



NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER
COREY JOHNSON
District 3



Wednesday, April 1, 2015

Community Board Four Report

Dear Friends:

This month I introduced five pieces of legislation that will affect meaningful change for the people of New York City. On Monday, my bill to extend rent regulations in New York City was signed by Mayor Bill de Blasio. Below you will find details about these bills and an update on my recent activities. I want to thank each of you for your advocacy as we push for continued change.

As always, I am here to help. You can contact my District Office at (212) 564-7757 between 10 am and 6 pm on Mondays to Fridays.

Sincerely,

Corey Johnson
Council Member, 3rd Council District

Participatory Budgeting Vote – April 11-19!



Last month my office held our Participatory Budgeting Expo Project where neighbors came together and saw which ideas have been developed into proposals for Participatory Budgeting! Between **Saturday, April, 11 and Sunday, April 19** voting will be taking place throughout Council District 3.

Voting sites include:

- My District Office (224 West 30th Street, Suite 1206) from April 13-17 between 10 am and 5 pm
- Andrew Heiskell Library (40 West 20th Street) on Saturday, April 11 and Saturday April 18 between 12:30 pm – 6:00 pm
- Hartley House (413 West 46th Street) on April 11, 12, 18 and 19 between 9 am and 5:30 pm
- Hudson Guild (441 West 26th Street, Dan Carpenter Room on the 2nd Floor) on April 12 and 19 between 9 am and 6 pm
- The Fulton Houses Tenants Association Office (419A West 17th Street) on April 11, 12, 18 and 19 between 9 am and 6 pm

- The LGBT Community Center (208 West 13th Street) on April 18 and 19 between 9 am and 6 pm
- Tony Dapolito Recreation Center (1 Clarkson Street) on April 11, 12, 18 and 19 between 9 am and 6 pm

If you would like more information about PB and want to get involved, please contact Matt Green at 212-564-7757, or by email at mgreen@council.nyc.gov.

Honoring Tracy Riposo-Cook at Women's Herstory Month



On Monday, March 30th, I was honored to recognize Tracy Riposo-Cook at this year's Women's Herstory Month Celebration. Tracy Riposo-Cook is a Penn South resident and chosen by my office as one of the honorees.

Ms. Riposo Cook was recognized for her years of service to the Penn South Community where she has served as President of the Penn South Parent Committee and for organizing many community activities for the residents and their children.

Let's Talk! Reforming the Rent Guidelines Board



Panelists at the Let's Talk! event

On March 11, I was joined by housing policy experts and tenant organizers for a community forum about proposed reforms to the Rent Guidelines Board (RGB), the nine-member panel that determines annually how much landlords can set future rents for 2.5 million rent-stabilized tenants. We were joined by a panel of experts that included Sheila Garcia, a tenant representative on the RGB and Tim Collins, its former Executive Director. We had a productive discussion driven by insightful questions from constituents. In its history, the RGB has never chosen a rent freeze. Rather, it has raised rents every year since its creation. This year, I and many advocates are calling on the RGB to roll-back rents, to compensate for years of unfair rent increases. I thank everyone who attended on March 11 and look forward to working with you on this important effort.

Passed! Extending Rent Regulation in New York City



Speaking prior to the legislative session in which we voted on this bill

Every three years, New York City must declare a housing shortage emergency which allows our rent stabilization laws to be extended. I am proud to be the prime sponsor of this legislation in 2015, which was passed this month by the City Council and signed by Mayor de Blasio on March 30. This amendment of the administrative code will extend rent stabilization for another three years beginning on April 1, 2015.

This triannual extension falls within months of the expiration of the rent laws in Albany. Busloads of New Yorkers who care about affordable housing, myself included, will go to Albany this session to demand that rent-stabilization laws be strengthened – not weakened. It is a battle we must win if we want to keep New York affordable for middle and working class families.

Introduced Legislation: Barring Discrimination Against Affordable Housing Tenants

Many New Yorkers were shocked to learn that it is perfectly legal for a developer to hoist a sign saying that rent-stabilized tenants are not welcome to enter a gym, pool or green space in their own building. At yesterday's legislative

session, I introduced legislation that would bar building managers from discriminating against tenants in affordable housing units from using building amenities. Following instances in which tenants in affordable housing units were prohibited from accessing gyms, green spaces, play rooms, pools and other building amenities; this legislation would require developers and building managers to provide equal access to such facilities. If building amenities are made available to market-rate tenants for a fee, the same opportunity must be offered tenants in affordable housing units. Every person should be treated with respect and dignity. I thank Public Advocate Tish James and Council Members Mark Levine, Helen Rosenthal, Ritchie Torres and Antonio Reynoso for co-sponsoring this important legislation.

