

# Liz Krueger

New York State Senate | 28th District



May 2018

## Message from Liz...

One of the biggest disappointments in this year’s budget process was the failure to pass significant reforms to our criminal justice system. The final budget did not address bail, speedy trial, or meaningful discovery reforms. While there were differences between the Assembly, the Governor, and criminal justice reformers over what the final details of these proposals should be, they all agreed that we should make significant progress in addressing injustices in our criminal courts, jails, and prisons. But the Senate Republican leadership blocked consideration of any of these measures.

The Republican leadership of the State Senate seems to have a very different “criminal justice reform agenda” aimed at increasing mass incarceration. They rolled this out on April 30th and May 1st with 25 bills increasing penalties for various crimes, creating new crimes, and making it harder to get parole for people currently in prison. Some of these bills seemed aimed at returning to the Rockefeller Drug laws of the 1970s, with increased penalties for a wide range of drug offenses. Another bill created a “three strikes and you’re out” law requiring mandatory life sentences for repeat offenders. And there were a host of bills designed to make it harder for anyone currently incarcerated to get out on parole. Days like this in the Senate make me feel like I’ve stepped into another era where fearmongering about rampant crime trumps considerations of actual public safety solutions or the basic Constitutional principles of fair treatment under the law.

In a time of declining crime rates and dropping prison populations, this focus is both wrongheaded and out of touch with the priorities of most Americans. A recent study by the Vera Institute of Justice found that people across the country, both urban and rural, do not see locking more people in prison for longer periods of time as a high priority. When asked about priorities, they rank job creation, infrastructure, access to community mental health and drug treatment services, and a host of other goals far above investing in prisons and jails, which ranked last on the list. The study found that a 67 percent majority agree, “building more jails and prisons to keep more people in jail does not reduce crime,” including 61 percent of rural Americans. And 49 percent of those surveyed agreed with the statement, “Too many people are in jail for the wrong reasons.” More information on the survey is available at <https://www.vera.org/newsroom/press-releases/new-poll-finds-that-urban-and-rural-america-are-rethinking-mass-incarceration>.

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I look forward to the time when the New York State Senate will enter the 21st Century and recognize that we need a justice system that people believe is actually just. Creating such a system will involve reforming our bail system so that people are not locked up because they lack the ability to pay. It will involve ensuring everyone has access to a speedy trial, as guaranteed by our Constitution. It will involve discovery reform to ensure prosecutors do not hide evidence from defendants and their attorneys. It will involve a host of other reforms, but it certainly will not involve trying to find new ways to keep more of our people in prison. The United States already has the highest prison population in the world, and that in and of itself is an indictment of our criminal justice system.

-Liz

P.S. I recently wrote op-eds regarding two other issues that also were not addressed adequately in the budget – congestion pricing and reducing plastic bag waste. Here are links to these pieces if you would like to read them:

<https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/articles/liz-krueger/craigs-op-ed-states-half-measures-wont-fix-citys-congestion-problem>

<https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/articles/liz-krueger/daily-news-op-ed-make-plastic-carryout-bag-extinct>

## **POLICY SPOTLIGHT**

### *Election Reform*

On May 1st I joined members of the Senate Democratic Conference in announcing a legislative package that would help ease access to voting and increase voter participation. We also released the results of a survey that outlined several potential causes for New York's embarrassingly low voter turnout rate that demonstrate the need for fundamental reforms in our voting system.

The report, *Why Don't More New Yorkers Vote? A Snapshot Identifying Low Voter Turnout*, detailed a survey conducted with New Yorkers who did not participate in the 2016 General Election despite being eligible to vote. The survey highlighted potential causes for New York's dismal record on voting participation, ranking 41st in the nation following the 2016 General Election. To view the full report and survey, please visit: <https://www.scribd.com/document/377827073/05-01-18-Why-Don-t-More-New-Yorkers-Vote-A-Statewide-Snapshot-Identifying-Low-Voter-Turnout>.

Key findings from the survey include:

- 79% of respondents said they would be more likely to vote in an election if early voting was enacted.
- 76% of respondents said they would be more likely to vote in an election if no-excuse absentee voting was enacted.
- 81% of respondents who live in counties with voting hours from 12:00 – 9:00 PM on primary day said they would be more likely to vote in an election if voting hours were extended to 6:00 AM – 9:00 PM.
- 28% of respondents said they have missed an election because of work or school obligations.

