



E-News February 2015

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SAVE THE DATE:

*Sunday, March 15, 2015
Rockland County Youth
Fest*

This annual springtime event held at Rockland Community College affords the community the opportunity to interact with many of the services available to children, youth and families in Rockland County under one roof with no admission fee and no fees for any services, activities, etc. provided during the course of the day.

Dear Neighbors,

The 2015-2016 Legislative session has begun, and I am eager to work with our newly-elected Speaker, Carl Heastie (D-Bronx.) I have observed him over the years, and I am impressed by his leadership and his balanced approach. As Chair of the Labor Committee, he has been a strong advocate for working families, focusing on increasing the minimum wage, equal pay, and paid leave to improve the quality of life for those in Rockland County and across New York State. Given that the Governor has presented his 2015-16 Executive Budget and that the Legislature has successfully delivered four on-time budgets, it is now time to get to work.

- Ellen C. Jaffee

East Ramapo Legislation

Following Hank Greenberg's report, the Rockland delegation met in November and started drafting legislation based on the recommendations in the report. I share the serious concerns of many in the East Ramapo Community regarding the ability of the district to adequately meet the needs of the public school students. The legislation is going through review with Assembly Program and Counsel and the State Education Department, and as soon as it is finalized we will make it available to the public. I promise we will introduce the bill shortly, work diligently for its passage in both houses, and ask the Governor to sign it as soon as possible so that the public school students receive the quality education that the NYS constitution guarantees them.

Healthcare Without Co-Pays or Deductibles



I attended a public hearing to show my support for The New York Health Act. Assemblyman Richard Gottfried's bill, of which I co-sponsored would create a statewide single-payer health insurance system for all New Yorkers.

Environmental Cops Cut

At the [Joint Legislative Public Hearing on 2015-2016 Executive Budget Proposal: Topic "Environmental Conservation"](#) I asked about the Governor's proposed cuts to NYSDEC staff and was disappointed to hear Commissioner Martens say there would be a 25% cut in 'cops on the beat.'



Fighting for Family Planning



On January 26th, Family Planning Advocates of New York State Day of Action, I stood up, once again, for reproductive and sexual healthcare funding. Employers should not have the right to make healthcare decisions for employees. Last year the Assembly passed the "Boss Bill."

Denying millions of women access to affordable birth control is denying them fair and equal access to basic preventive health care. This legislation is a step in the right direction: It will guarantee New York women, not their employers, the freedom and fundamental right to make their own personal healthcare decisions about what is best for them and their families. I will again submit this important legislation. I hope this year the Senate will pass it.

Martin Luther King Lives On



I had the privilege of attending The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. 31st Interfaith Commemorative Celebration sponsored by the Nyack N.A.A.C.P. at Pilgrim Baptist Church in Nyack. What a joyous celebration of his life.

I stood on the floor of the Assembly and spoke of Dr. Martin Luther King's life and legacy. The legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. lives within each of us, not just on MLK Day but every day. As Dr. King said, we are responsible for "positive action" because "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." That is why I support raising the minimum wage, banning the box and raising the age of criminal responsibility.

Swearing-In January 2015



I was honored to be sworn in by Rockland District Attorney Tom Zugibe and so happy my son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren were able to attend.

What an incredible event that included the President of the NAACP New York State Conference, Dr. Hazel Dukes, Congresswoman Nita Lowey, and so many of you who elected me to serve another term.



I sincerely believe that government can make a positive difference in our communities. Working together we can do great things!

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