



### Dear Neighbor,

2023 is winding down and many of us are beginning to look forward to the new year. For my colleagues and me, 2024 also means a new legislative session. I have been thinking about the legislative priorities for the Assembly's Environmental Conservation Committee, which I now chair, and how I will work

with my colleagues to advance the important legislation under consideration.

Governing is difficult work. At the state level, we legislators are tasked with representing the priorities of our specific districts while considering the concerns, and political realities, of diverse communities across the state. A critical, and often challenging, part of the process is compromise. I wish I could say that we legislators all share common ground on the issues facing the state, but it's simply not true - communities have different and sometimes opposing needs, legislators have diverse principles and priorities, and deep divisions exist about how to tackle the problems that face us. Common ground is not always possible, and common sense is not so common.

When there is no consensus, compromise is a key tool for getting things done. Having served in the legislature for many terms, I know this firsthand. I have sponsored and advocated for numerous bills that are now law. Each piece of legislation that gets passed is intensely labored over and goes through many rounds of revision, incorporating the input of colleagues, agencies, advocates, experts, community members, and other stakeholders. No one gets everything they want as they wanted it, including those of us who helped draft and sponsor the legislation. But these bills would not have passed otherwise.

Successfully passing legislation means having the humility to accept that passing a bill that does some good is more important than not passing a bill that I think is perfect, and the knowledge that there will always be an opportunity to return to an issue when additional information or new events make it possible to garner more support for it.

This year, I have been thinking about compromise because it feels increasingly like it's become a dirty word. Ideological purity has become the norm in our politics, and voters look to elected officials to forgo compromise, encouraging them to stake out unwavering positions even if that means that they prevent important legislation from passing or even, when it comes to the budget, threatens the ability of government to function. Believing in the importance of compromise does not mean that I believe you should serve without principles. There have been many times in my career - whether it be fighting for the Reproductive Health Act and the codification of LGBTQ rights in New York State or fiercely advocating against the use of public space for private profit on Pier 40 - that I have stood alone against immense pressure because I understood what was at stake. But I also believe that the issues we face are too great to allow for inaction, and I will work with my colleagues - and yes, compromise with them - to make sure that we are doing what we can to help our constituents and safeguard our environment.

Sincerely,

Deborah

## Tackling Climate Change

Climate change is a critical issue that is overwhelming in its scale, and addressing it not only requires that we think creatively, but also take a comprehensive and coordinated approach. Since being named Chair of the Assembly's Environmental Conservation Committee earlier this year, I have tried to do just that.

During the 2023 session, I sponsored environmental bills that were passed and are currently awaiting signature by Governor Hochul, including Bill A.2917, which bans wildlife killing contests and Bill A.3226, The Birds and Bees Protection Act, which prohibits the use of agricultural products that contain a neurotoxin shown to be detrimental to bird and bee populations. Bill A.6949, which reduces the red tape for certain types of geothermal wells, has been signed into law.

**In the coming session, I am excited to continue fighting for the reduction of packaging waste by prioritizing the passage of the Packaging Waste Reduction & Infrastructure Act (also known as the EPR--Extended Producer Responsibility Act), which would require companies that produce large amounts of packaging to assume responsibility for ensuring it gets recycled.** I'm also looking forward to working closely with the Assembly's Energy Committee to find ways to increase the use of renewables, with a focus on doing so while preserving prime farmland and other natural resources. Climate change poses a huge and multi-faceted challenge, and I am committed to continuing to address it in numerous ways. But I also know that for the efforts to succeed, they must be coordinated to ensure they're not working at cross purposes.

