

Assemblymember  
**Tony Simone**

Assembly District 75



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Dear friends,

I hope you had a wonderful holiday season, and that your family has been safe and warm through the first snowstorm in New York in nearly 700 days. The image of the city covered in a blanket of snow seems far away now, but my pup Radar enjoyed playing in the snow while it was here!

Albany is back in session and my colleagues and I are working hard to deliver a state budget that will build a more affordable, healthy and livable New York. Below, you'll find information on new legislation, my work in the district and community events!

As always, if you have an issue or question please reach out to my office at (212) 807-7900 or [simonet@nyassembly.gov](mailto:simonet@nyassembly.gov). We are here to help.

Tony

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## **Recent News**

### Back in Albany!

On January 3rd, I headed back to Albany for the first day of the 2024 legislative session. I have lots of priorities this year, number one of which is achieving a housing deal that invests in affordability and accessibility for all. [Governor Hochul said in her State of the State address](#) that there are several methods to address the affordability crisis in New York, including [increasing supply of affordable housing with a new tax incentive](#), encouraging office conversions to residential, and developing new housing on state owned properties. I support the Governor in these ideas, but I think these policies must go hand in hand with stronger tenant protections, including Good Cause Eviction, which would ban outrageous yearly rent increases.

I am also focused on critical legislation this session to combat climate change, protect transgender kids, [make our streets safer for everyone](#), and [ensure services for consumers](#). If you have ideas for legislation that you want to see pass the legislature, I want to hear them! Call my office at (212) 807-7900 or email us at [simonet@nyassembly.gov](mailto:simonet@nyassembly.gov) and we'll discuss the bill idea with you.



### New Legislation: Improving the Safety Around Methadone Clinics

My office has heard about lots of issues surrounding a methadone clinic in midtown, where people struggling with addiction are trying to get the treatment they need but are being preyed on by drug dealers and criminals. Members of the community have lots of ideas on how to improve the situation, which is why [I have introduced legislation](#) with Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal that would require methadone clinics across New York State to establish community advisory boards. By requiring advisory boards, the bill would ensure that the clinic is engaged with the community where they operate and can address issues as they arise, keeping everyone safe and helping those on their path to recovery.

### Statement on the Closure of Beth Israel

I joined my colleagues at the city, state, and federal levels of government [in a statement](#) thanking the Department of Health for issuing a cease and desist letter to Mount Sinai in regards to its attempted closure of Beth Israel. Closing this hospital would mean the residents of lower Manhattan would have less access to life-saving medical services, and it will overwhelm other hospitals in Manhattan who

will now have to handle an influx of cases. Beth Israel must stay open, for the good of my constituents and the constituents in my colleagues' districts as well.

#### MLK Day of Service with Met Council

On Martin Luther King Jr Day, I joined Met Council for a Day of Service, packing kosher and halal meals for needy New Yorkers. Met Council is America's largest Jewish charity dedicated to serving the needy and operates the largest free kosher food distribution program in the world. Their network of 101 food pantries, 20 affordable housing sites, and 15 Jewish Community Centers provide services directly in neighborhoods across New York.



*Packing kosher & halal meals with Met Council staff (and new CB4 chair!) Jessica Chait and Councilmember Shaun Abreu.*

#### E-bike Safety with Councilmember Bottcher & Penn South

Street safety for everyone, pedestrians and bikers alike, is one of the issues I hear most about from constituents. To encourage ebike users to slow down and use the road safely, I joined Councilmember Erik Bottcher and State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal to kick off the public awareness campaign, "Slow Your Roll, Respect the Stroll!"

To keep the conversation going, I also attended a forum on e-bike and street safety policy with friends and neighbors at Penn South, where we discussed ways the state and city can enforce existing laws as well as [new legislation](#) that is needed to

protect pedestrians and help deliveristas do their jobs safely. [You can view my full remarks here](#). Thanks to Brian Hammerstein for the video!