To address these findings and strengthen the democratic process in New York State, I joined my colleagues in putting forward a series of bills that will enable early voting and no-excuse absentee voting, modernize and expand voter registration, extend Primary Election voting hours and ensure uniformity throughout the state, and expand language options for ballots.

The Senator Democratic Conference's Voting Reforms package includes:

- **Early Voting:** This bill, S.7400-A, would establish an Early Voting system to permit eligible voters in New York State to vote in person during a designated period prior to any primary, special, or general election day. This bill will also establish an Early Voting Fund to cover the expenses of early voting so that local governments are not unfairly burdened.
- **No-Excuse Absentee Voting:** This bill, S.840, would amend the state Constitution to allow for any voter to request to vote by mail without declaring reason.
- **Automatic Voter Registration:** This bill, S.3409, would automatically register voters who interact with most state or local agencies unless they affirmatively opt not to do so.
- **Change of Party Enrollment Reform:** This bill, S.5615, would allow a voter to vote in a primary election if they have changed their party enrollment up to ninety days prior to a primary election, instead of the current requirement that they change registration prior to the previous general election, which can often be more than a year in advance.
- **The Voter Empowerment Act:** This bill, S.3304, would create a modern voter registration system that will reduce costs for processing voter registrations and maintain complete and accurate voter registration lists. This legislation will help reduce the inaccuracy and disenfranchisement caused by human error. The Voter Empowerment Act will also, among other things, transfer the registrations of New Yorkers who move within the state; provide for access to voter registration records and the registration of eligible citizens over the Internet; and move the deadlines for voter registration.
- **Pre-Registration for 16- and 17-Year Olds:** This bill, S.4440, will enable 16- and 17-year olds to pre-register to vote.
- **Primary Voting Hours Consistency:** This bill, S.7264, would ensure that primary voting hours across the State will be uniform and polling places will be open from 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM on Primary Election days.
- **Consolidation of Federal and State Primaries:** This bill, S.3562-A, would save tax payer dollars and make state primary elections the same day as federal primary elections. It also ensures that New York State's election law complies with the federal Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act.
- **Expanded Language Options for Ballots:** Senate Democratic Conference members have introduced legislation to ensure voters whose first language is not English understand their ballots and the voting process. These bills, S.5602, S.3869, and S.5825, would increase available materials in Haitian Creole, Bengali, Punjabi, Hindi, and Russian in areas with large numbers of voters who speak those languages.
- **Advanced Notice of Elections:** To ensure voters are well-informed and aware of upcoming elections, Senate Bills S.5527 and S.6733 would require Boards of Election to mail notices to voters shortly before all Primary, General, and Special Elections.

Empowering New Yorkers to have a more active role in their state government should not be a partisan or controversial issue. The bills my colleagues and I have advanced will simply bring New York's archaic election system laws into the 21st Century. I urge the Senate Republicans to stop playing politics with New Yorkers' Constitutional right to vote. The right to vote is one of the most fundamental freedoms belonging to every American. But New York's convoluted and out-dated voting

laws discourage participation in our electoral process and lead us to have one of the lowest voter turnout rates in the country.

I am pleased to join my Democratic colleagues in advancing this important package of bills that will modernize voting procedures, remove barriers to voting, and help give New Yorkers the free, fair, and accessible elections they deserve.

## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

### **Indivisible Upper East Side Event on the Future of Your State Government:**

On Thursday May 10th I will be speaking along with my Assembly colleague Dan Quart at a discussion of the Future of Your State Government. The event is hosted by Indivisible Upper East Side and will take place from 7 – 9 pm at All Souls Church, 1157 Lexington Avenue at 80th Street. For more information, visit [www.indivisible-ues.org](http://www.indivisible-ues.org).

### **Rally for Age Justice on May 15:**

Be a part of a historic event in Union Square Park on May 15th at 4:30 P.M. Join the Radical Age Movement and allies in confronting ageism at the first ever Rally For Age Justice. For more information and for a list of cosponsors, visit <https://radicalagemovement.org/events/rally-for-age-justice-2018> or call 646-630-4443.

