



Assemblyman Ken Zebrowski



End of Session Update 2018

Dear Neighbor:

The Legislature just recently wrapped up our 2018 session in Albany. I am pleased to report that I had a successful legislative session: 25 bills that I authored passed the Assembly. Several of those bills have also been approved by the Senate and now await signature from the Governor.

This year, I continued to fiercely advocate for education and was finally able to make full day kindergarten a reality for the handful of neglected students in New York State. I supported significant statewide reforms regarding gun control and domestic violence; while championing the local issues that impact Rocklanders, like improving school fire inspections.

Many pieces of my legislation originate from a constituent that brings an issue forward to my office. I always welcome your ideas, questions, or concerns. As your representative, I am always advocating for the issues that matter most to Rocklanders. Thank you for continuing to bring these important issues to my attention. It is an honor to represent our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ken".

Ken Zebrowski

Assemblyman Zebrowski debates a bill on the floor of the Assembly.



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Universal Statewide Full Day Kindergarten Now a Reality

- After years of work, full day kindergarten is now within reach for all New York State students.
- Assemblyman Zebrowski is thrilled to announce that full day k incentive aid has been secured as a part of the 2018-19 state budget.
- North Rockland is one of a handful of school districts in NYS that only have half day programs. However, with this incentive aid, North Rockland is now set to convert to full day in the Fall of 2018.
- This was modeled after legislation that Assemblymen Zebrowski and Skoufis introduced that passed both the Assembly and Senate (A.1625).
- Ken worked tirelessly for years to ensure all New York State students have access to full day k and is pleased to have achieved this feat this session.

Continuing to Invest in Education

- The enacted state budget provides an increase of \$859 million statewide in education aid.
- This includes an increase of over \$7 million to Rockland schools.
- Assemblyman Zebrowski was also successful in rejecting a proposal to cap expense based aid. This would have severely hurt school district's reimbursable aid.

Protecting Water Utility Customers

- Assemblyman Zebrowski is providing more transparency for water utility customers by establishing, for the first time, a water cost index; a uniform system of measurement for average use across different water systems throughout the State (A.7183A).
- The bill directs the Public Service Commission (PSC) to develop this calculation based on different factors such as: usage, fees, taxes, meter size, or seasonal rates. Public and private water systems would then be required to annually calculate and submit their water cost index to the PSC, where that information will be made available to the public.
- Assemblyman Zebrowski believes that consumers should be able compare their water costs to other rates across the State. This would be extremely beneficial when a water utility applies to the Public Service Commission for a rate increase.
- Water is a necessity that everyone must have access to, however the rates across the state vary and customers are left in the dark and unable to see how their utility company measures up. Assemblyman Zebrowski's legislation would provide for increased transparency.
- This legislation passed both the Assembly and Senate this session. The Governor has until the end of this year to sign it into law.



Assemblymembers Zebrowski, Skoufis and Senator Carlucci stand with Full Day Kindergarten Advocates.

Fighting Against Exempting Private Schools from Educational Standards

- At the 11th hour of budget negotiations, the Senate began a concerted effort to effectively stop the State Education Department (SED) from enforcing educational standards in private schools.
- Assemblyman Zebrowski took the lead in fighting against this assault on education. Ken has spent significant time in the Assembly fighting to improve education and standing up for all students, no matter what school they go to. He has sponsored a bill for several years that would create an enforcement mechanism for education standards in non-public schools (A.1305).
- Although Assemblyman Zebrowski was largely successful in fighting against the originally proposed language, he still voted "no" on the compromise bill. SED will continue retain control over the curriculum for private schools, however, Ken believes that SED must be permitted to determine "substantially equivalent" standards in private schools without limitation.
- Assemblyman Zebrowski remains committed to working with SED to ensure that they have the support and resources to do their job. More importantly, Ken will continue to work to make sure that kids have access to a quality education.