### Medical Aid in Dying

I spoke at a rally in Albany in support of [A995/S2445](#), the Medical Aid in Dying Act. This bill would allow terminally ill patients who have six months or less to live to request medical assistance to reach the end of their life. Dying with dignity is a right that we all deserve, and this legislation carried by Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal and Assemblymember Amy Paulin will give the autonomy to the patients facing a terminal diagnosis by allowing them to choose how and when they die. Until this bill is passed, too many New Yorkers will suffer needlessly and endure unimaginable pain. The bill must be passed in 2024.



*Speaking in support of Medical Aid in Dying with Assemblymembers Linda Rosenthal, Jen Lunsford and Harvey Epstein, as well as Senator Jessica Scarcella-Spanton and advocates.*

### Second Sundays at the Whitney

Starting this month, the Whitney began offering free admission and special programming for visitors every Friday evening from 5–10 pm, and on the second Sunday of every month! These programs—called Free Friday Nights and Second Sundays—aim to bring as many New Yorkers as possible into the Whitney to enjoy all-ages artmaking, tours, special exhibitions, and our permanent collection floor, which includes works by Edward Hopper, Kara Walker, Georgia O’Keeffe, Kevin Beasley, Faith Ringgold, Lee Krasner, Jasper Johns, Alexander Calder, Jacob Lawrence, Carrie Mae Weems, Andrea Carlson, and Clarissa Tossin, among many others. These initiatives aim to reduce barriers to the Whitney and offer audiences unique, fun, and welcoming entry points to the Museum. I joined the team at the

Whitney to kick off Second Sundays and got to explore the many wonderful exhibits on display there. You can reserve a free Friday night ticket!



*Celebrating the first Second Sunday with Assemblymember Deborah Glick and Whitney staff.*

### Electric Vehicle Chargers in Chelsea

Penn South unveiled two new electric vehicle chargers in Chelsea, which will provide electric charging not only for Penn South residents, but for Chelsea and New York City at large. This is the kind of green infrastructure we so badly need in New York City; there are many people that would love to trade in their gas guzzlers for an efficient, clean EV, but if you live in Manhattan and you have nowhere to charge it, how can you make the switch? These charging ports will make it possible. Now it'll be easy for EV drivers to charge their vehicles and be on their way. For those who need a car to get around, an EV is a great solution, and with these chargers, Chelsea residents now have the option to make the switch.



*Speaking on the importance of electric vehicles with friends and neighbors from Penn South!*

### Protecting Transgender Kids in New York State

This year, I have introduced legislation to require schools to establish policies that would protect trans students, allowing kids to feel safe and respected in one of the places where they spend so much of their lives. Many children experience bullying in school to begin with, and trans kids have increasingly experienced cruelty and hate directed at them from teachers and their peers alike. My bill ensures that trans kids can live their lives without fear and grow up knowing that school is a safe place for them to be. I spoke about this bill and other legislation at Equality New York's recent advocacy day in Albany; [you can hear my full remarks here](#).

### Consumer Affairs & Protection 2023 Report

If you're interested in a long read this weekend, I suggest you take a look at the [2023 Annual Report of the NYS Assembly Standing Committee on Consumer Affairs and Protection](#). The committee deals with issues that affect our constituents' everyday lives, including protecting the privacy of recipients of abortion services and communications, prohibiting price-gouging, ensuring product safety, and other protections for consumers.

### Letters to the MTA Calling for Investments in the West Side

My colleagues and I sent a letter to the MTA calling on the agency to build the 10th Avenue station for the 7 train, which was part of the original project to invest in the West Side's commercial growth by building out Hudson Yards. The station was ultimately removed from the plan due to cost constraints, which I believe was a

wasted opportunity. Hell's Kitchen is growing, and we need subway access to continue that growth and ensure the long-term economic viability of the area.

I also wrote a letter with colleagues to the MTA to express the urgent need for elevators at the MTA stations in Chelsea, specifically the stations located at Eighth Avenue and 23rd Street and/or Sixth Avenue and 23rd Street. There are many communities and organizations on and around 23rd Street in Chelsea which would greatly benefit from an elevator, which includes Penn South, one of the largest NORCs in New York City, two branches of the Hudson Guild, and two NYCHA developments which have large senior populations. The MTA should prioritize these stations as they upgrade the entire system to become ADA compliant.

