



NEWS From Assemblymember John T. McDonald III



Fall 2021

2021 Constituent Survey

Dear Neighbor:

We have reached the point in the year when the Legislature will return in a few months for the 2022 Legislative Session in January. Each year, I ask for your input on potential priorities for the NYS Legislature in the upcoming session, bills that may be considered, and feedback on the issues that are important to you. My job as a public servant is to serve and represent the interests of the 108th District. It has been an incredibly busy year focusing on constituent issues, even more than usual due to the influx of issues related to unemployment benefits, workforce shortages, and Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) applications. I pride myself on responsiveness and I work with my office to assist constituents with navigating state agencies and cutting through red tape.

As always, my office is always available to assist in any way we can. If you are looking for assistance regarding state or local government issues, please do not hesitate to contact me by calling (518) 455-4474 or by emailing mcdonaldj@nyassembly.gov. To stay updated on community and legislative updates, please join my mailing list by visiting my New York Assembly website at <https://nyassembly.gov/mem/John-T-McDonald-III/>.

I always encourage you to reach out to me whether to provide feedback on issues, share any ideas you may have, or discuss a problem that needs to be tackled. I am always willing to meet with constituents in my office, out in the district, by phone or virtually through ZOOM. Hearing your voice and what matters to you is extremely beneficial as we shape our legislative agenda and prioritize the needs of the district. It is a privilege to serve you and it is an honor that I will never take for granted. Thank you for completing the enclosed survey, my door is always open and I look forward to talking to you soon.

Sincerely,

John T. McDonald III

2021 108th District Constituent Survey

Please find a constituent survey below that will allow you to provide input on the issues that may come up during the next legislative session. These questions are meant to gauge your opinion on areas that are likely to arise or have been discussed during previous legislative sessions; however, note that these questions are not necessarily indicative of the policy issues that I am focusing on or legislation that I am seeking to advance. For many of the questions, especially on the more controversial issues, I ask for the reasoning behind the answer. Understanding the basis for the responses is incredibly helpful to me when considering pending legislation and I appreciate the thought and time my constituents take when answering these questions.

Your survey responses help guide my work as your representative in the New York State Assembly. I look forward to receiving your input since I rely on it when voting on measures, sponsoring and supporting legislation, and prioritizing funding in the budget process. Please note that there are two spaces available to allow two members of your household to participate.

There are two ways that you can submit the survey:

- By returning the enclosed survey by mail to our Albany office located at the following address:
Assemblymember John T. McDonald III • Room 417, Legislative Office Building, Albany, New York 12248
- By filling out the form online on my website at <https://nyassembly.gov/mem/John-T-McDonald-III/>
- **The survey deadline for responses is December 15, 2021** •

Survey questions have a “Yes” or “No” answer choice:
(select one) and some will have a blank line to write in a number or comment.

1. As we continue to see the impacts of climate change, discussions have been ongoing as to what the next steps are beyond the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (“CLCPA”) that was enacted into law in 2019 and how to fund the objectives of the law. The proposed Climate and Community Investment Act (A.6967 Cahill/S.4264A Parker) (“CCIA”) would implement a polluter fee structure for carbon and greenhouse gas emissions among other provisions. Proponents of the bill estimate that the fees would generate approximately \$15 billion per year. These revenues would be split toward funding for community-based organizations located in or serving environmental justice communities, funding renewable energy projects, and funding energy rebates for low- and moderate-income New Yorkers. In addition, a percentage of funds are committed toward offsetting the loss of fossil fuel-related jobs and revenues.

Concerns have been raised by some as to whether costs will be passed down to consumers (the bill does not require nor specify this), questions around the rebates for low- to moderate-income ratepayers, and general questions as to how the legislation will be implemented in practice including labor provisions in the bill. Understanding that it is not possible to explain the various components of a complicated bill that is 73 pages long in a short question - Are you familiar with the CCIA legislation? Do you support or oppose passing the CCIA into law? Why?