As the Assemblymember for the 66th district, I witnessed the devastating and extensive damage done by Superstorm Sandy and have been closely involved in the years-long recovery process. The district sits at the crossroads of several resiliency projects, overseen by multiple levels of

government, each of which seek to prevent flooding from future storm surge. As proposed, they will each have an immense impact on the landscape of Lower Manhattan and the quality of life of its residents. And yet, there is little to no coordination between them, and each project is moving forward with little insight on how they will impact one another, let alone their collective impact on our neighborhoods. **That's why I have joined with colleagues from the Legislature and the City Council to ask that the Governor and the Mayor establish a task force that can address and coordinate the infrastructure challenges faced by the waterfront as it confronts the impacts of climate change.** Such a task force could work with community, City, State, and Federal stakeholders to ensure that all resiliency efforts will work together to keep us safer.

Importantly, a task force could also help these stakeholders look to the diverse methods available for mitigating the impacts of climate change and help address impacts beyond storm surge. Much of the work done in the past ten years has focused on the threat of sea-level rise and storm surge and preventing another Sandy. However, as we've all seen, storm surge is not the only threat - New York City has seen two major flooding events from rainwater in recent years. A myopic focus on storm surge will lead us to a waterfront lined with walls that will keep seawater out, but rainwater in, which would be a disastrous outcome. **We need to look to nature-based flood prevention features, like increased oyster beds and more green space, dramatically expanding the tree canopy, as well as hard infrastructure that has worked in other cities to deal with rainwater, like locating cisterns under parks in order to capture floodwater.**

As we look ahead, I will continue pursuing a comprehensive approach in the Assembly and fighting for my colleagues to do the same.

## Standing With Workers

In 1911, a fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory killed 146 workers, mostly immigrant women and girls, who had been locked in their workroom in order to prevent them from taking breaks and to ensure that their belongings could be searched when they left work. The fire was the largest industrial accident in the history of New York City, and one of the largest in the history of the country.

**In October, as I gathered with my colleagues and descendants of the fire's victims to celebrate the unveiling of a new, permanent memorial to those who died in the Triangle Shirtwaist fire, I was struck by the ways in which the event continues to reverberate around us.** The fire was truly horrific – so horrific that the abysmal working conditions of those who had up to that point had very little economic or political power became a flash point for the city, the state, and the nation. As Governor Hochul said at the memorial unveiling, New York was “the birthplace of the workers’ rights movement because of what happened right on this block.”<sup>1</sup> The fire spurred a wave of labor organizing and a state commission that helped revolutionize labor laws in New York, and contributed to the eventual passage of the National Labor Relations Act in 1935, which enshrined the right for private sector employees to organize in unions, collectively bargain, and strike.

**I thought of the legacy of the fire a few weeks later in late October when I joined a SAG-AFTRA picket line in support of the union's strike.** The union has since reached a bargaining agreement, but when I joined them, SAG-AFTRA (which represents film and television actors) had been on strike since July. The SAG-AFTRA strike spoke to many of the issues that will face workers across sectors in the coming years – they were fighting not just for livable wages, but also for their very existence in the film and television industry, asserting their right to control their voices and images as artificial intelligence presents an existential threat to their craft. Their strike was part of the “summer of strikes” that is now extending into the remainder of 2023, a wave of major strikes that includes the Writers Guild of America and United Auto Workers. In recent years we have watched workers at corporations that are hostile to unions organize despite threats to their livelihood and expensive campaigns to discredit them. According to the Cornell Industrial Labor Relations School Labor Action Tracker, there have been 348 labor actions taken this year involving more than 300,000 workers. **As technologies threaten to shift jobs away from workers and wealth inequality continues to grow, unions and their workers are fighting for the dignity, working conditions, and wages they deserve.**

As I've said many times, their bravery helps not just union members, but all of us. Unions have been instrumental in creating the protections that all workers now enjoy, and their advocacy is contagious - when workers make major gains through a labor negotiation or strike, other workers see what might be possible for them and become their own advocates. The victims of the Triangle Shirtwaist fire should not have died, but I am grateful that workers across the country are continuing to honor their legacy and, in doing so, are creating a better world for all of us.

