



Close of the Legislative Session – I think...

Wednesday was the last day of the legislative session, but as I am sure you have seen in news reports, the issue of Mayoral Control of NYC schools still lingers as something critical that must be resolved.

On the Assembly side, we passed an extender of mayoral control and tax extenders for localities outside of New York City. Instead of doing the same, the Senate said that they would only sign the extender, a policy which they claim to support, if the state lifted the charter school cap. This is in no way germane to whether or not Mayor de Blasio should have control of NYC schools. This tactic is coercive and clearly demonstrates that the Senate is not negotiating in good faith. These issues must be resolved before we return to the next legislative session in January and I will be telling the Speaker and the Majority Leader that I think we should return to session sooner rather than later to complete our business.

I have learned a lot in my first legislative session in Albany, but one thing that I know about this particular negotiation is that The Assembly, while a far from a perfect legislative body, has been straight forward about its approach on this while the Senate has turned the well-being of our public schools in NYC into a political issue and has created this stalemate. If a special session is called to deal with these issues, I will be sure to keep you in the loop about our progress.

Fighting for Adoptee Rights

There was a bill before the Assembly this week, [A-5036B](#), which purported to help adoptees who have become adults gain access to their original birth certificate. I voted no on the bill, because I believe that while well intentioned, the bill actually creates a new set of rights for birth parents while inhibiting adoptees from gaining access to their own birth certificate so they can realize their full identity and understand their health history. I do not believe that the Government should have this information only to share it with birth parents and not the adult adoptees themselves.

There is another bill in the Assembly, [A-6821A](#), which offers unrestricted access to adoptees that I am proud to co-sponsor and support, but I felt it important to share my reasoning behind why I voted No on [A-5036B](#), so please click below to view my full remarks from the Assembly floor.



3rd Bill of the Session

I passed my third bill of the session on Monday, when the Assembly voted in favor of my bill [A5735A](#), which would amend the election law to notify voters in bold and prominent font on their registration form that New York practices a closed Party Primary system. In New York State, if a voter is not enrolled in a particular party then they are not able to participate in that Party's Primary Election. Roughly 25% of voters in New York State are registered to vote as either Independents (i.e. not registered with a party) or in the Independence Party. This bill requires that on every voter registration form that it be explained in bold and prominent font - that political party enrollment is optional, but that, in order to vote in a primary election of a political party, a voter must enroll in that political party. More explicitly notifying each voter at the time of their registration will help to better educate the voter and potentially impact the Primary enfranchisement of almost three million voters in New York State. Given the byzantine nature of our system of election laws, the bill is an important step toward educating new voters about the way our electoral system works in New York. I look forward to pushing the bill in the following legislative session so that it not only passes the Assembly, but the Senate as well.

Graduation Friday!

After I managed to return home safely from Albany, I was lucky to be welcomed home by a slew of offers to attend 5th Grade graduations at schools across the district. This was a well need breath of fresh air after a week of craven cynicism in Albany. In a 2 hour span over the course of this morning, I was able to attend graduation ceremonies at The Children's School-PS 372, PS 321, PS 217, PS 10 and PS 130. It is a special day for all the graduates and their families and a wonderful testament to how truly great our schools are in the 44th Assembly District.





I am thrilled to be back in Brooklyn full-time for the Summer and look forward to seeing you around the neighborhood. As always, if you have any legislative ideas or community concerns, please reach out to my office by responding to this email or calling us at (718) 788-7221.

Bobby