### **Workshop on Sexual Health for Women with RA, SpA or PsA:**

On May 10th the Hospital for Special Surgery is hosting a free program on “Women’s Sexual Health Across the Lifespan: What Every Woman with RA, PsA and SpA Needs to Know.” If you are a woman with rheumatoid arthritis (RA), spondyloarthritis (SpA), or psoriatic arthritis (PsA) learn about the impact of these conditions on your sexual health. Dr. Lisa R. Sammaritano will speak at the program, which will be followed by a question and answer session. The event will take place from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the Hospital for Special Surgery, 535 East 70th Street in the Richard L. Menschel Education Center. Light refreshments will be served. Register online at [hss.edu/secure/pped.asp](http://hss.edu/secure/pped.asp) or by mail to Education Institute, Hospital for Special Surgery, 535 East 70th Street, New York, NY 10021. For more information, contact Claudia Zurlini at 212-606-1613 or [zurlicnic@hss.edu](mailto:zurlicnic@hss.edu).

### **CIVITAS Building Height Forum on June 6:**

On Wednesday, June 6th Civitas is hosting a Building Height Forum: How Tall is Too Tall? A Community-wide Town Hall on Height Limits. The event will take place from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Lenox Hill Hospital, Einhorn Auditorium, 131 East 76th Street. To RSVP visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/land-use-forum-how-tall-is-too-tall-tickets-564070149>. For more information call CIVITAS at (212) 996-0745 or email [info@civitasnyc.org](mailto:info@civitasnyc.org).

### **Testifying against a Zoning Exemption for 428-432 East 58th Street:**

Last month I joined New York City Council Members Ben Kallos and Keith Powers in testimony to the New York City Board of Standards and Appeals, opposing the exemption of 428-432 East 58th Street from a community-led zoning text amendment. The developer is trying to get around recently enacted zoning restrictions for this area that effectively limit supertall buildings in east of First Avenue between 51st and 59th Streets. The rezoning, which was enacted November 30, 2017, was the result

of a grassroots effort led by a group called the East River Fifties Alliance (ERFA) and subject to a full review by the community board, the City Planning Commission, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and the City Council. The testimony is available at <https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/articles/liz-krueger/testimony-board-standards-and-appeals-regarding-428-432-east-58th>

**Clear Your Cabinet – Find Drug Takeback Locations:**

The following link provides a map and locations where pharmaceuticals can be dropped off. Some locations are available throughout the year and some only on take back days. People can sign up to get a reminder to drop off their pharmaceuticals when the next national drug take back day comes around: <https://clearyourcabinet.ag.ny.gov/>

This is a crucial way that we can all help to fight the opioid crisis that is devastating families across New York and our country. Research shows that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, and the source is often from medication that was prescribed but never finished and left to sit at home.

In addition, the NYC Department of Sanitation will be holding a SAFE Disposal event in Manhattan, for all manner of harmful household products. That event will take place on May 20th, from 10am to 4pm, at Columbia University Teachers College, on West 120th Street between Broadway and Amsterdam. For more information, visit [on.nyc.gov/safeevents](http://on.nyc.gov/safeevents).

**Online Services through My Social Security Account:**

If you're 18 or older and work, open your my Social Security account today at [www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount). Make sure your earnings information is correct. If you're receiving benefits already, manage your information online!

To create a My Social Security account, visit <https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/>. You must provide some personal information about yourself. You also must give answers to some questions that only you are likely to know.

Next, you create a username and password that you will use to access your online account. Then, you will select how you would like to receive a one-time security code by providing the email address you registered or a text-enabled cell phone number. Once you receive the one-time security code, you will need to enter it within 10 minutes to finish creating your account. This process protects you and keeps your personal Social Security information private.

You now can use a My Social Security account to request a replacement Social Security card online if you:

- are a U.S. citizen age 18 years or older with a U.S. mailing address;
- are not requesting a name change or any other change to your card; and
- have a New York driver's license or a state-issued identification card.

Remember, you can get an original Social Security card or a replacement card if yours is lost or stolen. There is no charge for a Social Security card. This service is free.

