



News from

Assemblywoman Gina L. Sillitti

Dear Neighbor,

I hope you and your loved ones have enjoyed the summer.

As we all get ready for the fall season, I hope you have a moment to learn about what we've obtained for our community this legislative session. My colleagues and I also accomplished historic achievements in this year's budget. I helped secure funding to address pressing local concerns related to public safety, environmental policy, infrastructure, and school funding. These investments will fuel real change and help Long Islanders thrive.

My top priority is representing you and your family, whether it involves fighting for legislative solutions or helping connect you to resources. If you have any questions or concerns about this newsletter or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact my office at 516-482-6966 or reach me by email at SillittiG@nyassembly.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gina L. Sillitti".

Member of Assembly, 16th District



"Throughout the 2023 legislative session, I'm proud to have worked with my colleagues to pass a budget and legislation that helps our district and all New Yorkers."

- Assemblywoman Gina Sillitti

Housing

Assemblywoman Sillitti stood with her suburban colleagues in the Majority to prevent the one-size-fits-all proposal that did not work for our communities. They also succeeded in preserving local control over zoning decisions impacting housing development. While the governor's housing compact was not the right approach for Long Island, we are facing a housing crisis that we can't ignore. We must continue the dialogue about how to best address this, but it can't be a top-down, behind closed doors approach.

Public Safety



This year's budget helps improve New York's bail reform law by giving judges more discretion in handling pre-trial sentencing and their ability to impose bail. Since taking office, Assemblywoman Sillitti has been advocating for common-sense improvement to our bail laws by allowing judges to consider all relevant factors when making pretrial determinations, including past criminal history or repeat offenses. Together, these changes will help keep violent criminals off our streets while ensuring we have a fair and unbiased criminal justice system for all.

Working with Nassau County police, Assemblywoman Sillitti has introduced legislation that would provide peer-to-peer support to our first responders. We have seen that our first responders often recover best from trauma when they have a peer that has lived their experiences and is trained to help them navigate their traumatic event. This legislation will keep these conversations confidential, ensuring our brave men and women are comfortable getting the mental health services they need (A.1310).

Supporting First Responders

Assemblywoman Sillitti introduced legislation to provide disability retirement to volunteer firefighters diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease caused by their firefighting duties. Previously, we passed legislation allowing this for paid firefighters, and we want to expand this to our volunteer members (A.7871).

This year's budget:

- ✓ Provides **\$7.6 million** to modernize emergency medical services and establish a public service campaign to recruit more EMS workers

- ✓ Establishes a heart presumption for firefighters, making it easier for firefighters to receive the benefits they deserve
- ✓ Funds death benefits and disability retirement for Nassau County fire marshals who are killed in the line of duty or because of the performance of their duties

Supporting Our Veterans

This year's budget provides for:

- ✓ **\$1.1 million** in support for homeless veterans
- ✓ **\$500,000** to establish a database of veterans' memorials to ensure we're properly honoring our nation's heroes
- ✓ **\$300,000** increase for the Mobile Veterans Benefit Advisory Clinic
- ✓ **\$7.7 million** to expand the Joseph P. Dwyer Peer-to-Peer Veterans' Support Program statewide, providing vital peer support and counseling services to veterans who are transitioning from military service to civilian life

Assemblywoman Sillitti personally helped secure **\$120,000** to fund the Nassau Suffolk Law Services' Veterans Rights Project. This project was created to meet the unique civil needs of our most vulnerable veterans.



Assemblywoman Sillitti introduced legislation to increase the military buy back, which provides veterans with state service pension credit for their years of military service, ensuring our veterans get credit for their time protecting our country (A.5936-A).