Introduced Legislation: Operating Plans for Sight-Seeing Buses

While sight-seeing buses are an important part of the New York City tourism industry, they can be quite an inconvenience when they deviate from their routes and drive down small, residential streets. Currently, these buses are not required to submit operating plans that outline their proposed routes and days or times of operation.

That is why I introduced legislation on March 11 that will address this problem. The bill will mandate that these buses submit plans to the Department of Consumer Affairs and forward them to the Department of Transportation, as well as the local community boards and councilmembers in the districts. This will bring about greater transparency as we try to accommodate tourism, but with respect for our residents.

I'd like to thank my colleagues, Council Members Rafael Espinal and Ydanis Rodriguez, for joining with me in this important effort.

Introduced Legislation: Protecting our Air Quality

On March 11, my colleague Council Member Costa Constantinides and I introduced two companion bills that would protect the city's air quality. The bills would require the City to conduct annual air-quality surveys, and to open the City's cooling centers on days when poor air quality may put us at risk of harm.

As both the Chair of the City Council Health Committee and a legislator concerned about the well-being of our environment, I want to make sure that the air we breathe will not pose a risk to our health.

The mandated air quality surveys would identify the major sources of air pollution, including both local and regional sources, and make recommendations for city, state and federal action to improve air quality. This will bring about a greater understanding of the problem as we seek a long-term solution to air pollution in New York City.

We must use all tools at our disposal to protect the health of New Yorkers. Children and seniors in particular are vulnerable to environmental pollutants. These measures will save lives by helping to prevent the development of serious respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.

Introduced Legislation: Including Citizen Feedback in the Mayor’s Management Report

As members of local government, it is so crucial that we are adaptive and responsive to the needs and concerns of our constituents. Despite this, the biannual Mayor’s Management Report does not directly gauge residents’ perceptions and evaluations of government services.

If passed, a bill I recently introduced will allow the City to properly gauge how residents view the performance of City government, and provide a more accurate view of an agency’s success or failure by measuring whether or not a particular incident was resolved satisfactorily. This bill will give more transparency and accountability when it comes to government services, and I hope to see it passed this session.

Introduced Legislation: Bringing Transparency to the Distribution of Suspensions and Expulsions in Schools

African American, Latino, LGBT and special education students are significantly more likely to face discipline than their peers. Increased out-of-class time and in-school arrest rates severely decrease their likelihood of graduating from high school. Yesterday I, along with Council Member Laurie Cumbo introduced legislation aimed to further address this issue. Our legislation would require the reporting of multiple suspensions of the same student, use of restraints, introduction of metal detectors and metal detectors left in place after a request to remove them, students referred to emergency medical services,

as well as complaints made against school safety agents. The 2011 School Safety Act brought transparency to the issuing of suspensions and expulsions issued by the Department of Education as well as the distribution of tickets and summonses issued by NYPD School Safety Agents, as did recent changes announced by the DOE. We look forward to building on these efforts to ensure that all of our students have a safe, supportive environment in which to learn.

Legislation to Increase Health Care Transparency at Rikers Island

Like many New Yorkers, I am deeply disturbed by recent reporting regarding the poor and inadequate treatment of individuals incarcerated at Rikers Island. Recently, my colleague Council Member Elizabeth Crowley and I chaired a joint hearing of the Council’s Committee on Health and Committee on Fire and Criminal Justice Services to address this topic.

Our hearing, entitled “Health Care Delivery in New York City Jails: Examining Quality of Care and Access to Care,” along with Int. No. 440, a bill that I introduced, was an opportunity to examine the discrete and incredibly important issue of health services in jails. This is just one component of the complex and interlocking problems facing our City’s correctional facilities. With proper examination I think we can better understand how the system is performing, who is accountable, and what we can do to fix it.

My legislation would establish an annual report by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene pertaining to health services in City jails. This bill would give us the tools and transparency

needed to bring critical medical services to those who are incarcerated. I look forward to working with my colleagues on this issue as we press for better treatment of all New Yorkers.

