



# NEWS FROM ASSEMBLYMEMBER Alex Bores

## DEAR NEIGHBOR,

When I became your Assemblymember, I **promised to focus on making you & your family safer, your life easier, and your government more effective.** Over the past year, my office has fulfilled that promise by passing important legislation, funding local services, shutting down unlicensed cannabis shops, and **creating safer streets with new measures on e-bikes and mopeds.**

**I have passed 18 bills through the State Assembly,** with 10 measures already signed into law by Governor Hochul (six more await her signature, one awaits action in the Senate, and an additional one will come directly to you for a vote).

**My legislation to speed up our backlogged court system, by removing a judicial cap from 1846, passed the Legislature** and will eventually appear as a ballot initiative. This summer the Governor signed two of my bills that ensure our streets are safer: the first mandates that collision reporting forms indicate whether an e-bike was involved in a crash, and the second requires that dealers register mopeds at the point of sale, enabling traffic enforcement.

I worked to shut down illegal, unlicensed cannabis stores across our community by fighting for changes to the law that enable swift crackdowns and launching a reporting form where neighbors like you can report stores they see in the community. My office shares this information with the Office of Cannabis Management and the New York City Sheriff's office to ensure that they shut down each of these shops permanently; **as a direct result of our efforts, 630 illegal cannabis shops have been closed, including 27 in the district.**

**I also brought over \$4.5 million to local programs** that provide services such as health care, education, older adult services, and job training as well as mental health, criminal justice, and legal resources.

In this newsletter, you will learn more about my work in the community this year. I also send out a monthly email newsletter to keep neighbors up to date between these yearly summaries. If you are interested in joining, send an email with the subject line "Join Alex List" to [BoresA@contactme.nyassembly.gov](mailto:BoresA@contactme.nyassembly.gov).

Lastly, I would love to talk to you in person. **Please join me for an open Town Hall on September 12th from 6:00–8:00 pm at the Roosevelt House on 65th St.,** where I will take live questions on any issue from the audience. Space will be limited, so please RSVP by scanning the QR code or visit <https://bit.ly/AMBoresTownHall>.

As always, it is my honor to represent you in Albany.

Sincerely,



## RESULTS FROM MY OFFICE

(by the numbers)

10,859+

contacts with neighbors

325+

constituent cases resolved

295

bills cosponsored

17

bills passed through the legislature

477+

community events attended

561+

legislative meetings held

## Contact Us!

My office is here year-round to serve you. Whether you would like to raise a community concern, need assistance navigating state agencies, or would like to share a policy suggestion: please do not hesitate to reach out!

Email: [BoresA@contactme.nyassembly.gov](mailto:BoresA@contactme.nyassembly.gov) • Phone: 212.605.0937

## ENCOURAGING RESPONSIBLE INNOVATION

### Protecting Elections from AI

Artificial intelligence has been used maliciously in the US elections already, and it arguably swung the results of last fall's Slovakian elections\*. We needed to act before a similar fate happens here. **That is why I sponsored two bills (A.7106 & A.9816) that were passed as part of the State budget that together give New York elections the strongest protections from AI than any State.** The first bill (which I passed with Senator Kevin Parker) requires disclosure of AI in political advertising. The second bill (which I passed with Senator Kristen Gonzalez) provides injunctive relief for believable deepfakes that circulate just before an election. These bills are the first steps of many to safeguard elections from AI.

### Speeding Up Government Services

Government agencies do not always keep up with technological advancements, resulting in slow services and wasted tax dollars. Before I served in the Assembly, I worked at companies that built and deployed software for various governments. We could innovate faster and improve services for citizens if the agency strategically deployed software to secure cloud computing when appropriate, rather than requiring expensive (and often old) mainframes for every project. Based on that experience, I passed a bill (A.8435) that requires **state agencies to make plans around when they adopt cloud computing, allowing them to improve your experience.**

\*<https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/01/politics/election-deepfake-threats-invs/index.html>  
<https://www.wired.com/story/slovakias-election-deepfakes-show-ai-is-a-danger-to-democracy/>

## IMPROVING PUBLIC SAFETY



### Accelerating Trials: The No Cap Act

**Trials in New York take too long.** Whether you are primarily concerned about defendants languishing in Rikers or worry more that defendants may commit additional crimes while released on bail, delayed trials make both problems worse. A major cause of delays is that we do not have enough judges. An outdated provision of the New York State Constitution — first inserted in 1846 and unchanged since 1963 — mandates a strict cap on the total number of judges in each jurisdiction (the State has 13 judicial districts, with each NYC borough accounting for one district). This delays both criminal trials and civil trials: prolonging divorces, limiting recovery of damages, and deterring economic activity in New York. **I wrote a bill (A.5366) that will remove this arbitrary cap on justice.**

This bill is a constitutional amendment, so it needs to pass the legislature twice and then be approved by voters in a statewide referendum. The first step is the hardest, and this session the Assembly passed my bill for the first time.