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## **Community Resources and Events**

### The MTA Hosts Public Comment Period on Congestion Pricing

This spring, the MTA will hold public hearings so that New Yorkers can provide feedback on the adoption of a toll rate schedule for the Central Business District.

The MTA will hold four public hearings on the proposed toll schedule:

**February 29, 2024**, at 6:00 PM

**March 1, 2024**, at 10:00 AM

**March 4, 2024**, at 10:00 AM

**March 4, 2024**, at 6:00 PM

All public hearings will be held in person at MTA Headquarters, 2 Broadway, 20th Floor – William J. Ronan Board Room. There will also be a Zoom option for those who prefer to attend virtually, and the hearings will be livestreamed on the MTA website. This more flexible format allows us to hear from a wider audience, including people who cannot travel to Lower Manhattan. [You can find more information here](#), including how to submit a comment and watch the hearings virtually.

### Free Tax Prep Services

It's January, which means it's most wonderful time of the year - tax season! Luckily, the New York City Department of Consumer and Worker Protection is providing free tax services for anyone who earned less than \$85,000 in 2023. The IRS begins accepting tax filings on **January 29th, 2024**, so now is the time to prepare for your filing. If you're interested in getting help filing your taxes, [find more information here](#).

### Hudson River Park Opens New Playground!

At Pier 26 in Hudson River Park, a new science playground has opened to the

public! The playground features custom-fabricated play structures in the shape of two endangered sturgeon species that are native to the Hudson River — the Atlantic sturgeon and shortnose sturgeon. Inside each of the two sturgeon structures children can explore fish “anatomy” and interact with other marine-oriented play features to learn about local wildlife that resides in the Hudson River Park’s 400-acre Estuarine Sanctuary.



#### Volunteer with DOROT; Deliver Joy to an Older Neighbor

DOROT is welcoming volunteers to participate in Winter Package Delivery to connect with older members of our community. This event takes place on Sunday, January 28 at two locations: 1. DOROT at 171 West 85th Street and 2. Moise Safra Center at 130 E. 82nd Street. Volunteers check in, pick up a package, deliver it to a DOROT participant and either stay for a short visit or make a friendly call to follow up. Opportunities are available for adult and family volunteers. For more information and to register, please visit their Web site.

#### Unhomeless NYC at Hudson Guild

Starting February 8th, [Unhomeless NYC](#) will open an exhibit at Hudson Guild at 441 West 26th Street in Chelsea. UnHomeless NYC is a pedagogical exhibition that began at Kingsborough Community College Art Museum in 2022, and is intended to address the stigma of homelessness by presenting socially engaging artworks using research and data. The exhibition at Hudson Guild builds upon the one at Kingsborough, reuniting a selection of artworks which engage in critical discourse on social structures and the housing crisis. The exhibition will be coupled with events which connect artists, students, educators, and activists, in order to



understand the critical issues surrounding the problem and explore ways to resolve it. [Find a schedule of events here to attend!](#)

### Wildlife Conservation Society Youth JIVE Expo

It is almost time for the annual Wildlife Conservation Society's Youth JIVE (JOBS, INTERNSHIP, & VOLUNTEER) Expo, which is slated to return to the Bronx Zoo on February 3rd from 11:00am-3:30pm! The WCS Youth JIVE is an interactive opportunity for youth (ages 14-26) to learn about paid and unpaid positions at our New York City Zoos and Aquarium (BRONX ZOO, CENTRAL PARK ZOO, PROSPECT PARK ZOO, QUEENS ZOO, AND THE NEW YORK AQUARIUM). Participants will attend workshops and meet directly with hiring managers. Anyone who is interested can [register here](#) or check the attached flier for more information on this great chance to learn more about all of the different opportunities available at the Wildlife Conservation Society!



