



NEWS FROM ASSEMBLY MEMBER **Catalina Cruz**



**DEAR FRIENDS
AND NEIGHBORS**

What a fantastic year it has been! I participated in one of the most historic legislative sessions in decades, provided quality and meaningful constituent services to those in need, and brought outstanding community programming and events through our district office. I am honored to represent and serve the people of Jackson Heights, Corona, and Elmhurst, and look forward to what the next year will bring!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catalina Cruz".

SERVING OUR CONSTITUENTS



Since the opening of our office, we have helped approximately 600 constituents with immigration, housing, education, health care, and other issues. We are committed to connecting you with resources to improve your quality of life. We provide services at our district office, as well as during mobile hours at the Jackson Heights Gay & Lesbian Senior Center and the Corona Library. Please stop by our office or mobile hours if you need help!

FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

We are proud to have obtained key funding to help programs in our community provide much needed services, including:

- ✓ \$15,000 to Asian Americans for Equality, which will be used to administer programs related to immigration, the implementation of the Jose Peralta DREAM Act, housing counseling, and entitlement support services.
- ✓ \$7,500 to BIOBUS, Inc., which will be used to provide science education programs at our local district schools.
- ✓ \$12,500 to CHHAYA Community Development Corporation, which will be used to support the organization's English for speakers of other languages program (ESOL) and implementation of the Jose Peralta DREAM Act.
- ✓ \$7,500 to Corona Ambulance Corps, which will be used to cover expenses for purchasing medical supplies and provision of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) training.
- ✓ \$7,500 to St. Leo's Church – Food Pantry, which will be used to cover expenses related to providing food for the community.



COMMUNITY EVENTS



On October 8, 2019, we hosted a celebration of our Latinx community in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month! We honored the legacy of the late Hector Figueroa, former President of 32BJ, among other community leaders. We also ate amazing Dominican food, saw great cultural performances from various countries including Peru and Ecuador, and danced the night away with the New York City Police Department's La Jara band. We will continue to bring fun, service-oriented events to you throughout next year.

NEW LAWS IN EFFECT

I was thrilled to be a part of one of the most successful legislative sessions in decades! My colleagues in the Assembly and I passed some of the most progressive laws in the country, including:

STRONGEST TENANT PROTECTIONS EVER

- ✓ Enacted this past spring to support tenants around the state to ensure they receive the greatest protections under the law.
- ✓ Prohibits retaliatory eviction against a tenant who makes a good faith complaint to the landlord alleging uninhabitable conditions.
- ✓ Prevents landlords from using a database of court information to blacklist prospective tenants.
- ✓ Requires landlords to provide adequate notice when refusing to renew a lease.
- ✓ Limits security deposits to one month's rent and requires any deposit to be refunded.
- ✓ Requires landlords to make a good faith effort to re-rent a unit after a tenant breaks the lease to help mitigate damages.
- ✓ Limits background check fees to \$20 and prohibits lease application fees.

DRIVER'S LICENSE ACCESS AND PRIVACY ACT

- ✓ This law will allow undocumented immigrants to apply for a standard state driver's license.
 - ✓ This legislation improves public safety, lowers insurance costs, provides an increase in revenue that could be used for infrastructure improvements, boosts our economy, and allows undocumented immigrants to follow traffic laws.
 - ✓ Applications can be submitted starting December 16.
- For more information, please visit <https://dmv.ny.gov/driver-license/driver-licenses-and-green-light-law>



THE JOSE PERALTA NEW YORK STATE DREAM ACT

- ✓ This law took effect in the Fall 2019 and will provide access to financial aid for young undocumented New Yorkers, who meet certain requirements, in order to help them achieve their college dreams.
- For more information, please apply via <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/dream/>

CHILD VICTIMS ACT

- ✓ This law opens the doors of justice to the thousands of survivors of child sexual abuse in New York State by prospectively extending the statute of limitations.
- ✓ This legislation also establishes a one-year window in which adult survivors of child sexual abuse would be permitted to file civil actions.
- ✓ The Child Victims Act provides justice for past and future survivors of child sexual abuse, helps the public identify hidden child predators through civil litigation discovery, and shifts the significant and lasting costs of child sexual abuse to the responsible parties.

Additionally, several of the bills I sponsored are now laws, including:

- ✓ **A. 7515** – This law expands the category of eligible participants in the NYS Address Confidentiality Program to include victims of sexual offenses, stalking, and human trafficking.
- ✓ **A. 6358** – This law prevents the idling of engines of school vehicles while parked or standing on school grounds.

Winter
2019

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NEXT STEPS

As the New Year approaches, I return to Albany where I endeavor to have as successful a legislative session as last year. Some of the new legislation I will be working on includes the criminalization of wage theft, the right to counsel for all New Yorkers in immigration proceedings, and enhanced rights for nail salon workers. Please also stay tuned for our Winter/Spring series of district events including a citizenship drive, in-house legal services, community workshops on immigration, health care, and worker's rights, and the return of our successful small business outreach walks.

But, I also need your help! I rely on your feedback so that I can continue fighting for what matters to our community. Please feel free to contact me by phone at (718) 458-5367 or by email at cruz@nyassembly.gov with your opinions, ideas, and needs.