Continued on next page

- a. Yes, I am familiar with the CCIA legislation
- b. No, I have not heard of the CCIA legislation
- c. Support
- d. Oppose

Why? _____

- a. Yes, I am familiar with the CCIA legislation
- b. No, I have not heard of the CCIA legislation
- c. Support
- d. Oppose

Why? _____

2. Good Cause eviction legislation (A.5573) has been proposed statewide that would apply to rental units except owner-occupied buildings with four or fewer units and subject to other limited exceptions. A tenant would only be able to be evicted for "good cause" grounds including: nonpayment of rent, the tenant is violating a substantial obligation of tenancy, tenant is committing or permitting a nuisance or damage to the property, the tenant occupancy violates the law or the tenant is using the housing for illegal purposes, the tenant is unreasonably prohibiting the landlord from accessing the property for improvements or repairs, or the landlord wants to use property for personal use or for occupancy by an immediate family member. The bill would also prohibit rent increases above either three percent or one and one-half times the annual percentage change in the Consumer Price Index for the region where the housing is located (whichever is greater).

Currently, the City of Albany has a good cause eviction local law providing that tenants in the City of Albany will be entitled to a renewal lease unless the landlord can substantiate a good cause for the tenant's eviction such as nonpayment of rent, lease violations, nuisance etc. and provides protection against an unconscionable rent hike by capping rent increases at 5%.

Do you support a statewide good cause law?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Why? _____

- a. Yes
- b. No

Why? _____

3. The Extended Producer Responsibility Act (S.1185-C) ("EPR") is a proposed environmental bill that would require producers (person or companies that create the products) of consumer packaging and paper products to pay to recycle these materials. Producers are prohibited from selling or distributing any covered materials in New York unless they have an approved producer responsibility plan. The program will also create a funding mechanism to cover the costs of the program or cover the cost of a municipality for partaking in the program. The funding program will be structured in a way that includes incentives to reward producers for product design that reduces waste, increases the recyclability of the product, and removes toxics in packaging. Charges will also be adjusted based on the post-consumer recycled content rate of the covered material. Are you familiar with the EPR legislation? Do you support or oppose passing the EPR into law? Why?

- a. Yes, I am familiar with the EPR legislation
- b. No, I have not heard of the EPR legislation
- c. Support
- d. Oppose

Why? _____

- a. Yes, I am familiar with the EPR legislation
- b. No, I have not heard of the EPR legislation
- c. Support
- d. Oppose

Why? _____

4. Clean Slate legislation (A.6399-A Cruz/S.1553B Myrie) has been proposed that would allow for automatic sealing of certain criminal convictions. The bill would apply to records of misdemeanor and felony convictions subject to certain conditions. Among these conditions are waiting periods for traffic infractions, misdemeanors and felonies. Other conditions require that the defendant not have a pending criminal charge in this state, not currently be on probation or parole for the eligible conviction, and that the defendant is not currently required to register as a sex offender. In addition, there are ten exceptions to the automatic sealing provision, such as for background checks for potential law enforcement officers, background checks for gun license applicants, and other fingerprint-based background checks required by law. Are you familiar with the Clean Slate legislation? Do you support or oppose passing the Clean Slate bill into law? Why?

- a. Yes, I am familiar with the Clean Slate legislation
- b. No, I have not heard of the Clean Slate legislation
- c. Support
- d. Oppose

Why? _____

- a. Yes, I am familiar with the Clean Slate legislation
- b. No, I have not heard of the Clean Slate legislation
- c. Support
- d. Oppose

Why? _____

5. The New York Medical Aid in Dying Act would allow a mentally competent, terminally ill patient to choose to self-administer medication to end his or her life with additional protective measures in place. Do you support passing the Medical Aid in Dying Act into law?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Why? _____

- a. Yes
- b. No

Why? _____

6. There are groups who are advocating for and legislation that would allow early release of elderly New York inmates who are 55 years of age and older out of prisons and onto early parole. Do you support allowing the parole board to evaluate all inmates who are 55 years old and older for early release from prisons? Note: the proposed bill does not mandate release but allows the Board of Parole to make the evaluations and the discretion to make the decisions.

- a. Yes
- b. No

Why? _____

- a. Yes
- b. No

Why? _____

7. There has been discussion around economic development spending and how we can improve how the state invests in funding projects and targeting incentives. Which of the following proposals, if any, do you support as economic development spending reforms?

