



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

Join Me For Community Convention Follow-up Calls

DANIEL L. SQUADRON September 17, 2009

| ISSUE: **ETHICS, HOUSING**



On March 15, four hundred members of our community gathered at the first-ever 25th Senate District Community Convention to discuss shared concerns, priorities, and hopes as part of 22 discussion groups. I left the Convention resolved to take our discussions and translate them into action, and to report back on what we heard and the progress we made. Today I want to announce that this report will be in the form of a series of conference calls, beginning next week. The first call will begin with an overview, and each of the four calls will then cover some of the 22 issues from the Community Convention. Here is the schedule

of calls:

Wednesday, September 23, at 5:30.

Overview of Community Convention Topics

Buses, Subways, MTA Funding, and MTA Issues

Pedestrian Safety, Street Changes, Bicycle Lanes, & Traffic Control

Environmental Sustainability and Alternative Energy

Parks and Open Space

Click [Here](#) to listen to September 23's Follow-up Call

Wednesday, September 30, at 5:30.

Quality of Life: Nightlife, Public Safety, and Construction

Zoning, Neighborhood Preservation, and Community Development

Jobs, Workers' Rights, and Economic Development

Criminal Justice and Civil Rights

Click [Here](#) to listen to September 30's Follow-up Call

Wednesday, October 7, at 5:30.

Education, School Overcrowding, and the Role of Parents

Election Access and Participation

Ethics, Rules, and Campaign Finance Reform

Emergency Preparedness

Marriage Equality and LGBT Civil Rights

Click [Here](#) to listen to October 7's Follow-up Call

Wednesday, October 14, at 5:30.

Public Housing

Rent Regulations

Mitchell-Lama, Section 8, and Tenants' Rights

Public Assistance and Social Services

Disability Access

Senior Citizens' Concerns

Health and Health Care

Click [Here](#) to listen to October 14's Follow-up Call

To access any of the calls, please dial 1-712-432-3100 and use access code 691380. If you're interested in joining, please email admin@danielsquadron.org ahead of time so we can send you a more detailed list of the topics we'll be discussing on each call. Each call will be interactive, allowing participants to ask questions ahead of time or in the moment. If you miss the calls, we will post full recordings of them on my website at <http://www.squadron.nysenate.gov>. If you need a local call-in number, please let us know.

With everything that's happened in the Senate, I know Albany is on many of your minds right now, so I also want to take this opportunity to share my thoughts on the Senate session that took place last Thursday. To be sure, we accomplished some important business, including passing an impressive Green Jobs bill and confirming a new MTA chair. Of course, Thursday also had its disappointments. The Republican opposition to a strong ethics package that I sponsored with Senator John Sampson, and the fact that our conference was down one vote for the day, meant we were not yet able to pass our overall ethics proposal into law. If you're interested in reading more about the ethics legislation and the dynamics that factored into Thursday's vote, you can read the New York Times article on it at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/11/nyregion/11ethics.html>.

Also disappointing was the fact that we were not able to vote on several important and controversial pieces of legislation, including S2642A, a tenant protection bill I sponsor that was originally on last week's agenda . While Thursday's particular circumstances were such that our conference lacked a potential 'yes' vote, moving forward we must end the old Albany practice of only voting on bills that are guaranteed passage. This practice effectively kills legislation behind closed doors, leaving the public to wonder how their representatives would have voted. Whether or not we have the votes to pass bills like S2642A, I still believe they deserve the consideration of the full body. As we all saw so vividly this summer, the Senate must be much more transparent and accountable. The rules reforms we instituted are a first step, but we cannot stop there.

I also wanted to let you know about a hearing I will be hosting this Friday as Chair of the Cities Committee. The subject is preserving and encouraging retail diversity, locally-owned small businesses, and unique urban streetscapes. In the last few years, we've seen that strong and weak economies both pose grave threats to the local shops that define our communities. The goal of the hearing is to share best practices and develop a policy framework that will protect this essential component of our neighborhoods. Email me if you would like to learn more.

I look forward to speaking with all of you during the Community Conference Calls, and as always, please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions, concerns, or suggestions you have. You can reach me by email at squadron@senate.state.ny.us and by phone at (212) 298-5565.