children if we are to enrich our society, strengthen our economy and succeed as a nation!"

*- Jane Brown, Executive Director
Child Care Resources of Rockland, Inc.*



Assemblymember Jaffee meets in her district office with local child care advocates to discuss the importance of quality and accessibility in early care and education. (l to r) Arnie Warmbrand, Victoria Caramante, Eyleen Ortiz, Sonia Barton, Ellen Jaffee, Jane Brown, Kit Saizdelamora.

Jaffee's Workforce Training Law Helps Reduce Gender Wage Gap

"Responding to occupational segregation is an important part of tackling the gender wage gap because income inequality isn't just a case of economic unfairness, it's a matter of economic injustice, and it's holding back far too many of our working families," Jaffee said.

Currently, 29% percent of households headed by women in NY State live below the poverty level. Equally alarming is that traditionally female occupations pay considerably less than those occupations that are dominated by men. Jaffee's law created a work force training program in the Department of Labor that includes up-to-date information about careers that offer a higher

salary and compensation as well as counseling, skills development and training to ensure that women who visit state workforce training centers will be informed of higher-paying jobs traditionally held by men that they too qualify for and that they may have been steered away from in the past.

"This law gives women the information and training they need to make better job decisions and career choices for themselves and their families," Jaffee said. "Equipping women job seekers with this knowledge will help them reach their full earning potential and break down barriers in the workplace for all women who want to increase their employment opportunities and their paychecks."

NYS Attorney General Schneiderman: “Women should be empowered with information to make their personal healthcare choices.”

On July 17, 2014 Attorney General Eric Schneiderman announced the Reproductive Rights Disclosure Act, a new bill which would help protect New York women from the effect of the Supreme Court’s controversial Hobby Lobby decision. His proposed legislation would require employers to give 90-days written notice before making any changes in contraceptive coverage. It also would require employers to inform prospective employees of the birth control coverage they offer.



Assemblymember Jaffee joined the Attorney General, State Senate Minority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and a coalition of legislators and advocates at a press conference in White Plains to support the proposed legislation.

Jaffee’s “Boss Bill” Passes Assembly with Bipartisan Support, Bans Discrimination Based on Reproductive Healthcare Decisions

Jaffee’s bill (A.8769A / S.6578B) would close a glaring loophole in New York’s workplace anti-discrimination laws by banning employers from discriminating against employees on the basis of their reproductive health decisions. The bill, sponsored in the Senate by Liz Krueger (D – Manhattan), was prompted by more than 100 federal lawsuits brought by employers seeking to deny their employees the birth control coverage benefits they are guaranteed

through their healthcare plans under the federal Affordable Care Act. While this legislation would not directly affect employers’ health insurance offerings and covered services, it would prevent discrimination or retaliation against employees for their use of healthcare services and their healthcare decisions, and it would reinforce medical privacy protections for employees.

The Senate did not vote on the bill before the close of session.

Jaffee Sponsors New Law to Protect Child Victims of Human Trafficking

It’s estimated that nearly 300,000 children become victims of labor and sex trafficking in the United States each year. On average, child victims of human trafficking are 13-14 years old when they become involved in prostitution.

“Human trafficking is modern-day slavery. I do not believe that victims of human trafficking should be treated as criminals in the eyes of the law,” Jaffee said. “I am committed to doing all I can to put an end to human trafficking. I will continue to speak out and to advocate for all those who fall victim to such a heinous act.”

Under the new law (Ch. 555 of 2013), the court will have the ability to treat 16- and 17-year-olds who are suspected of engaging

in prostitution as Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS.) The law also mandates that if a person younger than 18-years-old is convicted of or pleads guilty to a prostitution-related charge, the judge must order a youthful adjudication, relieving the individual of a criminal record. In addition, the law will increase access to treatment and services to assist victims in coping with their traumatic abuse and to help prevent them from returning to a life of victimization.