Supported by bar associations, defenders, prosecutors, business groups, and good government advocates, this simple fix will improve both our civil and criminal courts, **because justice delayed is justice denied.**



### Improving Street Safety

It does not take long walking in NYC to see an e-bike or moped running a red light, going the wrong way, or riding on the sidewalk. To address these problems, I wrote two laws this session that tackle micromobility challenges.

A study by my office last year found that though cars are still the most dangerous vehicles on the road, e-bikes are closer to cars than to normal bicycles; in fact, an e-bike is 19 times more likely than a normal bicycle to cause a deadly collision. Crashes are frequently underreported, as the state-mandated collision report form only allows police officers to choose between a motor vehicle, bicycle, or pedestrian, which is why I passed a bill to update the reporting form to include e-bikes and mopeds. **Because of my legislation (A.7628), we will now be able to get a comprehensive sense of street safety in New York for the first time.**

Mopeds (two- or three-wheeled vehicles with small engines but without working pedals) are already legally required to be registered with the DMV, but in practice very few are. In fact, as of this writing, there are fewer than 1,600 mopeds registered in New York City! Yet the NYPD has seized over 12,000 unregistered mopeds this year alone! To fix this, **I passed a bill (A.8450) requiring that mopeds be registered before they leave the dealership, to stem the tide of unregistered vehicles on the road and enable traffic enforcement.**

## Combating Hate and Bias

Hate crime arrests in NYC have increased sharply; as of this writing, the most recent statistics show an 80% increase from October 2023–March 2024 versus the preceding six months. The rise in targeted hate-motivated crimes has particularly affected New Yorkers of faith, as houses of worship have been attacked with graffiti, threats, and even physical violence, including right here on the East Side. **That is why the budget provided \$35 million for security at institutions of faith.**

### Addressing Root Causes of Crime

Crime has many determinants, and a comprehensive public safety approach finds ways to address each of them. The Midtown Community Justice Center's Community First program takes a proactive approach to addressing mental health and homelessness, with a focus on preventing dangerous situations rather than merely reacting to them. **I secured \$25,000 in funding to expand this program on the East Side.**

A collaboration between the Midtown Community Court, Fountain House, Times Square Alliance, and Breaking Ground, the program has engaged almost 1,500 individuals over the past year, including referring individuals to necessary resources (544 people), making introductions to community organizations (316), and providing information on program enrollment (510). By providing these services, Community First can address some of the underlying issues that contribute to crime and improve the relationship between the community and law enforcement, allowing officers to focus on other urgent matters in the district.

### Securing Small Businesses

Manhattan has the most retail theft of any borough in New York City. Organized retail theft threatens our small businesses and raises prices for everyone else. As the NYPD continues to address this issue, **the budget created a new tax credit, up to \$3,000 per store to improve security measures for infrastructure,** helping to secure New Yorkers from organized shoplifters.

### Reducing Gun Violence

This year, **I passed a bill (A.8333) through the Assembly that would require the State to investigate the viability of user authenticated firearms (UAFs, colloquially known as "smart guns").** These guns employ authorized-use technology, meaning only a pre-specified user(s) can fire it, similar to how smartphones unlock.

The bill was bipartisan; a colleague from across the aisle shared that he supported the bill because his father's gun was stolen and then turned up 20 years later when it was used in a crime. A UAF might have prevented that crime. Thousands of guns are stolen in New York and trafficked every year. If those stolen guns had been UAFs, they would be worthless to criminals.

**Authenticated firearms could also limit accidental shootings in the home, which tragically killed 411 children last year in the US.** These firearms could even help protect law enforcement — 10% of all shootings of police officers are with the officer's own weapon.\*

\*<https://hub.jhu.edu/magazine/2013/fall/guns-kill-cops-statistics/>

## EDUCATION



### Funding Our Schools

As a public school graduate (in fact, from our very own NYC School District 2), I prioritize education. **We included in this year's budget an investment of almost \$25 billion in school foundation aid, the main source of public school operating expenses,** to ensure our schools throughout the State deliver for students.

## Ensuring Local Access to Neighborhood Schools

Manhattan was the only borough without geographic preference for resident students to attend local schools, leading students to travel long distances to out-of-borough schools after struggling to enroll in their own neighborhoods. I advocated alongside parents in the district for New York City Schools Chancellor David Banks to address this issue.

**In June, we achieved a breakthrough with the decision to restore geographic preference for six Manhattan schools.** This change provides Manhattan students a fair shot to secure spots in their local schools, the same way students in other boroughs can.

