

Around the Community



Members of Sacred Heart Girl Scout Troop 4000 are pictured with their donations to our community's 21st Annual Valentines for Vets Gift Drive.



Congratulations to the winners of Assemblyman Braunstein's Annual Halloween Essay and Drawing Contest. Assemblyman Braunstein is pictured with Amber Zhou of PS 203, Amy Zhou of Peihong Art Studio, and Nora Gupta of PS 115. (Not pictured - Danielle Dennehy of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament School.)



Assemblyman Braunstein attended the Key Luck Club's Lunar New Year Celebration at Bayside Senior Center.



Assemblyman Braunstein is pictured at Fort Totten with a military family who received donations from his office's 6th Annual Toy Drive.

Assemblyman Edward C. Braunstein

DISTRICT OFFICE: 213-33 39th Avenue, Suite 238 • Bayside, NY 11361 • 718-357-3588 • Fax: 718-357-5947
ALBANY OFFICE: Room 557 Legislative Office Building • Albany, NY 12248 • 518-455-5425 • Fax: 518-455-4648

EMAIL: braunsteine@nyassembly.gov

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Assemblyman Braunstein: State Budget Moves Northeast Queens forward

Assemblyman Braunstein announced that he helped pass a state budget that provides a historic increase in education funding, creates a first-in-the-nation free tuition plan to help students go to college, saves our local senior centers, and makes a significant commitment to ensuring every New Yorker has clean drinking water.

“This year’s state budget is so much more than a spending plan – it’s a detailed blueprint to move our state forward,” said Assemblyman Braunstein. “The 2017-2018 budget continues our progress and proves we’re committed to innovation, opportunity and supporting those that need a helping hand. This budget funds our shared New York values.”

Assemblyman Braunstein allocates over \$1 million to local libraries

Assemblyman Braunstein provided over \$1 million in state funding to local libraries, including the North Hills, Whitestone, and Douglaston/Little Neck branches.

“I am proud to have provided over a million dollars in sorely needed funding to libraries in Northeast Queens,” said Assemblyman Braunstein. “The residents of Little Neck deserve a library that has the same modern conveniences as other branches. As such, I am pleased to provide the North Hills Community Library with a \$500,000 grant for an exterior self-check in and an ADA-compliant entrance. The patrons of North Hills Library will be able to return their books 24/7 instead of having to wait until the facility is open, and the elderly and disabled will be able to more easily access the services offered at the library.”

“Our libraries are vital resources for our community, especially for students and senior citizens, since they provide a quiet place to study, as well as free internet access,” said Assemblyman Braunstein. “I allocated a \$500,000 grant to the Whitestone Library for a new roof so that our community will be able to utilize the building for many years to come.”



Assemblyman Braunstein provided the Douglaston/Little Neck Library with a \$125,000 grant for window and door replacement.

“We are grateful to Assemblyman Braunstein for sharing our vision of providing lifelong learning opportunities and information to the public,” said Queens Library President and CEO Dennis M. Walcott. “He’s proven himself to be someone who doesn’t just talk about his commitment to Queens Library – he delivers on it.”

Investing in our schools and our children

The budget increases education aid by \$1 billion for a total of \$25.7 billion, a 4.1 percent increase from last year’s budget, representing the largest investment in education in New York history and reaffirming the Assembly’s unrelenting commitment to putting every student on their path to success.

“This year’s state budget invests in our schools so that every student can get an education that helps shape their future,” said Assemblyman Braunstein. “There’s truly no better investment than one in our kids. By giving our schools the funding and resources they need, we can protect vital education programs and help our students learn, grow and get ahead.”



Assemblyman Braunstein met with Sacred Heart Cub Scout Pack 49 at his District Office.

Implementing the Excelsior Scholarship, supporting state colleges and universities

The budget makes a substantial investment in SUNY and CUNY schools and helps expand access to higher education through scholarship and opportunity programs.

“Working families in New York State and across the nation are seeing the costs of a college education soar as the need for a college degree to access good-paying jobs has never been greater,” said Assemblyman Braunstein. “This year’s budget allows eligible students to attend public colleges and universities tuition free, helping even more young people make their college dreams come true.”