According to FBI data, sex trafficking is the fastest-growing business of organized crime and the third-largest criminal enterprise in the world, with a yearly profit of nearly \$32 billion.



Assemblymember Jaffee hosted an event at Nyack Hospital to share information about breast density. With her are Dr. Patricia Joseph, MD, Director of Breast and Women’s Health Prevention Services at Nyack Hospital (l); Radiologist, Dr. Shari Siegel-Goldman, MD, Director of Breast Imaging at Hudson Valley Radiology Associates (HVRA) and Nyack Hospital (r); and Joann Pushkin, breast cancer survivor-turned-advocate and cofounder, D.E.N.S.E (Density Education National Survivor’s Effort).

Jaffee’s Breast Density Inform Law is Most Comprehensive in the Nation

Ellen Jaffee’s landmark legislation made New York one of the first states to require that women be informed in clear language if their breasts are dense. Dense breast tissue can hide cancers on a mammogram and may increase a woman’s risk of developing breast cancer. The law seeks to provide a woman with this medical finding and to encourage a follow-up conversation with her doctor about supplemental screening. New York’s Breast Density Inform Law serves as a template to other states as they draft similar legislation. Since the Law’s enactment most states have followed suit supplying personal density information to women based on language developed by Jaffee and Senator John Flanagan (R-Islip) in New York.



Assemblymember Jaffee greets Maureen Morgan of Pomona on Women Veterans' Recognition Day in Albany. Morgan is the first woman to lead the Rockland American Legion in its 95 year history.

Midwives Honor Jaffee

On April 29th, 2014 members of the NY State Association of Licensed Midwives came to Albany to honor Ellen Jaffee for her strong advocacy on women's health issues.

Patricia Burkhardt, President said, "The midwives of New York State are delighted to honor Assemblywoman Jaffee for her support of women, her understanding of the complexities in their lives, and her encouragement for the midwives who often care for them. We also very much appreciate that she became a co-sponsor of the Birth Center Bill. (A.09398 / S.07121), sponsored by Assemblymember Richard Gottfried (D-Manhattan) will enhance options for women to receive safe and cost effective care."

Jaffee Resolution Raises Awareness of Women's Lung Health

Jaffee's resolution proclaiming the week of May 12-18, 2014, Women's Lung Health Week, celebrates and honors the power of women who stand united to fight lung cancer, the #1 cancer killer of women in the United States.

Denise Hogan, Coordinator, POW'R Against Tobacco, American Lung Association of the Northeast said, "I want to thank Assemblywoman Jaffee for introducing the resolution and working to raise awareness. Awareness brings knowledge, knowledge brings change. We are raising the bar and working towards making women's lives free of lung disease."

RESOURCES

Breast Health Services:

- Hudson River Health Care Cancer Services Program: 845-573-9860
- The Breast Center at Nyack Hospital: 845.348.8551
- The Center for Breast Health at Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center: 1-866-596-8456 or 845-369-8800

Tomorrow's Workplace (Employment Services): 845-356-5100

Childcare Resources of Rockland: 845-425-0009

Center for Safety and Change

(Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Crime Victims Services):
845-634-3344



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COMMUNITY OFFICE HOURS

Join Ellen Jaffee for ASSEMBLY OFFICE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Every 3rd week of the month, Assemblymember Ellen Jaffee will hold local community office hours to answer questions and hear concerns from constituents.

September 20, 2014

2:00 PM - 4:00 PM
9W Market, 243 Rte. 9W, Palisades, NY

September 21, 2014

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Piermont Farmers' Market
M & T Bank Parking Lot, Piermont, NY

October 18, 2014

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Suffern Farmers' Market
Parking lot A bottom Lafayette, Suffern, NY

November 20, 2014

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Nyack Farmers' Market
Riverspace Parking Lot, Nyack, NY

Keep an eye on Facebook and Twitter for Ellen in your neighborhood!