## Preserving Instruction During Voting

**Parents should be sure that their children are getting an uninterrupted education.** While early voting increases democratic participation, hosting it in schools hurts our students. Early voting in gymnasiums takes up a school's resources, with students losing access to their recreational time for a full week or more.

**I introduced a bill (A.10504) with Senator Liz Krueger to ensure early voting takes place in sites other than schools.** The bill would not restrict early voting, as it would open other locations for New Yorkers to cast their votes. Given our plethora of museums, public venues, and willing locations, there is no reason voting must take place in schools.

In addition to my legislation to move early voting out of schools, my office has collaborated with parent advocates and Councilmember Julie Menin's office to find alternative voting sites and raise awareness about this issue. Our ongoing efforts have recently resulted in the establishment of a new voting location on the Upper East Side (at Asphalt Green).

## PROTECTING AFFORDABILITY

### Increasing Child Tax Credits

Eighty percent of New York families cannot afford childcare for even a single kid based on the federal standard for affordability\*. This year, we helped ease the burden on New York's working families; **thanks to the budget, 1.5 million New Yorkers will receive an enhanced child tax credit.**

## Establishing The Climate Superfund

The effects of climate change are here, and along with action to reduce emissions, projects from wetland restorations to more efficient cooling systems need to be installed across New York. In response, **I cosponsored the New York Climate Superfund Act (A.3351).** Instead of increasing taxes to pay for these projects, **the annual \$3 billion will be raised from fossil fuel companies and other serial polluters in proportion to their past emissions.** This bill accomplishes its climate goals without raising energy costs, as the charges apply only to past polluters, meaning companies with less sordid pasts can undercut polluters who try to pass costs on to current consumers.

## Combatting Restaurant Reservation Piracy

If you have ever had trouble getting a reservation at your favorite restaurant, **predatory black market bots that sell reservations for a profit are probably to blame.** These bots snap up reservations before you can get them and try to sell them back to you without the restaurant's consent. **The practice is common and insidious and, thanks to a bill I passed (A.10215), about to be illegal.** Since these fake reservations often result in empty tables, banning the malicious bots will lead to more business for restaurants, more security for workers in our community, and better quality of life for New Yorkers.

## Facilitating Free Tax Filing

Many New Yorkers spend their hard-earned money every year on tax preparation software to assist with the filing of simple returns. Thanks to my advocacy with Senator Andrew Gounardes and Governor Kathy Hochul's team, **we delivered free federal and state tax filing for simple returns.** While this software cannot and will never replace CPAs or tax preparers, it can replace TurboTax and similar software. In its first month, nearly 15,000 people used the program, with 95% of users satisfied and 86% finishing their taxes in 15 minutes or less.

## Protecting New Parents in the Workplace

In the budget, we significantly increased workplace protections for recent parents. Chief among these changes are **new guarantees for paid prenatal and lactation leave,** helping parents have fulfilling careers while also welcoming newborns into their lives. New York is the first state in the nation to guarantee paid prenatal leave.

\*<https://fiveboro.nyc/childcare/>

## KEEPING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS CLEAN

### Closing Illegal Cannabis Stores

Illegal cannabis stores sell unsafe and unapproved products which harm our neighbors, deprive the State of much-needed tax revenue, and invite crime. These storefronts deal in cash, but (unlike licensed cannabis retailers) often do not take necessary security measures, making them susceptible to robbery and violence.

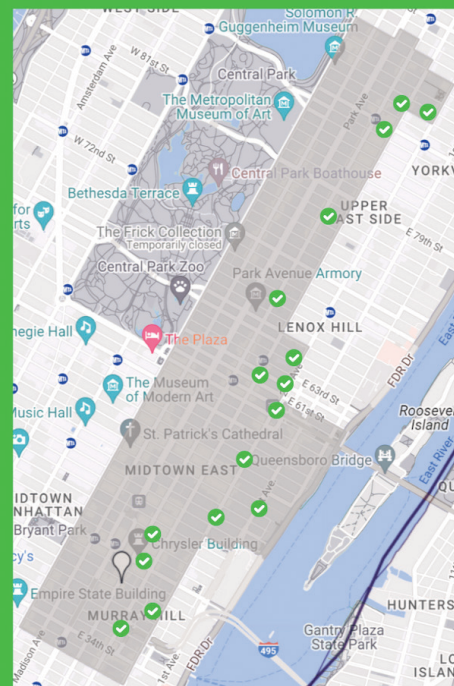
**As part of the budget, we empowered both the State and City to take quicker action against illicit cannabis stores. In addition, my office created our own online form that simplifies the process for neighbors to report illegal shops.** As a result, we have successfully closed several unlicensed dispensaries within our district.