- a. The elimination of Local Development Corporations and Empowering Industrial Development Agencies with the authority to give grants and loans
- b. Tax credits applied to taxes due
- c. Grants
- d. Increased transparency measures
- e. A unified economic development budget
- f. None
- g. Other _____

Why? _____

- a. The elimination of Local Development Corporations and Empowering Industrial Development Agencies with the authority to give grants and loans
- b. Tax credits applied to taxes due
- c. Grants
- d. Increased transparency measures
- e. A unified economic development budget
- f. None
- g. Other _____

Why? _____

8. Gig economy workers are generally treated as independent contractors because of the nature of the work and services provided. Should gig employees be classified as independent contractors or as employees?

- a. Independent Contractors
- b. Employees

Why? _____

- a. Independent Contractors
- b. Employees

Why? _____

9. The burden of student loan debt has a profound impact on the economy and not only impacts the financial decisions of the student borrowers but also the parents and guardians who may assist in financing higher education. Which if any of the following do you believe would be the most beneficial in addressing the student loan crisis?
- | | |
|--|--|
| a. <input type="checkbox"/> Tax credits to parents and borrowers | a. <input type="checkbox"/> Tax credits to parents and borrowers |
| b. <input type="checkbox"/> Low interest loans | b. <input type="checkbox"/> Low interest loans |
| c. <input type="checkbox"/> Expanded loan forgiveness programs | c. <input type="checkbox"/> Expanded loan forgiveness programs |
| d. <input type="checkbox"/> Better refinancing options | d. <input type="checkbox"/> Better refinancing options |
| e. <input type="checkbox"/> Government subsidies for education | e. <input type="checkbox"/> Government subsidies for education |
| f. <input type="checkbox"/> Increased consumer protections for borrowers | f. <input type="checkbox"/> Increased consumer protections for borrowers |
| g. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | g. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
10. The New York Health Act (NYHA) proposes a single-payer (Medicare for All) system that would replace the commercial insurance system with a public health system that proposes no health premiums, deductibles, and co-payments for health care and long-term care. The NYHA is projected to cost approximately \$139 billion by the RAND Corporation. Proponents have said the cost will be covered through a progressive payroll tax and a progressive tax on non-payroll investment income (capital gains and dividends). Do you support having a single-payer health care system in New York?
- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | a. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| b. <input type="checkbox"/> No | b. <input type="checkbox"/> No |
- What is your reason for supporting or not supporting single-payer?

- What is your reason for supporting or not supporting single-payer?

11. Many families struggle to find affordable and reliable child care and child care centers struggle to retain staff due to salary constraints. What do you think would be helpful to address the current child care crisis?