Mental Health

This year's budget provides for a **historic \$1 billion investment** to help address the mental health crisis, including:

- ✓ **\$30 million** to expand mental health services for school-aged children
- ✓ **\$60 million** to support the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
- ✓ **\$60 million** in capital and **\$121.6 million** in operating funding to dramatically expand outpatient services
- ✓ **\$28 million** for wraparound transition services after a patient is discharged

Protecting the Environment

In addition to investments from the landmark Environmental Bond Act passed by voters in 2022, this year's budget includes **\$400 million for the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)**. The EPF supports climate change mitigation, protects water sources and advances conservation efforts. This year's budget also includes:

- ✓ **\$500 million** in clean water funding, bringing New York's total clean water infrastructure investment to \$5 billion since 2017
- ✓ **\$400 million** to provide relief to New Yorkers experiencing high electric bills as well as lower energy burdens through electrifications and retrofits



Assemblywoman Sillitti giving Speaker Carl Heastie a tour of Manhasset Bay to discuss the effects of climate change

Protecting Reproductive Rights

This year's budget:

- ✓ Provides **\$8.3 million** to strengthen New York's reproductive health system
- ✓ Ensures insurance coverage for abortion drugs
- ✓ Prohibits persons or entities in the state from complying with out-of-state warrants targeting individuals for seeking or providing reproductive health services

Assemblywoman Sillitti co-sponsored and passed the Equal Rights Amendment to protect reproductive rights (A.1283). It will go before the voters in November 2024.

Education

This year's budget delivers:

- ✓ Over **\$114 million** in total school aid for our Assembly District, a **28% increase** from last year
- ✓ **\$2.6 billion** to fully fund school Foundation Aid for the first time since the formula was created in 2007
- ✓ **\$903,000** for Henry Viscardi School in Albertson, one of only 11 such schools in New York State, which provides children with severe disabilities with a traditional education
- ✓ **\$99.6 million** statewide to support public libraries



Assemblywoman Sillitti continues to push for an inclusive education by advocating for and co-sponsoring legislation (A.6579) that would require Asian-American history be taught in our schools.

"Through education we can begin to change minds, break barriers and stereotypes, and finally start to chip away at the hate. Education may not bring about the fastest results, but it will bring about the longest lasting ones."
- Assemblywoman Gina Sillitti

The strength of our state lies in its rich cultural diversity. Assemblywoman Sillitti co-sponsored and passed legislation to create the New York Asian American Pacific Islander Commission and establish Lunar New Year as a school holiday (A.3301-A, A.7768). She also co-sponsored legislation to establish Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, and Diwali as school holidays (A.2339).

In this year's budget, we provided a **historic investment of \$30 million** in funding that will provide Asian-led organizations with the resources they need to combat Asian hate, and will serve as a catalyst for promoting equity and ensuring a brighter future for AAPI members of our community.

Elections

Democracy is the backbone of our great nation and truly works best when we all participate.

Assemblywoman Sillitti introduced the following bills to make it easier to vote and safeguard our elections:

- ✓ **A.7052** - Opts New York State into E.R.I.C (Electronic Registration Information Center), a multistate network of about 30 states that helps maintain accurate voter rolls
- ✓ **A.4062** - Requires the board of elections to post sample ballots online at least twelve days prior to the first day of early voting, so you can see exactly what your ballot looks like before you vote
- ✓ **A.5358** - Requires certain candidates for public office to file a statement attesting that they meet the residency requirements of the office, because voters have a right to know their elected officials are who they say they are, and live where they say they live
- ✓ **A.6939-A** - Authorizes county boards of elections to establish county-wide polling places to make it more convenient to vote on Election Day
- ✓ Assemblywoman Sillitti also helped pass the New York Early Mail Voter Act to provide more safe and secure opportunities to cast a ballot (**A.7632-A**)

"For the first time, Foundation Aid will be fully funded. Our children are our future, and we must do all we can to ensure their success. That future starts in our schools!"

— Assemblywoman Gina Sillitti

**"I will always put our families first and fight for policies and investments that support all Long Islanders."
- Assemblywoman Gina L. Sillitti**

Upcoming Events

Gina on the Go!

During September & October, Assemblywoman Sillitti will be hosting her 3rd annual mobile office hours at local libraries throughout the district. This will give you a chance to meet with her one-on-one to discuss issues, ask questions, or propose legislative ideas. Dates and times will be mailed out soon.

Sports Equipment Drive - October 13

In October, our office is partnering with the Manhasset School District to host a sports equipment drive to benefit the Manhasset Great Neck EOC and Samba 360. We are looking for new and gently used equipment for basketball, soccer, volleyball, and lacrosse for children in our community, and we hope you can participate. Please visit our website to learn more!



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Gina L. Sillitti**