



Assemblymember
Ellen Jaffee
 Assembly District 97

Dear Friends,



March is Women’s History Month. The women of New York State have led the way in the fight for justice and equality. “Organize, agitate, educate, must be our war cry,” Susan B. Anthony said as she led the nascent women’s rights movement in America. I won’t stop fighting until we have full equality, including equal pay for equal work, quality childcare, paid family leave and access to full, affordable reproductive health services that women have had under federal law since the passage of Roe v. Wade in 1973.

I hope you are able to get out and enjoy this incredible weather. And remember, Sunday, March 13th, **SPRING AHEAD** and set your clocks ahead one hour for [Daylight Savings Time](#).

~Ellen~

Public Hearings: TZ Bridge Shared Use Path

The Thruway Authority will [hold public hearings](#) on the new Tappan Zee Bridge shared-use path with an open house from 5-8 and the public hearing portion to start at 6:30 pm on March 16 at Nyack Middle School. The NYS Thruway Authority and the NYS Department of Transportation will be gathering all comments about the two remaining concepts for the Shared Use Path. This pathway across the new bridge will bring many tourists to the area. [The hearings](#) are an opportunity to give feedback on the foot and bike paths that run over the new bridge between Tarrytown and South Nyack. If you are unable to attend, please email the NYS Thruway Authority/NYS Department of Transportation at info@newNYbridge.com



Free Tax Preparation Assistance

The IRS-certified volunteers with the [Volunteer Income Tax Assistance \(VITA\)](#) program provide free tax preparation services to individuals and families with annual incomes of \$54,000 or less, people with disabilities, the elderly and those with limited English skills. For those 60 years of age and older, the [Tax Counseling for the Elderly \(TCE\)](#) program can also provide assistance at no cost to you. Click on the links or call 800-906-9887.

Advocating for Full-Day Kindergarten



Meeting with East Ramapo Kindergarten advocates (l to r) Romel Alvarez, Amelia White, and Tammy Goss. East Ramapo and North Rockland are the only school districts in Rockland County that still offer half-day programs. Although full-day Kindergarten is not mandated by the State Education Department, the shift from half- to full-day programs reflects an increased emphasis on the importance of early childhood education.

NY State Student Loan Forgiveness Program

Applications for the [Get On Your Feet](#) program are now being accepted. Students who graduated both high school and college in the State and received an [undergraduate degree in or after the 2014-15](#) academic year and have lived in the state for 12 continuous months may be eligible to have up to two years of federal student loan payments forgiven. To be considered for the program, applicants also have to be enrolled in either an income-based or pay-as-you-earn loan repayment program and have an adjusted gross income of less than \$50,000. To learn more visit click [here](#) or call 1-888-697-4372

Attorney General Schneiderman Fines Interim Healthcare Inc. for Discriminatory Ad

Last October, Interim HealthCare Inc. placed a discriminatory ad in the Pennysaver. I called for an investigation into this act as it clearly violated State and Federal law that make it illegal to discriminate because of an individual’s birthplace, ancestry, culture or language. I want to thank the [Attorney General](#) for taking this blatantly discriminatory action committed by personnel at Interim Healthcare Inc. seriously. Let it be known that any company or organization who singles out a group of individuals in a discriminatory advertisement because of its national origin is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The advertisement not only offended the Haitian and Haitian-American Community in New York State and throughout the country, but also members of the larger community regardless of their individual ethnic and cultural background.



Assembly Budget Proposal Eliminates GEA, Restores \$434 Million for Schools



The Assembly budget proposal provides \$25.4 billion in aid for New York's schools, including \$434 million to eliminate the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) that has left schools underfunded and school districts and taxpayers overburdened. It also includes \$1.1 billion in foundation aid, which is targeted primarily to high-needs school districts. The foundation aid is part of a plan to get back on track with a four-year phase-in of the \$4.4 billion in foundation aid that is owed to school districts as part of the historic

Campaign for Fiscal Equity settlement. In addition, the plan includes \$200 million for community schools, a program that offers social, emotional, health and academic supports to students, particularly in some of the neediest communities in the state. Now is the time to ensure our schools have the funding they need to give kids the quality education they deserve. Pictured above, members of NYSUT in Albany.

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