Protecting Toll Payers

- As cashless tolls become the new normal, Assemblyman Zebrowski is ensuring that toll payers are protected from being improperly billed.
- Both the Assembly and Senate passed the Toll Payer Protection Act that Ken supported in the Assembly and Senator Carlucci sponsored in the Senate. The bill now awaits the Governor's signature.
- The Toll Payer Protection Act ensures that drivers are sent their cashless tolling bills by mail within 30 days. It also requires the creation of a website where people can pay for the toll bill online.
- By the end of 2020, the entire Thruway is expected to have cashless tolls, which is why these protections for toll payers are imperative.

Modernizing School Fire Inspections

- For years, Assemblyman Zebrowski has championed school safety issues, fighting to ensure that the buildings parents send their children to everyday are safe.
- Ken once again passed his school fire inspection legislation which completely reforms and modernizes how inspections are conducted (A.2985A). The bill makes the following changes:
 - It no longer allows people who are unqualified to conduct inspections.
 - Removes the "hold harmless" provision which allows inspectors who make errors on inspection reports to not be held liable.
 - Provides penalties for schools that fail to submit the required annual fire safety report in a timely matter or at all.
 - Currently, the Commissioner of Education can take action if a public school fails to comply, but there is not a similar process for private schools.
 - This measure would require the Commissioner to take action if a private school does not comply with the inspection requirement.
 - The legislation modernizes the fire safety report filing process by allowing schools to send it to the State Education Department electronically.

Sexual Harassment Reform

- Amid recent reports of sexual misconduct in the national and local media, Ken is taking the lead to protect New Yorkers by drafting legislation and supporting a package of anti-sexual harassment measures.
- Assemblyman Zebrowski's sexual coercion bill was included as a part of the 2018-19 budget, which adds a new crime of criminal coercion in the second degree, a class E felony (A.9538). This new penalty will protect individuals who are compelled or induced to engage in a sexual act and are threatened with retaliatory action, for example, the threat of losing a job.
- Ken also supported and voted for various sexual harassment reforms that empower victims and hold individuals accountable.
- Legislation was approved in the 2018-19 state budget that bans confidentiality clauses and also prohibits employers from using mandatory arbitration clauses for sexual harassment claims.
- The Legislature also passed a measure that requires the Department of Labor and Division of Human Rights to develop a model sexual harassment prevention policy and training. All public employers will be required to adopt the policy or establish one that equals the minimum standard.



Assemblyman Zebrowski speaking in support of increased transparency for social media campaign ads.

Democracy Protection Act

- For years, Assemblyman Zebrowski has carried legislation and advocated for increased campaign disclosure and election reform.
- Ken is happy to report that in collaboration with Governor Cuomo, their Democracy Protection Act is now NYS law.
- The bill requires disclosure on paid internet and social media ads and further regulates independent expenditures.
- There has unfortunately been some recent elections that have been clouded and heavily influenced by anonymous negative ads that are funded by dark money, especially on social media.
- This will re-establish transparency and democracy back into our election process.

Passing Important Gun Reforms

This session, the Assembly passed a package of bills that deal with several aspects of gun control. These are some common sense reforms to better protect New Yorkers that include:

- Ensuring there is sufficient time to conduct background checks.
- Allowing a court to issue an extreme risk protection order, preventing a person who poses a threat to themselves or others from purchasing or possessing weapons.
- Banning bump stocks; the mechanism that was used in the Las Vegas shooting which allows semi-automatic weapons to act like an automatic weapon.
- Banning individuals convicted of certain domestic violence crimes from possessing a weapon.

Preventing Furniture Tip-Over Tragedies

- For the past few months, Assemblyman Zebrowski has worked closely with a Hudson Valley family, the Frieds, in drafting Harper's Law (A.7516C). The bill is named after their daughter who was tragically killed after a piece of children's furniture accidentally tipped-over onto her.
- Furniture tip-over accidents disproportionately affect children; according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, 95% of tip-over deaths between 2000-2016 were children under the age of 6.
- The bill requires retailers that sell certain furniture to offer, in tandem, compatible tip-restraint devices. Clearly displaying these devices will encourage consumers to purchase and install the safety product preventing tip-over accidents.
- Harper's Law passed the Assembly this year and Ken is optimistic for full passage through the Legislature next session.

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Assemblyman
**Kenneth P.
Zebrowski**

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