1 <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/11/myregion/triangle-shirtwaist-factory-fire-memorial.html>



*It was great to spend time on the water learning firsthand about the work of the Billion Oyster Project with students from The Harbor School. Oysters are an important natural resource, helping to keep the Hudson River clean and softening the impacts of storm damage to the city. The Billion Oyster Project collaborates with many community partners in their efforts to restore oyster reefs to our waterways.*



*As Chair of the NYS Assembly's Higher Education Committee for many years, I was able to visit college campuses all over the state. Now, in my role as Chair of the Assembly's Committee on Environmental Conservation, I have the privilege of touring farms and visiting agricultural sites. I was happy to join colleagues and meet with maple syrup producers on such a tour earlier this year.*



*It was an honor to walk the picket line with SAG-AFTRA members this fall as they fought for and succeeded in obtaining a fair contract. Actors, writers, technicians, and craftspeople are essential to the dynamic cultural life of our city. I'm always proud to stand in solidarity with labor and I feel so fortunate to represent a district with a rich history of those working in the arts.*



*What a treat to join Darren Bloch, CEO, and State Senator Brian Kavanagh in celebrating Greenwich House's work as a vital community resource, providing workforce development, education, cultural activities, recreation, meals, and so much more through their older adult centers and youth programming.*



*In September, I was proud to join Governor Hochul and colleagues as she signed into law a package of legislation that will protect voting rights and strengthen our democracy, building upon last year's enactment of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act of New York.*

## CORRESPONDENCE CORNER

Letters and testimony play an essential role in the offices of elected officials and I want to highlight some of the writing my office has produced in the past few months to share this important part of our work with you.

### Promoting Street Safety

Given the influx of new modes of transportation, it's essential that we work harder to ensure pedestrian safety. I have long been supportive of policies to encourage the use of alternative transportation and I believe it is critically important that all riders and drivers comply with the basic rules of the road. I recently wrote to the NYC Department of Transportation Commissioner **asking for clarity about requirements for mopeds and scooters to display registration and asking why these drivers appear to be exempt from helmet laws.** Vehicle registration helps facilitate the enforcement of traffic laws, and I am hopeful the city will take steps to incorporate these new vehicles into existing laws in order to promote safety.

### Urging Accountability and Community Engagement from Mount Sinai

Mount Sinai Beth Israel (MSBI) announced in October that it was closing the MSBI campus at 281 1st Avenue without any prior notice to the community. I joined Assemblymember Harvey Epstein in writing to New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) Commissioner James V. McDonald to express our deep disappointment that Mount Sinai announced this closure. Despite the NYSDOH issuing a determination on the proposed merger of the New York Ear and Eye Infirmary and MSBI which **required that Mount Sinai engage in a robust community engagement plan**, MSBI announced the closure with no notice which undermines any stated community engagement commitments. **MSBI is the only full-scale hospital south of 28th Street and the community deserves a voice in the decision to shutter it.** Residents of Lower Manhattan must have a full-scale hospital capable of responding to emergencies and addressing the health needs of those who live, work, and visit our downtown communities. Especially after the devastating loss of St. Vincent's, and the assurances that the community would always have Beth Israel to rely on, the Department of Health should be taking every action to ensure that Mount Sinai is being responsive to community concerns. I will continue to work with my colleagues in government to press the NYS Department of Health and Mount Sinai on the essential need for adequate medical care for downtown communities.

### Advocating for Existing Housing and Affordable Housing

New York is in a housing crisis, and all levels of government have been called to come up with solutions to ensure that New Yorkers can get, and stay, housed. I believe that maintaining existing affordable and rent stabilized housing is critical to any plan to address the affordability crisis. In recent years, **I have become especially concerned that the lax inspection approach taken by the NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) is endangering the city's older and historic buildings. This includes much of our rent stabilized and rent controlled housing stock, which is frequently damaged by adjacent construction—displacing longtime residents, for short and long periods of time.** I'm called to action not just due to the concern for housing, but also due to the dangers facing residents and first responders in the most extreme situations. I recently wrote to Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine and implored him to incorporate a focus on preserving housing into his affordable housing advocacy. **I asked him to join me in advocating for the DOB to engage in more robust inspections and consider and protect our existing housing stock when approving new development.**

