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SAVE THE DATE:

Thurgood Marshall Day Celebration

Please come join me on **May 16, 2015 at 10:00 AM** at the **Headquarters of the Ramapo Central School District, 45 Mountain Avenue, Hillburn**, to celebrate the anniversary of the Brown vs. Brown of Education decision and Thurgood Marshall Day, which is May 17th.

Nyacks Bench by the Road Project

Award winning novelist Toni Morrison will be adding a new location to her "Bench by the Road Project," in Nyack, New York, on Monday May 18, 2015, at 2:30pm. The Nyack Bench will honor Cynthia Hesdra, a "conductor" on the Underground Railroad who lived in Nyack in the mid-to-late 19th century.

Dear Neighbors,

I want to thank all the advocates who traveled to Albany on April 28th to support the bill I sponsored that would appoint a state monitor to oversee the troubled East Ramapo school district. I am overwhelmed by the outpouring of support from the members of the Coalition for Oversight Now in East Ramapo Schools, including parents, students, clergy, elected officials, former school board members and concerned citizens. They came to Albany because they understand the critical role this oversight legislation plays in ensuring that the public school students of East Ramapo get the high-quality education they deserve and that our state constitution guarantees them. We need your continued support to get this legislation passed.

Regards,

Ellen

DAY OF ADVOCACY FOR OVERSIGHT IN EAST RAMAPO

More than 300 members of the **Coalition for Oversight Now in East Ramapo Schools** gathered in the Capitol where they marched, held a rally, and met with legislators urging them to pass my bill, ([A05355/S03821](#)) calling for the Commissioner of Education to appoint a state monitor "in order to reform the district's governance structure to provide necessary checks and balances to the board and superintendent that protects public school students." The day's events were co-sponsored by [Strong East Ramapo](#), the Rockland Clergy for Social Justice, the Spring Valley Chapter of the NAACP, and The Power of Ten. Andrew Mandel, who leads Strong East Ramapo said "As an alum of the district, I am horrified by the state of educational opportunities for the children of East Ramapo. It is time for Albany to hear directly from, and act on behalf of, the people experiencing the injustices that Hank Greenberg documented in his stunning report, East Ramapo: A School District in Crisis."



Suicide Prevention Day in New York State On average, one person dies by suicide every five hours in New York State. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for adults ages 25-34 in New York, and the third leading cause of death for young people ages 10-24. That's why as a member of the Assembly Mental Health Committee, I drafted a resolution calling on the Governor to proclaim May 6, 2015 as Suicide Prevention Day in New York helping to raise awareness about suicide and mental health issues that impact so many families.

On May 6 over 200 volunteers from the New York State Chapter of the [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#) (AFSP), the largest suicide prevention organization in the United States, went to Albany to meet with lawmakers and encourage them to support legislation addressing suicide prevention in New York State schools [A6187/S3561,A3384/S4261, A7180/ S3912](#).

New York State Senior Citizens Recognition Day in New York State

On May 5, [Senior Citizens Recognition Day](#), I presented Purificacion Cabusi, or “Puring” as she is known, with an Assembly Senior Citizen’s Day Recognition Award for her dedication and commitment to the Rockland community through 30 years of volunteer service to organizations including The Philippine American Seniors Association, The Rockland County Foster Grandparent Program, St. Catherine’s Church in Blauvelt, Rockland Children’s Advocacy Network Committee, and Rockland 21st Century Collaborative for Children and Youth.



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It’s Time Women Get Equal Pay for Equal Work. In

an effort to end the wage gap that can hinder women’s economic security, the [Assembly has passed a variety of equal pay measures](#). Equal pay is absolutely essential to ensuring the economic well-being of their families. That’s why I sponsored legislation (A.1574) that implements a state policy of fair and equal pay for equivalent value of work. On average, nationwide, women earn just 78 cents for every dollar earned by a man. For minority women, the disparity is even greater, with African-American women earning only 64 cents and Latina women earning only 55 cents for every dollar earned by their white male counterparts. Over the course of a woman’s lifetime, this can add up to between \$700,000 and \$2 million in lost wages. Between rising child care costs and everyday expenses, many women who are the heads of their households are struggling to make ends meet.



Assembly Passes Women’s Reproductive Health Act

The [Assembly passed a bill](#) that would amend the outdated language of New York State law. Although New York has safeguarded a woman’s right to choose for over 40 years, state law does not protect a women’s health. This legislation, which is part of the Assembly’s broader agenda to ensure full equality for women, would guarantee a woman’s right to choose and ensure constitutionally protected access to safe, legal abortion (A.6221). Updating this law is long overdue. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to pass this legislation, so we can protect a woman’s fundamental right to make her own health care decisions. Thanks to all the supporters of reproductive rights from Family Planning Advocates and NARAL who came to Albany this week.

Child Care for Parents Who Work Overnight

The Assembly passed my bill to expand access to child care for working families, including a measure that would require local social services districts to provide a child care subsidy for parents who work overnight and have children that are not yet in school, so that children can be cared for during the day ([A.775](#)). Child care is a basic need for many families. For a large number of working parents, not having access to child care often means they cannot work and cannot put food on the table. Providing these families with child care assistance allows struggling parents who work overnight to keep their jobs while knowing their children are being cared for.