### **Scam Call Alert:**

My office has been alerted to a new scam call where the caller leaves a message stating that serious allegations have been made and that the constituent may be subject to arrest. The scam caller instructs the recipient to return the call to discuss the case. If you receive a similar message, first and foremost, do not return the call. If your phone has been registered with the National Do Not Call Registry for at least 31 days, you can file a complaint by calling 1-888-382-1222. You can also call 1-888-382-1222 to register your phone.

### **Upcoming Pet Adoption Events:**

Animal Care Centers of NYC (ACC) is sponsoring several Pet Adoption events around the district in May. Upcoming dates and locations are:

Saturday, May 12, Noon – 4:00 p.m. Petco Union Square  
860 Broadway at 17th Street

Saturday, May 19, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Biscuits and Bath – Dogs only  
1064 First Avenue b/t at 58th Street

Upcoming events are also listed at <http://nycacc.org/Events.htm>

### **Legal Advocacy Clinics At Lenox Hill Neighborhood House:**

The Lenox Hill Neighborhood House Legal Advocacy Center Offers assistance on a number of different issues. Here is a list of their ongoing programs and clinics:

- SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) Clinics: Wednesdays from 10am to 1pm at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, 331 East 70th Street. First come, first served. Bring proof of identity, income information, utility bill, proof of housing costs, information on any dependents and if you are 60 or over or on SSI/SSD, information on medical costs. For more information, call [212-218-0431](tel:212-218-0431).
- SCRIE Clinics: Walk-in Clinic. The next clinic will take place Thursday, June 14 from 10:00 a.m to 1:00 p.m at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, 331 East 70th Street. You must arrive before Noon to ensure you can be seen. If you are 62 years or older, live in a rent regulated apartment and have an annual household income of \$50,000 or less you may be eligible for the Rent Freeze Program. Find out if you are eligible and get assistance applying or recertifying for SCRIE.
- Tenants Rights Advice Clinic: Walk-in clinic, now at 2 locations.
  - May 10 from 10am to 1pm at 331 East 70th Street. First come-first Served, arrive by Noon.
  - May 16 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the East Harlem Health Action Center, 158 East 115th Street. First come, first served, arrive by 4 p.m.Please bring all relevant housing-related documents with you.
- End-of-Life Planning/Advance Directives: volunteer attorneys may be able to assist you with one-on-one counseling and individualized drafting of Advance Directives including Health Care Proxies, Living Wills, Powers of Attorney, and simple, low-asset Wills. If you are interested in being screened for a possible appointment, call the intake hotline at [212-218-0503 ext 4](tel:212-218-0503).
- Health Care Access/Medicare/Medicaid: call [212-218-0503 ext 3](tel:212-218-0503). Find out about Medicare Savings Programs, Medicaid home care, Medicare Part D, Medicaid Spend-down, EPIC and if you are eligible for Medicaid.
- Health Insurance Enrollment: call [212-218-0432](tel:212-218-0432). Assistance with finding and enrolling in an affordable health insurance plan.

### **Affordable Housing Opportunities in Manhattan:**

**Acacia Gardens** is now accepting applications for 124 affordable studio, 1- 2- and 3-bedroom apartments newly constructed at 401-411 East 120th Street in the East Harlem neighborhood in Manhattan. Rents for these apartments range from \$822 to \$1,706 depending on income and unit size. To be eligible, applicants must have incomes between \$30,069 and \$95,400 depending on unit and family size. Asset limits also apply. Preference will be given to Community Board 11 residents for 50% of units, mobility-impaired persons for 5% of units, visual- and/or hearing-impaired persons for 2% of units, and City of New York municipal employees for 5% of units. A full description of the building and application process is available at <https://a806-housingconnect.nyc.gov/nyclottery/AdvertisementPdf/467.pdf>.

Households may elect to submit an application by one of two methods: EITHER online OR by mail. To submit your application online now, please visit NYC Housing Connect at [www.nyc.gov/housingconnect](http://www.nyc.gov/housingconnect) and select "Apply for Housing." To request an application by mail, mail a self-addressed envelope to: ACACIA Gardens, 413 East 120th Street, Room 305, New York, NY 10035.

Applications must be submitted online or postmarked by May 29, 2018. Applicants who submit more than one application may be disqualified.

