



Dear Neighbor,

I hope you and your loved ones are well!

The New York State legislature has wrapped its legislative session. Below are session and local updates as we head into the summer.

Hope to see you soon, and don't hesitate to reach out if my team or I can assist.

All the best,

Andy

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Andy Hevesi

Assembly District 28

This year, Assemblyman Hevesi and his partners in the Senate were able to pass several pieces of legislation through both houses, a number of which now await the Governor's signature. Some of these include:

- **A.8028 Hevesi SAME AS S.7685 Persaud - Passed Both Houses**

In 2022, the Real Property Tax Law was amended authorizing a childcare center tax abatement in New York City. Since its enactment, this abatement has been granted to 47 beneficiaries for the creation of 3,500 childcare seats, totaling approximately \$1,000,000 in abatements to childcare providers.

This bill will increase the amount of the abatement provided to applicants, including applicants for the enhanced abatement, which may be granted to an owner of an eligible building located within a "childcare desert." Deepening the benefit will **incentivize more property owners to work with childcare providers to build and expand childcare facilities in New York City.**



- **A.5434 Hevesi SAME AS S03781 Brisport - Passed Both Houses (Unanimously in the Assembly)**

Advocates and child welfare professionals have long reported that children entering foster care in New York are often forced to carry their belongings in plastic trash bags — a practice widely criticized as dehumanizing and traumatic. For many foster children, their possessions are more than just objects; they are symbols of their identity, history, and worth. Relegating children's belongings to trash bags leaves them feeling degraded, dehumanized, and traumatized.

This legislation requires the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) provide luggage to youth in foster care.

- **A.66 Hevesi SAME AS S550-A Brisport - Passed Both Houses**

To improve reporting to New York's Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Mistreatment (SCR) by replacing anonymous reporting with confidential reporting.

Across New York State, approximately 150,000 families are reported to the State Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) every year. The majority of these reports are ultimately deemed to be unfounded, meaning that after investigating the family, Child Protective Services (CPS) finds that no neglect or maltreatment occurred. However, the report itself can be disruptive and traumatic for families, subjecting them to months of intrusive and humiliating investigation, including home searches, lengthy interrogations about deeply personal subjects, and possibly even body checks of their children.

No family should be exposed to such intimate invasion by the government as the result of a knowingly baseless call. Yet, each year the SCR receives numerous false reports by anonymous callers that are designed to intimidate and harass families. Often, the victims of such calls are domestic violence survivors, whose abusers continue to repeatedly harass them and their children by anonymously reporting them to CPS. Anonymous reporting also disproportionately affects Black and Brown New Yorkers, who make up the majority of those reported.

Current law allows anyone to report a family to the SCR. Only mandated reporters are required to leave names and contact information; all other callers can report anonymously. As a result, little prevents people from abusing the SCR system to threaten and harass parents and their children. Anonymity also makes it more difficult for SCR workers to distinguish baseless reports from legitimate ones. On average, only 3.5 percent of anonymous reports are found to be credible each year. This not only harms the families targeted by unwarranted reports, but also diverts resources that could be better used supporting families who actually need it.



The Anti-Harassment in Reporting Act is a critical and common-sense measure that would deter people from making false and malicious reports by requiring them to leave their name and contact information with the SCR, while preserving the confidentiality of that information that the law has long protected. The identity of the caller would be protected, preserving their privacy and insulating them from any concerns about retribution, but the law would help agencies better understand which calls to credit and which to dismiss as illegitimate.

Child protective services investigations are disruptive and highly stressful to children and families. No family should be subject to unnecessary, invasive surveillance. The resources currently spent on investigating baseless allegations could be far better spent supporting children and families.

It is well documented that the harms of false reporting fall disproportionately on low-income, Black and Brown New Yorkers. The structural racism of the child welfare system can only be addressed by questioning and undoing longstanding features of that system. By taking the simple step of requiring all

callers who make allegations of child abuse and neglect to provide their names (as mandated reporters are already required to do), the Anti-Harassment in Reporting Bill will discourage malicious false reporting and allow child protective services to better assess allegations. Those making reports will be protected by strict confidentiality requirements.

In its memo in support of this bill, the New York State Bar Association stated, “It is an urgent imperative to end the unnecessary disruption and destruction of black families caused by the child welfare system.”

This bill is also supported by the New York Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Human Rights Watch, ACLU, The Children's Law Center, The New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Prevent Child Abuse New York, Citizens Committee for Children, The Children's Defense fund, Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition, CASA NY, Families Together NY, Pregnancy Justice and others.

Budget Wins

- **Led the New York State Assembly effort that resulted in this year's Expansion of the New York's Child Tax Credit.** That credit will provide up to \$1,000 per child under age 4 and \$500 for ages 4–16 — a major anti-poverty win Hevesi championed, benefiting over 2.7 million children statewide.

Led Queens Colleagues in the Effort to Secure \$8 M for the Queens Museum to Provide:

- The **opening of the borough's first children's museum** for arts and culture, which will encompass 15,000 square feet of space within the Queens Museum.
- The children's museum will **house classrooms, performance space, learning through play opportunities**, seasonal and cultural celebrations, in-school and after-school activities, art access, and early childhood programs, exhibition and community space and the ability to access Flushing Meadows Corona Park just outside its doors.
- **New collection and archives galleries**
- An **accessible auditorium** which will be available for community use
- Artist designed permanent seating
- Elevator modernization



Thank you to all who have remained in contact with our office this session, whether to flag personal legislative priorities, keep tabs on our efforts, or advocate personally on behalf of legislation and budget initiatives.

We are grateful for all of the engagement, and look forward to staying connected throughout the summer.

Spring Community Cleanup Wrap-up

We wrapped our Spring Community Cleanup series this past weekend! Huge thanks to all of the partners and volunteers who showed up this season.



Shoutout to all who've worked alongside us this year: Metro Village of Forest Hills, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 32, Dorie Figliola, The Shops at Atlas Park, Council Member Lynn Schulman, Senator Joe Addabbo, Congresswoman Grace Meng, Community Board 6, the Forest Hills Green Team, Forest Hills Stadium, Home Depot, and all of the volunteers for making this possible!



Looking forward to seeing everyone when we kick things off again in the fall!

ACE in the Community

We're glad to be continuing our partnership with **ACE** this summer to help keep the neighborhood clean and beautiful. Huge thanks to the entire team!



Looking forward to staying in touch as we head into the summer!



Flagpole on the Green, Forest Hills

Wishing everyone a happy and safe Fourth of July weekend — and as always, don't hesitate to reach out to my office with any questions, concerns, or if we can be of assistance.

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