



Assemblymember  
**Jo Anne Simon**

52nd District



**September 2017**

**A Message from Jo Anne...**

As we prepare for the start of the new school year and the fall season, I am thrilled to share the news that Governor Cuomo has signed my dyslexia bill into law ([A.8262/S.6581](#)), which will improve the lives of thousands of students. This legislation will help more children learn to read and be successful students because when children’s learning disabilities are clearly defined, educational interventions can be tailored to meet their needs.

My sincere thanks to the parents, students, teachers, schools, advocates and most importantly to all of the dyslexic individuals who have worked tirelessly to improve understanding of dyslexia and related learning disabilities.

You may read my New York Daily News op-ed on this issue: <http://nyassembly.gov/mem/Jo-Anne-Simon/articles/>

Please do not hesitate to contact my office with questions.

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**School Based Health Centers: Safe for Now**

School based health centers (SBHCs) are a critical safety net for immigrants and the uninsured. There are 145 SBHCs serving students in more than 345 schools across the city, regardless of their ability to pay. SBHCs provide primary and preventive care, reproductive and mental health care, and first aid; manage chronic illnesses; and more. From asthma and diabetes to food allergies and anxiety, these clinics can make the difference between life and death for many of our schoolchildren.

Therefore, it was alarming when four clinics in District 15 were slated to close this fall. A combination of budget cuts and policy changes created underfunding and instability to the SBHCs. Quickly, a coalition of parents, administrators, health care workers, and elected officials came together to organize and fight back and everyone pitched in.

Thankfully, the coalition’s advocacy efforts were successful. SUNY Downstate, the local sponsor of the clinics, decided that no matter the level of funding that it received, it will continue to operate the clinics for this year. I am very grateful that SUNY Downstate has stepped up for our children, but recognize the need to ensure the long-term viability of the local SBHCs and make sure SBHCs across the city and state are properly funded going forward.

Thanks to the coalition work of parents, officials, and health care workers from M.S. 51 William Alexander; Brooklyn New School and Brooklyn School for Collaborative Studies; P.S. 38 the Pacific School; the School for International Studies; elected officials, the NY School-Based Health Alliance, NYS Nurses Association, and others! [Read my Gotham Gazette op-ed for more background.](#)

### Tax Break for Seniors and Disabled New Yorkers

Seniors and New Yorkers with disabilities are getting a tax break! Thanks to recent changes in city and state law, homeowners with annual income of \$58,399 or less are now eligible to receive the Senior Citizen Homeowners' Exemption (SCHE) or Disabled Homeowners' Exemption (DHE).

**Who may be eligible:** Seniors 65+ or disabled New Yorkers with annual income of \$58,399 or less.

**How it works:** SCHE and DHE exempt 5 to 50% of the assessed value of your home from taxation.

**How to apply:** Visit [www.nyc.gov/sche](http://www.nyc.gov/sche) or [www.nyc.gov/dhe](http://www.nyc.gov/dhe) or call 311 to request an application and submit the application to the NYC Dept. of Finance by January 16, 2018.

**Why YOU should apply:** You could save hundreds of dollars or more on your property taxes this year!

**Already receiving SCHE or DHE?** Take no action! Any increases to your benefit will appear on your January 2018 property tax bill—with a retroactive credit to July 1, 2017.

**Previously denied because your income was too high?** If you applied for and were denied the benefit **this year** because your income was too high, and your income is \$58,399 or less, you will automatically receive the benefit on your January 2018 property tax bill, with a retroactive credit to July 1, 2017.

### Upcoming Voter Registration Deadlines

#### November 7, 2017 General Election Deadlines

**Mail Registration:** postmarked by October 13th & received by October 18th.

**In Person Registration:** October 13th

**Change of Address:** October 19th

**Absentee Ballot:** Postmark application by October 31st or apply in-person by November 6th.

Postmark the ballot by November 6th (received by November 15th). Deliver in-person ballot by November 7th (someone other than voter).

**Change of Enrollment:** An application to change one's party enrollment for 2018 must be received by October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

For more information and additional details on absentee and military voter ballots, visit the [Board of Elections website](#) or call 1-800-FOR-VOTE.

**To register to vote**, you may pick up a voter registration form at my district office, or go to the [BOE website](#) to download the form and explore other registration options.

## Standing Up for our Immigrant Friends & Neighbors

I stand strongly against President Trump's decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA), which ignores the vital role immigrants have played in America's history and diminishes the hope that America represents. DACA gives young immigrants who were brought here by their parents as children a chance to succeed and give back to the only country they know. It gives these 'Dreamers' a chance to live without fear of deportation so they can continue to go to school, serve in the military, pursue careers and build families.

These young people pay taxes, purchase homes, start businesses and create jobs. This is their home and we must not turn our backs on them. There are nearly 42,000 DACA grantees who call NY their home and over 800,000 across the country. The need has never been greater for Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform.