### Demanding Permanent Affordable Housing at 388 Hudson

The NYC Department of Housing, Preservation, and Development (HPD) is currently engaged in a **Request for Proposals process for the development of affordable housing on a city-owned parcel of land at 388 Hudson Street.** I wrote to HPD Commissioner Adolfo Carrion, Jr. to express my concerns that **HPD's approach to the site does not appear to honor what the community has consistently made clear: that housing built at 388 Hudson Street must be 100% and permanently affordable.** Our neighborhoods have lost hundreds, if not thousands of affordable homes to luxury housing development, due in large part to real estate speculation. We have watched rampant real estate development drive the price of housing in my district to levels that are inaccessible to many of the residents who have lived here for decades. I have spent much of my career advocating for the preservation and creation of affordable housing, and I am fighting to ensure that this publicly owned land is developed in a way that provides meaningful and lasting affordability and accessibility for residents. I implored HPD to listen to the voices of community stakeholders and residents and **do whatever is necessary to make permanent affordability at 388 Hudson a reality, should it be working with a non-profit developer or re-issuing the RFP with stronger restrictions and requirements.**

## Caring for Our Furry Friends and Trees Alike!



As the colder weather is upon us, please remember that if you are putting on a coat and boots to go outside, our furry friends also need appropriate protection.

- A layer of fur doesn't always equate to the same warm feeling of your parka, so **try to have a sweater or jacket for your dog when they need to use the facilities outdoors.**
- Snow and ice can also be hazardous to little paws, especially when the streets and sidewalks are salted and sanded for traction. We may not notice the corrosive effects of salt underfoot when wearing thick boots, but our animals certainly feel it in their paw-pads. **Rubber booties are always a good idea, especially after a wind and ice storm when a downed powerline may conduct electrical currents through shallow water or ice.**
- And as always, snow may melt but what your dog leaves behind does not, so **please clean up after your beloved pets even during a snowstorm.**
- Finally, a reminder that **dog urine can damage plants and trees, so please do not allow your pets to relieve themselves in tree pits or other plantings.**
- Our trees and plants are essential to the health of our city, absorbing air pollution, carbon pollution, and significant water runoff. They also lower the temperature of an area and reduce the risk of damage and the likelihood of extreme weather events.



*Trees are essential to the health of our urban environment, and I was pleased to join colleagues in New York City government and advocates from the Forest for All NYC coalition, in support of bills introduced by Council Members Bottcher and Brewer, that would require the City to include trees in its long-term planning and would create a citywide Urban Forest Plan aimed at protecting and increasing our city's urban forest.*

## Join Our Email Newsletter List!

To receive email updates between printed newsletters, please email my office: [glickd@nyassembly.gov](mailto:glickd@nyassembly.gov) or visit my Assembly webpage: <https://www.nyassembly.gov/mem/Deborah-J-Glick/news/>

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Deborah Glick's

## NEIGHBORHOOD UPDATE

ASSEMBLYMEMBER  
66<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT  
NEW YORK CITY

*HOW TO REACH US:*  
Call 212-674-5153 or  
email [glickd@nyassembly.gov](mailto:glickd@nyassembly.gov)



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## We're Here to Assist!

A reminder that the staff in my District Office provides a range of services to constituents, including:

- mitigation of quality of life and public safety concerns
- assistance with applying for meal delivery and food programs, financial benefits, and rent and utility assistance programs
- connections to supports for older adults
- legal aid and tenants' rights resources
- advocacy with City and State agencies

**Contact us by email: [glickd@nyassembly.gov](mailto:glickd@nyassembly.gov) or phone: 212-674-5153**



*While I know people always have important documents to dispose of securely, the real pleasure in hosting a shred event in partnership with the city's Department of Sanitation is the opportunity to hear directly from community members and neighbors during our sidewalk chats.*