12. Medicaid is generally the highest cost to county governments. It would cost the state \$2.3 billion to take over Medicaid management from the fifty-five counties outside New York City. Would you be willing to assume the cost of a state takeover in the State budget if it meant either an increase in State taxes or decrease in State services in order to lower your local property taxes?
- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | a. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| b. <input type="checkbox"/> No | b. <input type="checkbox"/> No |
13. Vacation rental websites, such as Airbnb, HomeAway, and VRBO, are online marketplaces that enable home-sharing. Provided that they are required to pay all related taxes and are compliant with current building codes, would you support these types of businesses in New York?
- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | a. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| b. <input type="checkbox"/> No | b. <input type="checkbox"/> No |
14. Despite additional charges of corruption in politics there has been little progress in the way of meaningful ethics reform. What in your opinion is the most important ethics reform measure that New York should enact? Please rank from most important (1) to least important (6)
- | | |
|--|--|
| a. Enhanced disclosure requirements _____ | a. Enhanced disclosure requirements _____ |
| b. Prohibiting outside income _____ | b. Prohibiting outside income _____ |
| c. Pension forfeiture _____ | c. Pension forfeiture _____ |
| d. Per diem reform _____ | d. Per diem reform _____ |
| e. Campaign finance reforms
(i.e. Lower limits for political contributions) _____ | e. Campaign finance reforms
(i.e. Lower limits for political contributions) _____ |
| f. Other _____ | f. Other _____ |
15. Term Length - Currently, New York State legislators are elected to a two-year term.
- | | |
|---|---|
| a. Do you support legislators continuing to serve two-year terms
(every two years having to run for re-election)?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | a. Do you support legislators continuing to serve two-year terms
(every two years having to run for re-election)?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| b. If you answered no to (a), would you support a constitutional amendment that would increase in the length of a term to four years?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | b. If you answered no to (a), would you support a constitutional amendment that would increase in the length of a term to four years?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
16. Term Limits – Currently New York State legislators are not subject to term limits, which means they can run for an unlimited number of two-year terms.
- | | |
|--|--|
| a. Should legislators be subject to term limit
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | a. Should legislators be subject to term limits?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| b. If you answered yes to (a), how many total years of service should a legislator be limited to (choose one response)?
<input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 | b. If you answered yes to (a), how many total years of service should a legislator be limited to (choose one response)?
<input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 |
17. When considering how to allocate the State's financial resources, which categories are your highest priorities? (rank highest priority as 1 – lowest priority as 13)
- | | |
|---|---|
| a. Education (K-12) _____ | a. Education (K-12) _____ |
| b. Higher Education/College _____ | b. Higher Education/College _____ |
| c. Housing _____ | c. Housing _____ |
| d. Health Care/Opioid/Heroin _____ | d. Health Care/Opioid/Heroin _____ |
| e. Environment _____ | e. Environment _____ |
| f. Local Governments/Property Tax Relief _____ | f. Local Governments/Property Tax Relief _____ |
| g. Bridge and Road Infrastructure _____ | g. Bridge and Road Infrastructure _____ |
| h. Water and Sewer Infrastructure _____ | h. Water and Sewer Infrastructure _____ |
| i. Parks _____ | i. Parks _____ |
| j. Workforce Development (Trades, Apprenticeships, Nursing, etc.) _____ | j. Workforce Development (Trades, Apprenticeships, Nursing, etc.) _____ |
| k. Resources for the Aging community _____ | k. Resources for the Aging community _____ |
| l. Nutrition and Healthy Food _____ | l. Nutrition and Healthy Food _____ |
| m. Child Care _____ | m. Child Care _____ |
18. Supporting small businesses is a priority of mine and I frequently hear about the need for regulatory reforms to remove onerous burdens on small businesses to allow them to grow and succeed. What do you think is the biggest impediment for small businesses? (rank highest priority as 1 – lowest priority as 6)

- a. The need for increased communication from regulatory agencies _____
- b. Health care costs _____
- c. Simplifying the tax code _____
- d. Licensing requirements _____
- e. Lower tax rates _____
- f. Other (please explain) _____

- a. The need for increased communication from regulatory agencies _____
- b. Health care costs _____
- c. Simplifying the tax code _____
- d. Licensing requirements _____
- e. Lower tax rates _____
- f. Other (please explain) _____

19. The unfortunate reality of the heroin epidemic is that many of us have been touched by it in some shape or form. What obstacles do you see in prevention, treatment, and recovery? What if any thoughts do you have on how we can be more effective in battling this growing problem?

20. Just over 90% of patients continued to receive prescription opioids after an overdose. More than half receive the prescription from the same doctor who prescribed the drugs that led to the overdose. If you are prescribed opioids, do you think a health care professional should be notified if you have had a drug overdose on opioids or heroin or that such information should be placed on a registry available to health care providers before she/he prescribes additional opioids?

- a. Yes
- b. No

- a. Yes
- b. No

Why? _____

21. Overdose Prevention Centers (OPCs) have been proposed as a method of preventing deaths from overdoses. The sites provide a clean and safe environment and prevent overdoses by having immediate access to life-saving resources. Individuals can use pre-obtained drugs under the supervision of medical professionals. Staff members of these programs will provide sterile injection supplies, collect used hypodermic needles and syringes, and teach patients about safe consumption practices. Patients will also be able to access referrals to treatment, job training, and other social services. Would you support safe injection sites that allow supervised drug use?

- a. Yes
- b. No

- a. Yes
- b. No

Why? _____

22. The 2021 NYS Budget included \$2 billion for the Excluded Workers Fund. The Excluded Workers fund provided financial assistance to workers who were not otherwise eligible for state or federal unemployment benefits. Many of the workers who are eligible for the fund are undocumented workers and cash economy workers. Do you support additional funding for the Excluded Workers Fund?

- a. Yes
- b. No

- a. Yes
- b. No

Why? _____

23. Please share any additional thoughts on issues that are important to you that you would like to see addressed in the 2022 session.

New York State Assembly • Albany, New York 12248

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Assemblymember

John T. McDonald III

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