**As of July 26, 2024, the Sheriff had conducted 47 inspections and closed 27 stores within the 73rd Assembly District,** with these numbers even higher by the time you are reading this.

Thanks to reports submitted by neighbors like you through my office's reporting form, we were able to identify and share 42 potential locations within the district with both the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) and the New York City Sheriff's Office. To the right, you can see the impact of our collaborative efforts with these agencies in shutting down unlicensed stores.



CLOSING ILLEGAL CANNABIS  
IN THE 73RD ASSEMBLY DISTRICT



### Beautifying Parks and Streets

Our streets, parks, and recreational areas must be kept clean, well-maintained, and fully operational. **I participated in various community initiatives, such as park and street cleanups with different groups across the district,** including the East 86th Street Association's street cleanup, the St. Vartan's Park tree planting & trash clean-up, and the Muslim Volunteers for New York Ruppert Park cleanup.

## LOOKING OUT FOR OUR COMMUNITY

### Funding Neighborhood Resources

Groups that provide essential resources and services to our community are crucial for our well-being. I helped secure funding to ensure access to healthcare, mental health resources, and legal support for everyone, regardless of income.

One in five NYC adults lacks health insurance\*, making vital services like mammograms hard to access. Early detection boosts survival rates, so I funded the American Italian Cancer Foundation to provide free mammogram screenings in our district via a mobile bus.

Mental health resources are often underfunded. To support mental health access, I secured funding for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) to expand its educational programs, advocacy, and support services.

Legal representation in civil cases is often unaffordable. To address this, I funded the New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG) to continue offering free legal services citywide, with a dedicated day each month for residents of the 73rd District.

**I helped secure funding for many additional groups in our district**, including the Tilden and Astor New York Public Library branches; Carnegie Hill Neighbors; the East 86th Street Residents Association; and the Lenox Hill Neighborhood House Women's Mental Health Shelter.

### Meeting You Across the District

Since coming into office, I have started most Friday mornings at different subway stops across our district to greet neighbors and gather insights into our neighborhood's priorities. So far, I have **spent 49 mornings at subway stops**, fostering conversations that shape our community's agenda.

I also host Mobile Office Hours to ensure government services are accessible throughout the district by bringing them to your doorstep. This initiative allows neighbors to discuss concerns, constituent cases, or legislative ideas directly with me or my team. **My office has held 12 Mobile Office Hours across different areas of our district.**

During the summer months, street fairs are a wonderful way to connect with neighbors and gain different perspectives on community issues. **I have participated in 10 street fairs**, spending hours engaging with community members and exploring collaborative solutions to our district's challenges.

\*<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/epi/databrief43.pdf>

## IMPROVING HOUSING

### Building Affordable Housing

Housing in New York City is facing significant challenges, with Manhattan's median rent around \$4,400 and the lowest vacancy rate in decades. To address this, we passed measures to create hundreds of thousands of new homes. The new 485-x tax incentive program will promote housing construction, encourage affordability, and ensure better wage standards for building service and construction workers. This historic housing package also includes a \$500 million fund to develop up to 15,000 homes on State-owned sites, \$80 million for improvements to Mitchell-Lamas, and a \$150 million investment in the Housing for the Future Program. We also changed outdated restrictions and established incentives to encourage affordability in office-to-residential conversions and took steps to bring vacant apartments back on the rental market.

### Reducing Vacant Apartments

I introduced two bills (A.9545 & A.9565) to increase housing supply and lower bills for the vast majority of New Yorkers. One shifts more property taxes to vacant land, raising money to repair dilapidated homes. The other provides tax credits to those who are primary residents in their apartments, while slightly increasing taxes on those who do not. **These changes will disincentivize vacant apartments, speculation, and vacant land—all while raising money to get damaged apartments back online and lowering costs for 85% of New Yorkers.**



NEWS FROM ASSEMBLYMEMBER

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## Connecting You to Government Services:

How can our office help you? Here are just some examples of how we have aided your neighbors this year:

- Recovering lost senior citizens' reduced fare cards.
- Connecting the Department of Labor experts directly to a business owner with questions about unemployment insurance.
- Resolving questions and reductions of E-ZPass bills.
- Finding where delayed NYS tax returns are.
- Getting updates from the NYS Licensing division for any license.

As an example, a helpful neighbor alerted us to the poor condition of the park benches in Sutton Place Park. **Our office was able to collaborate with the NYC Parks Department, which then power washed all benches in the park**, which were heavily overgrown with moss.

If you have any questions, suggestions, or issues we may be able to assist you with, I encourage you to contact me at **[BoresA@contactme.nyassembly.gov](mailto:BoresA@contactme.nyassembly.gov) or by phone at 212-605-0937.**