I am pleased that NYS Attorney General Eric Schneiderman has filed a "[Lawsuit To Protect Dreamers And Preserve DACA](#)," arguing that the Trump Administration violates due process rights; harms states' residents, institutions, and economies; and violates the equal protection clause by discriminating against Dreamers of Mexican origin.

To find out more about your rights as a DACA grantee or for legal advice, go to:  
<http://www1.nyc.gov/site/immigrants/help/legal-services/deferred-action.page>

## A Call to Improve Bus Service

I recently joined my Assembly colleagues and transportation advocates at a press conference to call for the MTA to create a comprehensive plan to improve bus service. As New York City continues to experience a transit crisis, particular attention must also be paid to the buses, in addition to the subways. We owe it to the 2.5 million New Yorkers who use the bus every day to get to work, school and medical visits to improve the current state of bus service which is slow and not punctual. The majority of subway stations are not ADA accessible, and buses provide an accessible transportation option for people with disabilities and the increasing population of older adults in the city. We also sent a letter, spearheaded by Assemblymember Jeffrey Dinowitz, Chair of the Committee on Corporations, Authorities, and Commissions, calling for bus service improvements to be included in MTA's plans, including two changes that would drastically improve the quality of bus service for riders: transit signal priority and all-door boarding technology. [Click here to see the letter to the MTA.](#)

## 80 Flatbush Proposal

The NYC Educational Construction Fund recently accepted comments for the draft scope of work for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the 80 Flatbush Avenue project. Located in an already densely built and highly congested area adjacent to the "crossroads of Brooklyn," its impacts will likely be great, hence I believe that the EIS process must be as thorough, comprehensive, and inclusive of community stakeholders as possible. The next step in the ULURP process will likely be the formal certification of the proposal to the Department of City Planning followed by Alloy's presentation to the Community Board 2 Land Use Committee in the fall. Please read my scoping comments, submitted with Senator Montgomery, on my website at <http://nyassembly.gov/mem/Jo-Anne-Simon/postings/>

## Eileen C. Dugan Senior Center Artwork



I was thrilled to display the artworks of incredible local artists from the Eileen C. Dugan Senior Center. The artists, Ramona and Louisa, visited my office to tell me more about their work and the inspiration behind their paintings. Ramona just started painting this year and has found a strong passion in it. Louisa has been an artist for many years and her work has brought joy to her friends and neighbors in Carroll Gardens for decades. Thank you for loaning your artwork to me; it brightened up our office!

## Summer Reading Challenge: Time to Turn in Your Form!

I was happy to once again sponsor the Summer Reading Challenge which is not only fun, but keeps those “learning muscles” well-toned for when kids return to school. Remember to have your children turn in their forms to my office so that we can recognize them during the certificate ceremony at the Carroll Gardens library on Tuesday, October 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm.

## Upcoming Events

### Community Meeting on a NYS Constitutional Convention, Tues., Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>, 6pm

I am cosponsoring a community forum with Senator Velmanette Montgomery and others on the possibility of a New York Constitutional Convention, which will be put to voters on the ballot this November. This forum will focus on the rights that will be at risk if the convention is convened. Hear from the Legal Aid Society, NYU, DC 37, AFSCME AFL-CIO, United Federation of Teachers, New Yorkers Against Corruption, Adirondack Council, Medgar Evers College, CUNY, and more. Tues., Sept 19<sup>th</sup>, 6-8pm, Presbyterian Church, 85 South Oxford St. (& Lafayette). To RSVP or for more details, contact Sen. Montgomery’s office, c/o Jason Salmon 718-643-6140, [salmon@nysenate.gov](mailto:salmon@nysenate.gov). Other forums by supporters of the Convention have been conducted. A helpful resource in support of the Convention is <http://effectiveny.org/constitutional-convention/>

### Join me to Get Your Free Flu Shot! Tues., Oct 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Once again, I am pleased to offer free flu shots in my district office, 341 Smith Street, in conjunction with NYU Langone Medical Center. You may sign up for appointment between 10am and 2pm, on Tuesday, October 17, 2017. The vaccines are for adults 18+ years old. Please contact my office to make an appointment at 718-246-4889 or email [simonj@nyassembly.gov](mailto:simonj@nyassembly.gov).

### Atlantic Antic Festival! Sunday, Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>, 12pm-6pm

The annual Atlantic Antic, presented by the Atlantic Avenue Local Development Corporation, is the oldest and largest street festival in Brooklyn. The Atlantic Antic brings together hundreds of thousands of people to Atlantic Avenue to celebrate the longstanding tradition of food, art, music, shopping, festivities, and fun. [I am honored to be the ambassador for this year’s Atlantic Antic festival!](#) See you there! For more information, go to <http://atlanticcave.org> or call 718-875-8993.

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