Wildlife Conservation Society PRESENTS

# WCS YOUTH JIVE

JOB, INTERNSHIP & VOLUNTEERING EXPO

BRONX ZOO | NEW YORK AQUARIUM | CENTRAL PARK ZOO | PROSPECT PARK ZOO | QUEENS ZOO

**1 JOIN US IN PERSON AT THE BRONX ZOO ON FEB 3RD**

**Choose how to participate**

**2 ACCESS CONTENT ONLINE (SELF-GUIDED EXPERIENCE)**

**14-26 year old attendees will be able to...**

- Learn about the many jobs\*, internships, and volunteer positions at WCS' 5 NYC Zoos & Aquarium  
*\*jobs are for 16+*
- Connect directly to hiring managers and make a good first impression
- Attend workshops and a career panel to gain important skills & perspective

**EVENT DETAILS**

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2024**

registration required; timed entry

<https://bronxzoo.com/teens/wcs-youth-jive>



### 2023 Report on Community Classrooms at Pier 57

The Community Classrooms at Pier 57 have been a wonderful resource for the West Side by providing tech-enabled, bookable spaces for hosting educational, recreational, and cultural experiences in an accessible and collaborative environment. Community Classrooms are free to book and accessible year-round. The classrooms host everything from film screenings to coding classes, and Pier 57 released their 2023 report on everything the classrooms did last year. Check it out!

### 2024 New York State Parks Centennial Challenge

This month, Governor Hochul announced the [2024 Centennial Challenge](#), which invites all New York State residents and visitors to explore our state parks, learn about New York history, and give back to New York State Parks for the next generation of adventurers. Beginning on January 1, 2024, the New York State Parks Centennial Challenge includes 100 missions that can be completed at various state parks and historic sites. Participants will need to complete 24 missions throughout 2024 to complete the challenge.

Some example Centennial Challenge “missions” include:

- Go camping at one of more than 8,500 campsites
- Visit a “new-to-you” state park or historic site and bring a picnic
- Pack your skates and go skating at one of state parks’ ice rinks
- Talk to an interpreter about the history of a state historic site
- Join a volunteer event
- Learn the Leave No Trace principles and apply them during your next visit
- For more information on the Centennial Challenge, visit [the NYS Parks website](#).

### NYC Public Schools Teacher Application Now Open

I want to inform you about an important announcement from New York City Public Schools (NYCPS) that holds great importance for the future of our youth. NYCPS has recently launched its annual [Online Teacher Application](#) for the upcoming academic year. This reflects a steadfast commitment to ensuring every child in our city has access to quality education by attracting talented and qualified educators.

#### **Key Information:**

**Eligibility:** The [Online Teacher Application](#) is open to all candidates who currently hold or will obtain New York State (NYS) teacher certification by September 2024.

**Support:** A range of resources are available for applicants, including a [flyer](#), an [Application Guide](#), [virtual info sessions](#), and an [Online Support Center](#).

**Stay Updated:** Follow the latest on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram for regular updates, deadlines, events, and opportunities.

For more details and to access the application, visit [TeachNYC.net](https://www.teachnyc.net).



**NYC'S STUDENTS DESERVE THE BEST TEACHERS.**  
**Join the movement. Teach NYC!**

**A REWARDING CAREER**

- COMPETITIVE COMPENSATION**  
Teachers with a bachelor's degree and no teaching experience will earn **\$64,789**. Teachers with a master's degree will earn **\$72,832**.
- COMPREHENSIVE BENEFITS**  
NYCPS offers a robust benefits package including health, dental, and vision insurance, a pension plan, an annual bonus, and UFT membership.
- OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH**  
Develop your teaching skills with professional development resources for new teachers and a mentor your first year.

**MAKE AN IMPACT**

- THE IDEAL CANDIDATE**  
NYC Public Schools seeks passionate teachers who are New York State-certified or on track to be by September 2024.
- HIRING TRENDS**  
This year, in-demand subject areas include Special Education, Math, Science, Bilingual Education, World Languages, and Career and Technical Education.

**Start your journey today!**

**APPLY NOW >**

**STAY IN TOUCH**

