



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

State Senator Gustavo Rivera on the End of the 2021-2022 Legislative Session

GUSTAVO RIVERA June 16, 2021

| ISSUE: **END OF SESSION**

“This legislative session we passed an array of historic measures that I am confident will be critical in helping New Yorkers navigate an unprecedented recovery and build a more equitable state.

Victories like a first-in-the-nation Excluded Workers’ fund, the implementation of a new set of safe staffing standards in hospitals and nursing homes, the legalization of marijuana centered on restorative justice, and a powerful legislation to establish an Opioid Settlement Fund, would be inspiring on their own. I am proud to have fought and successfully passed 24 of my bills through both houses of the legislature, eight of which have already been signed into law.

These measures, along with others championed by my colleagues, address a large swath of the most pressing issues facing our communities and will have a real impact on New Yorkers’ lives, offering opportunities to thrive as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic,” said State Senator Gustavo Rivera.

Highlights of Senator Rivera’s Legislative Accomplishments:

- Improved patient safety and enhanced quality care for every New Yorker by setting standards for safe staffing in both hospitals and nursing homes ([S.1168A](#), [S.6346](#)).
- Established an Opioid Settlement Fund to ensure that settlements the State receives from lawsuits against opioid manufacturers are allocated to prevention, treatment, harm reduction and recovery services related to substance use disorders and co-occurring mental illnesses. ([S.7194](#)).
- Expanded lead testing and remediation of drinking water in schools ([S.2122A](#)) and lowered the lead action level to 5 parts per billion.
- Created a pathway for midwifery birth centers to be approved to operate, helping address the maternal mortality and morbidity crisis ([S.1414A](#)).
- Secured over \$3.7 million in direct funding for the 33rd Senate District for capital projects and operational expenses to support our infrastructure and local organizations, including parks, schools, small businesses, senior centers, community centers, violence interrupters, free legal service providers, and community health centers.
- Decriminalized the possession and removed the cap on the sale of syringes to help New Yorkers dealing with substance use instead of criminalizing them ([S.2523](#)).
- Replaced all references in state law of the word inmate with incarcerated individuals, a change in terminology that recognizes humanity ([S.3332](#)).
- Required hospitals to conduct a health equity assessment before seeking approval for construction, merger, closure or substantial reduction in changes to health services ([S.1451](#)).
- Set safety standards to appropriately discharge or transfer a New Yorker from a nursing home ([S.3058](#): Signed into law).
- Set new requirements for nursing home operators and owners before being entrusted with the care of individuals in an effort to increase transparency and oversight of these

facilities ([S.4893A](#): Signed into law).

Senate Majority's Legislative Accomplishments

Overview of this session's most critical legislative measures, which were championed by the Senate Majority:

- Legalization of marijuana with a focus on restorative justice ([S.854A](#) Krueger)
- Ended solitary confinement in our jails and prisons. ([S.2836](#) Salazar)
- Package of bills aimed at keeping our communities safe and ending gun violence by addressing the Iron Pipeline ([S13A](#) Hoylman; [S14A](#) Hoylman; [S5000B](#) Kavanagh; [S7152](#) Brooks; [S7196](#) Myrie; [S1251](#) Gianaris)
- The Housing Our Neighbors with Dignity Act (HONDA) to transform distressed hotels and other commercial buildings into affordable housing ([S5257](#) Gianaris)
- Regulated pharmacy benefit managers to make prescription drugs more affordable ([S3762](#) Breslin)
- The Less is More Act which reforms the parole system by eliminating incarceration for most minor violations ([S1144A](#) Benjamin)

“While there is no doubt that this year’s legislative session has been incredibly productive and I celebrate each one of our achieved victories wholeheartedly, it is undeniable that we still have a lot of work left to do to create a more just and equitable state for all New Yorkers, whether we are talking about the New York Health Act or Fair and Timely Parole Act. The work continues,” added Senator Rivera.