Honoring our Ebola Health Care Workers



Issuing proclamations to Ebola health care workers with Speaker Mark-Viverito

The case of Ebola in New York City last fall was a test of our public health system. Earlier this month, I was proud to stand with the healthcare professionals who treated a doctor who contracted Ebola after helping people with the disease in West Africa. Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and I thanked them for their outstanding service at a City Council legislative session this month, where we issued a proclamation for their courageous and compassionate work. Despite the danger that Ebola brings, and the stigma that comes with treating it, these healthcare workers exemplified the very best in what our City has to offer. With care and discipline, they treated a brave man while taking the proper precautions that ensured that the disease was not transmitted. They showed the whole nation that even in the most dire of circumstances, New York City is prepared to overcome any obstacle in our way.

Visiting Fountain House with First Lady of New York City Chirlane McCray



I am inspired by the fact that First Lady Chirlane McCray's has made mental health one of her top priorities. On March 18 I joined her and the Mayor's Office of Veterans' Affairs Loree Sutton on a tour of Fountain House, a fabulous organization located in my district that serves individuals with mental illness. Fountain House provides over 1,300 New Yorkers annually with a wide variety of services including education, housing, socialization, wellness and employment services. Through the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, First Lady McCray is creating a "roadmap for a more inclusive mental health system in New York City," and her visit to Fountain House is part of a citywide tour of programs that address this issue in different ways. At the end of our tour, we took part in a roundtable discussion about veterans' mental health that included 13 veterans' organizations. I thank First Lady McCray for her work and look forward to partnering with her in addressing this important issue.

Rallying In Opposition to Port Ambrose Natural Gas Terminal



On March 16, I rallied outside City Hall with many of my colleagues and dozens of New Yorkers who care about our clean air and water. We urged Governor Cuomo to cancel the Port Ambrose natural gas terminal, which would be built approximately 20 miles off of Long Island's South Shore. The reason why it is imperative to shut this project down is because it would not only increase demand for natural gas, which threatens our marine ecosystem, but it would also stand in the way of building an offshore wind farm in the same area. As I told *The Independent*, I'm happy that the Governor worked to ban fracking in New York at the end of last year, and I know that it was the hard work advocates put into protesting fracking that ultimately fueled the decision. We're not going to go away on this issue, either.

PRE-K FOR ALL: Pre-K Applications Available for 2015-2016 School Year!

Pre-K For All is well underway. The DOE met their mark for Year 1 of expansion – 53,000 kids enrolled across the City (as opposed to 20,000 in the

previous year). They opened 245 new pre-K early education centers across NYC, and trained 6,000 educators. This year, the goal is that all 4 year olds who want a pre-K seat can have one. There is now a single enrollment process for full day pre-K providers, making the process easier than ever.

To apply for pre-K, go online to www.nyc.gov/prek; over the phone by calling (718) 935-2067; or in person at a Family Welcome Center (for locations, visit www.nyc.gov/schools/welcomecenters).

Free Monthly Legal Housing Clinic

My office helps constituents around my district with a wide range of issues. However, housing issues – particularly those that have to do with landlord harassment/disputes – account for an outstanding number of these constituent cases.

We offer housing clinics at my district office (224 West 30th Street, Suite 1206) on the second Tuesday of every month from 5:30-7:30 pm. **The next clinic will be on Tuesday, April 14.**

At these clinics, you can receive free legal advice from housing attorneys who will be volunteering their time. You will be seen on a first come, first serve basis.

Citymeals-on-Wheels

Do you know a senior who could benefit from a home-delivered nutritious meal? Look no further than Citymeals, which is one of the largest meals-on-wheels programs in the US. They provide over 2 million meals to approximately 18,000 elderly New Yorkers each year. In addition to nutritionally balanced senior meals, our devoted staff and volunteers also deliver vital human companionship.

As an independent 501c(3) fundraising charity, Citymeals exemplifies what a successful public-private partnership looks like through their partnership with NYC's Department for the Aging (DFTA).

To find a home-delivered meal program, call their office (212) 687-1234, email getmeals@citymeals.org, or visit www.citymeals.org.

DYCD Resource Expo and Information Sessions

The NYC Department of Youth & Community Development is now accepting applications for its Summer Youth Employment Program, which connects people between the ages of 14-

24 with paid internships at community-based organizations. The deadline to submit an application is April 10. Participants are selected by lottery, and specialized programming is available for disabled, foster care, runaway/homeless, and court-involved youth.

If you are eligible and interested in applying for an internship, please visit <https://application.nycsyep.com/>. If you run a community-based organization and are interested in providing a paid-internship as part of this program, please visit

<https://worksitpreapp.nycsyep.com/Pages/SystemAccess/Default.aspx>