The state budget provides funding to establish the Excelsior Scholarship, a groundbreaking, first-of-its-kind initiative to make SUNY and CUNY schools tuition-free for New York families who earn less than \$125,000 annually. Students who attend a private college in New York and whose families earn less than \$125,000 annually would also be eligible for a scholarship award of \$6,000. The Excelsior Scholarship will be implemented at a gradual rate, starting at \$100,000 in 2017-18, \$110,000 in 2018-19, and \$125,000 in 2019-2020.

Investing in clean water, rebuilding crumbling infrastructure

The budget allocates \$2.5 billion for water infrastructure, including \$200 million for drinking and wastewater infrastructure improvements in New York City’s watershed, to help ensure clean drinking water by repairing and replacing old pipes and water mains, as well as preventive measures, such as source water land acquisition, to keep water from becoming polluted.

“The water our families drink, bathe in, and cook with must be absolutely safe,” said Assemblyman Braunstein. “We’re taking critical steps to fix our crumbling water mains and pipes before it’s too late.”

Keeping New Yorkers safe

With the rise in hate crimes in recent months, the state budget establishes a Hate Crimes Task Force in New York to prevent, investigate and detect hate crimes, as well as issue reports to combat these crimes and other forms of discrimination.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRAUNSTEIN PROVIDES BENEFITS ASSISTANCE FOR SENIORS

Assemblyman Braunstein, in partnership with Services Now for Adult Persons, Inc., is offering benefits and entitlements counseling to persons 60 years of age and older, including help with EPIC, Food Stamps, HEAP, Medicaid, Medicare Part D, SCHE, and SCRIE.

Please call Assemblyman Braunstein’s office at 718-357-3588 if you would like to schedule an appointment with a case worker.

Supporting seniors’ health and well-being

Governor Cuomo’s proposed cuts to senior centers in New York City were rejected in the state budget. In February, Assemblyman Braunstein held a rally at Selfhelp Clearview Senior Center in Bay Terrace to protest the Governor’s budget proposal redirecting Title XX funding to other budgetary purposes.

“I am relieved that the state budget rejected Governor Cuomo’s proposal to redirect Title XX funding that is used to support senior centers. Restoring this funding prevented 65 senior centers in New York City from closing, which would have had a devastating impact on thousands of seniors,” said Assemblyman Braunstein.

The budget increases funds for Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs), such as Samuel Field Y’s Clearview Assistance Program, Deepdale Cares, and NORC WOW, for a total of \$2 million. NORCs help keep seniors in the neighborhoods where they have built friendships and support networks. For the second year in a row, the Assembly has led the way, including these programs in its one-house budget and ensuring it was enacted in the final budget.

“Seniors have built their lives in our neighborhoods and play an integral role in helping them grow vibrant,” said Assemblyman Braunstein. “This year’s budget helps elderly Northeast Queens residents remain in their homes and continue to be a part of our communities.”



The budget provides \$13.5 million to support long-term care, including restoring \$10 million to preserve spousal refusal, ensuring couples do not lose their life savings in the event a spouse becomes ill and needs nursing home care.

“A spouse who has to face the already devastating experience of moving a loved one out of their home and into a long-term care facility shouldn’t also have to give up their financial security,” said Assemblyman Braunstein. “This program helps them keep their hard-earned savings to live on.”



Assemblyman Braunstein attended the Indian and Korean Independence Day Celebration sponsored by The Hindu Temple Society of North America and the Korean American Association of Queens.



Assemblyman Braunstein delivered donations from his annual Veterans’ Gift Drive to the NYS Veterans Home at St. Albans. Assemblyman Braunstein is pictured with veterans, as well as his staff and students and faculty from Benjamin N. Cardozo High School.

Dear Neighbor:

This newsletter highlights the actions I have been taking in our district and in Albany on behalf of our community. If you would like to sign up for my email list to receive more frequent updates, please email me at braunsteine@nyassembly.gov.

As always, my office is available to assist you. If you are having trouble with state or local government issues, please do not hesitate to contact us. My staff and I are always here to help you obtain benefits, provide information on government programs, and develop legislative solutions to community problems.



Edward C. Braunstein
Member of Assembly, 26th District



Assemblyman
**Edward C.
Braunstein**
Reports to the People

SPRING 2017



Assemblyman Braunstein was named the 2017 Man of the Year by the Little Neck-Douglaston Memorial Day Parade Committee.



Assemblyman Braunstein joined his colleagues and civic leaders at a rally against Anti-Semitism at Samuel Field Y in Little Neck.