





Senior Resource Guide

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Senior Resource Guide






Assembly Minority Leader
Brian Kolb

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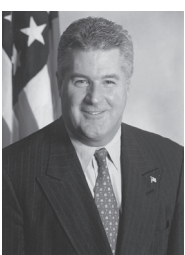




**From Assembly Minority Leader
BRIAN KOLB**

NORTHEAST INFORMATION

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ASSEMBLY MINORITY LEADER

Brian Kolb

129th Assembly District



Important Local Contact Information from Brian Kolb

- Cayuga County Office for the Aging 315-253-1226
- Cortland County Area Agency on Aging 607-753-5060
- Onondaga County Department of Aging and Youth 315-435-2362
- Ontario County Office for the Aging..... 585-396-4040
- Seneca County Office for the Aging 315-539-1765

U.S. GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- Administration on Aging 1-202-401-4541
- Health Care Fraud Hot Line (Inspector General) ... 1-800-447-8477
- Internal Revenue Service - Information Line 1-800-829-1040
- Medicare Hot Line 1-800-633-4227
- Social Security Administration Hot Line 1-800-772-1213
- Veterans Affairs, Department of 1-800-827-1000

TOLL-FREE HELPLINES & OTHER IMPORTANT NUMBERS

- AARP 1-202-434-2277
- Alzheimer's Association 1-800-272-3900
- American Cancer Society Response Hot Line 1-800-227-2345
- American Council of the Blind 1-800-424-8666
- American Diabetes Association 1-800-342-2383
- American Heart Association 1-800-242-8721
- American Lung Association 1-800-586-4872
- Arthritis Foundation Information Line 1-800-283-7800
- Medicare and Medicaid Services Hotline 1-800-633-4227
- National Cancer Institute 1-800-422-6237
- National Caregiving Foundation 1-800-930-1357
- National Eye Care Project Helpline 1-800-222-3937
- National Hospice Organization 1-800-658-8898
- National Institute on Aging 1-800-222-2225
- Parkinson's Disease Foundation 1-800-457-6676
- Veteran's Assistance..... 1-888-838-7697

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NEW YORK STATE OFFICE FOR THE AGING (NYSOFA)

Our State Office for the Aging has been at the forefront of special programs for New York's seniors.

On the Web

NYSOFA hosts a number of Web sites designed to help New York's seniors and their families access information that is important to their independence. Find them on the Internet at www.aging.state.ny.us.

Hot Line

NYSOFA's toll-free Senior Citizen's Hot Line: **1-800-342-9871** - has operators working from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Health Care Consumer Information & License Verification Service

Consumer information on each of the professions and a license verification service is available on the Web at www.op.nysed.gov or by calling the Office of the Professions at **1-518-474-3817**.



Brian Kolb is working to keep health care affordable for senior citizens.

Health Care Proxy

The New York Health Care Proxy law allows people of all ages to designate an agent to make health care decisions on their behalf if they can no longer do so. Forms are available at local offices for the aging or call the Senior Citizen's Hot Line at **1-800-342-9871**.

Health Insurance Balanced Billing

In New York State, a physician who doesn't accept Medicare assignment cannot charge more than 5 percent above the Medicare-approved amount for covered

services (this limit does not apply to home or office visits). For more information on this law, contact the Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP) Hot Line at **1-800-701-0501**.

Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC)

Administered by the New York State Department of Health, EPIC helps many seniors cope with prescription drug costs. EPIC will work in conjunction with Medicare prescription coverage. For more information, call the EPIC Help Line at **1-800-332-3742**.

Health Insurance Information, Counseling & Assistance Program (HIICAP)

Over 500 trained HIICAP counselors answer older New Yorker's questions about Medicare, Medicare Advantage programs (managed care), Medicare

prescription drug coverage, Medigap and other health and long-term care insurance in local offices for the aging across the state. Counseling is also available through a toll-free HIICAP Hot Line at **1-800-701-0501**. Call for an appointment to meet with a counselor. HIICAP information is also available on the Internet at www.hiicap.state.ny.us.

Medicare

Medicare provides health insurance for persons 65 and over, certain disabled persons and those in final stages of renal (kidney) disease.

The Social Security Administration takes applications for Medicare and provides information (apply 3 months before your 65th birthday to avoid penalty). For information, call the Medicare Hot Line at **1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)** or TTY-TDD **1-877-486-2048**.

Consumer Issues

Consumer fraud schemes are most often targeted at seniors. Seniors targeted by fraud should contact the New York State Attorney General's Consumer Hot Line at



Brian Kolb is advancing real solutions to improve the quality of life for senior citizens.

1-800-771-7755 and also your county's district attorney, who will prosecute offenders.

Real Property Tax Credit

The "Circuit Breaker," New York State's income tax credit program for eligible homeowners and renters, helps elderly and moderate-income homeowners and renters who pay a disproportionate amount of property taxes in relation to their household incomes. To inquire about this program and to find out if you are eligible, contact your County Office for the Aging.

Other programs and credits that assist New York's seniors in keeping their tax liabilities within acceptable levels, especially when living on fixed incomes, include:

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

This program provides cash to help pay heating bills for low-income individuals and families. It is administered by local offices for the aging for people age 60 and over. You can begin applying

for a HEAP grant in November each year. HEAP provides grants on a first-come, first-served basis until the funds provided for each heating season run out. For more information, contact your County Office for the Aging.

Personal Identification Card

For seniors who no longer drive or have never driven, a non-driver photo identification card may be purchased from the Department of Motor Vehicles. Some local offices

for the aging may also provide identification cards. Call your County Office of the Aging to ask if they have such a program.

Health Care

Veterans are eligible to receive medical care through the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system, which maintains a network of medical facilities and community clinics across New York State. Long-term health care is offered to wartime veterans and certain eligible spouses at New York State Veterans Homes.

Property Tax Exemption

Veterans may be eligible for a reduction in their real property tax. Your local assessor can assist in determining if you are eligible for such an exemption. For more information about these and other veterans benefits, contact your local veteran's representative or call toll-free, **1-888-VETS NYS (1-888-838-7697)**.



Brian Kolb listens to senior citizens.

School Tax Relief (STAR)

As a property tax relief advocate, Brian Kolb stood up for you to keep the STAR Rebate program going. While Basic and Enhanced STAR have not been affected by the state's fiscal situation, unfortunately, the Middle Class STAR program has been eliminated. Eligible seniors are still able to receive a significant exemption on the taxable value of their homes, resulting in considerable property tax savings. Ask your local assessor about Basic STAR and Enhanced STAR or visit www.orps.state.ny.us/star/.

Find out how to appeal your assessment by calling the New York State Office of Real Property Services at **(518) 474-2982** or visit <http://www.orps.state.ny.us/pamphlet/complain/howtofile/index.htm> for step-by-step directions.