**751 East 6th Street Apartments** is now accepting applications for 28 affordable studio, 1- 2- and 3-bedroom apartments newly constructed at 751 East 6th Street on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Rents for these apartments range from \$596 to \$2,519 depending on income and unit size. To be eligible, applicants must have incomes between \$22,320 and \$135,590 depending on unit and family size. Asset limits also apply. Preference will be given to Community Board 3 residents for 50% of units, mobility-impaired persons for 5% of units, visual- and/or hearing-impaired persons for 2% of units, and City of New York municipal employees for 5% of units. A full description of the building and application process is available at <https://a806-housingconnect.nyc.gov/nyclottery/AdvertisementPdf/481.pdf>.

Households may elect to submit an application by one of two methods: EITHER online OR by mail. To submit your application online now, please visit NYC Housing Connect at [www.nyc.gov/housingconnect](http://www.nyc.gov/housingconnect) and select "Apply for Housing." To request an application by mail, mail a self-addressed envelope to: 751 E 6th Street Apartments, Triborough Finance New, PO Box 2007, New York, NY 10035.

Applications must be submitted online or postmarked by June 26, 2018. Applicants who submit more than one application may be disqualified.

**222 East 44th Street** is now accepting applications for 50 affordable studio, 1- and 2-bedroom apartments newly constructed at 222 East 44th Street in the Midtown East neighborhood in Manhattan. Rents for these apartments range from \$613 to 2,733 depending on income and unit size. To be eligible, applicants must have incomes between \$22,903 and \$135,590 depending on unit and family size. Asset limits also apply. Preference will be given to Community Board 6 residents for 50% of units, to mobility-impaired persons for 5% of units and visual- and/or hearing-impaired persons for 2% of units. A full description of the building and application process is available at <https://a806-housingconnect.nyc.gov/nyclottery/AdvertisementPdf/485.pdf>.

Households may elect to submit an application by one of two methods: EITHER online OR by mail. To submit your application online now, please visit NYC Housing Connect at [www.nyc.gov/housingconnect](http://www.nyc.gov/housingconnect) and select "Apply for Housing." To request an application by mail, mail a self-addressed envelope to: 222 E. 44th Street c/o Breaking Ground, PO Box 3620937, New York, NY 10129.

Applications must be submitted online or postmarked by July 2, 2018. Applicants who submit more than one application may be disqualified.

**Metrocard Bus and Van Schedule:**

The MTA offers MetroCard-related services throughout New York City through mobile buses and vans. Buses provide a full range of services, including applying for or refilling a Reduced-Fare MetroCard, buying or refilling a regular MetroCard, or getting answers to a MetroCard-related question. Vans sell Unlimited Ride MetroCards and Pay-Per-Ride MetroCards, and they refill MetroCards and Reduced-Fare MetroCards. Buses and vans will be in my district on the following dates and locations:

May 8, 9 - 10:30 am, 92 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus  
May 8, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm., 86 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus  
May 8, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 68 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus  
May 16, 11 am - 1 pm, 79 Street & York Avenue – Bus  
May 16, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 72 Street & York Avenue – Bus  
May 16, 9 - 10:30 am, 92 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus  
May 17, 8:30 - 10:30 am, 47 Street & 2 Avenue – Van  
May 17, 1:30 - 3:30 pm, 28 Street & 2 Avenue – Van  
May 17, 9 - 10:30 am, 79 Street & 3 Avenue – Bus  
May 22, 9 - 10:30 am, 92 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus  
May 22, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm., 86 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus  
May 22, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 68 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus  
June 1, 9 - 10 am, 57 Street and 1 Avenue – Van  
June 1, 10:30 - 11:30 am, 57 Street and 3 Avenue – Van  
June 1, 12:30 - 2:30 pm, 68 Street and 1 Avenue – Van  
June 6, 9 - 10:30 am, 79 Street & 3 Avenue – Bus  
June 6, 11 am - 1 pm, 79 Street & York Avenue – Bus  
June 6, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 72 Street & York Avenue – Bus  
June 7, 7 – 9 am, 91 Street and York Avenue - Van  
June 7, 8:30 - 10:30 am, 47 Street & 2 Avenue – Van  
June 7, 1:30 - 3:30 pm, 28 Street & 2 Avenue – Van

The full mobile MetroCard schedule is available at <http://mta.info/metrocard/mms.htm>. Please note that MetroCard buses and vans do not take credit cards.