

Assemblymember  
**Tony Simone**

Assembly District 75



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Dear Friends,

I hope you're doing well and happy first day of March! For those of you who don't know me yet, my name is Tony Simone and I'm your new Assemblymember. After two months in office, I'd like to highlight just a few of the many actions I have taken in office.

My community office is here to help you. My team can be contacted at 212-807-7900 or by emailing SimoneT@nyassembly.gov.

**Making Public Safety a Priority**



In December, I joined Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg to announce a new multi-million-dollar initiative to reach New Yorkers with deeply entrenched needs and connect them with comprehensive wraparound community support services, including housing assistance and treatment for mental illness and substance use disorders, in order to keep our fellow New Yorkers safe. The District Attorney's Office is seeking to invest in intervention at two distinct points: purely preventative neighborhood-based interventions that are not linked to criminal justice contact; and intervention immediately after criminal court arraignment that operates outside any court-mandated programming.

Additionally, I have been regularly meeting with our local police precincts, the DA's office, city agencies, local residents and fellow elected officials to find solutions to public safety issues in our community. I joined my fellow elected officials on the west side in pushing the city to form a special taskforce to address the public safety and quality-of-life issues on Eighth Avenue, which has seen especially difficult problems over the past couple of years in both Chelsea and Hell's Kitchen. This taskforce is based on a model that has been successful on 125th street and would be attended by all relevant agencies and heavily involve local community members.

## My Inauguration Ceremony this Saturday

I hope you can join me for my upcoming inauguration and community celebration! Meet your neighbors, enjoy local food, hear from distinguished guests and enjoy entertainment from our host, Marti Cummings, RuPaul's Drag Race's Jackie Cox and Broadway's Maya Days!

Family, friends and guests are welcome! [Be sure to RSVP here](#)

**Where:** Hudson Guild, Fulton Center, 119 Ninth Ave, between West 17th & 18th Streets.

**Date:** Saturday, March 4

**Time:** Doors open at 2PM, program will start at 2:30, and should end around 4:00.

[RSVP here](#). We have limited capacity so please RSVP to be sure you can get in.



The poster features three portraits at the top: Jackie Cox on the left, Tony Simone in the center, and Marti Cummings on the right. Below the portraits, the text reads: "Performance by RuPaul's Drag Race's Jackie Cox" and "Special host Marti Cummings!". The main text of the poster is: "Please Join Us for the Inauguration and Community Celebration for ASSEMBLYMEMBER TONY SIMONE". The location is "Hudson Guild, Fulton Center, 119 Ninth Avenue (between West 17th & 18th Streets)". The date is "Saturday March 4, 2023". The schedule is "Doors open at 2:00 pm, Program starts at 2:30 pm and ending around 4:00 pm". The entertainment is "Performance by: Broadway's Maya Days". The special guests include: "NYS Attorney General Letitia James, NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli, Congressman Jerry Nadler, State Senators Brad Hoylman & Liz Krueger, Borough President Mark Levine, City Councilmember Erik Bottcher & More!". The bottom of the poster says: "Please RSVP at bit.ly/SimoneInauguration. This event is free and open to the public."

## Casinos in Manhattan

We've all heard much about the possibility of a casino coming to Manhattan. I am against the concept of a casino in Manhattan, and I will look at all of these proposals skeptically. The first hurdle any casino proposal will have to take is passing a vote by a local community advisory committee. This six-member committee is made up of one vote each from the Governor, Mayor, Borough President, State Senator, State Assemblymember and City Councilmember.

No proposal should come to pass without clear support from the local community and once the local advisory committee begins their work, that process will be informed by the community. It's abundantly clear that any proposal has a massive hill to climb to win the local support that is required for approval and as details emerge on actual proposals, and I look forward to hearing your thoughts as this process unfolds.

## **Penn Station**

This month, the State Legislature held joint hearings on the State Budget. I took this opportunity to question Empire State Development on why the State continues to pursue a plan that has no local support, and which has increasingly unreliable funding plans.

[Watch video of the hearing here.](#)

Last year, I wrote an [op-ed calling for massive changes to the plan for Penn](#). As your Assemblymember I *will continue to work from every angle until we have the transportation upgrade New York City deserves*. In coalition with fellow elected officials, advocates and transportation experts, we will continue to *push* for a true transportation plan that serves our community and region.

## **Defending Students**

I have [re-introduced a critical bill, A.4576](#), to help ensure school is a safe and respectful environment for students. The victimization and discrimination of LGBTQ students has had devastating effects. And we now live in a time where attacks on these students are increasing across the country. Transgender and gender non-conforming students experiencing victimization due to their gender expression are almost three times as likely to have missed school in a given month, had lower GPAs than students who experienced less harassment, experienced lower self-esteem and higher incidences of depression and suicidal ideation.

This legislation will codify a requirement that school districts have procedures and policies in place to ensure that they treat students consistently with their gender identity or expression, allow students to access sex-segregated facilities and activities consistent with their gender identity or expression, and protect the privacy of data related to students' transgender or gender nonconforming status.

Policies like this are important to help guide school districts towards best practices for creating a safe, healthy learning environment for all students.

## **Access to Public Venues**

This Winter, we learned that Madison Square Garden has begun a practice of using facial recognition technology to bar legal adversaries from entering their properties owned by Jim Dolan. We heard stories of mothers being kicked out of seeing the Rockettes at Radio City with their daughters' girl scout troop, from taking their kid to a Taylor Swift concert at the Garden and more. I joined Senator Hoylman-Sigal in [introducing legislation in Albany](#) to ban this practice and publicly condemned the practice in front of the Garden in January. That same weekend, Jim Dolan decided to retaliate as [I was disinvited from dropping the puck at a Rangers game](#) that was meant to highlight the team's efforts towards inclusion of the LGBTQ community in sports.

Since then, we have continued to put pressure on the Garden. As a sports arena meant to accommodate the public that receives all kinds of public benefits and subsidies, it is outrageous that the owner would try and [deny admission to his personal adversaries](#).





### **Westside Community Fund Applications Open**

The West Side Community Fund Grant is led and funded by West Side Community Fund (WSCF), a consortium of over 20 leading businesses and firms that come together to support initiatives that deliver improved or expanded services to residents along the West Side, especially to underserved populations.

Eligible applicants include neighborhood organizations, block and tenants' associations, non-profits, city agencies, schools, health clinics, NYCHA projects, police community programs, religious institutions, homeless facilities, etc. Individuals who deliver services, such as teachers, are also eligible to apply.

WSCF has partnered with Hudson Guild, a multi service community-based organization serving those who work, live or go to school in Chelsea, and the west side, with a focus on those in need. Hudson Guild will be administering the grant process on behalf of the West Side Community Fund.

[Lean more and apply here](#)

### **MTA Project under 14th Street**

The MTA is to begin Accessibility Improvements at the 14 St Passageway connecting the Sixth and Seventh Avenue Subway Lines. Construction will make the existing pedestrian passageway that connects Sixth and Seventh Avenues at 14 St accessible. A new ramp will be added to the west end of the pedestrian passageway, which connects subway riders to the 14 St 1, 2, 3 and 14 St F, M and 6 Av L stations. Crews will also install new lighting and ceramic wall tiles. Once work is completed the tunnel will be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

To safely accommodate the work taking place, the passageway will be closed starting Monday, Feb. 27, and is anticipated to reopen in December 2023. During the time the passageway is closed, customers will be able to utilize a free out-of-system transfer between the two stations via OMNY or MetroCard.

[Read more about this project here](#)

I hope to see you around the neighborhood soon

— Tony

