

Liz Krueger

New York State Senate | 28th District



December 2014

Message from Liz...

As we celebrate our various holiday traditions this year, it is important to remember that there are many New Yorkers struggling to meet their basic needs. A recent report by the New York City Coalition Against Hunger found that between 2011 and 2013, more than 1.4 million New York City residents were “food insecure,” meaning they were unable to afford an adequate supply of food consistently throughout the year. The economic recovery has not reduced food insecurity significantly, and it remains higher than prior to the recession. Twenty-three percent of children and thirteen percent of seniors lived in homes experiencing food insecurity.

One major cause of increased food insecurity is last year’s cuts to federal SNAP (food stamp) benefits. While administrative actions taken by Governor Cuomo reduced the amount of the cuts, New York City residents still received an estimated \$426 million less in SNAP in 2014 than in 2013. Not surprisingly, these cuts resulted in increased reliance on food pantries and kitchens, which saw demand increase by seven percent in 2014.

While the city and the state have both stepped up to try to fill the gaps caused by federal cuts, they do not have the resources to effectively address hunger in the face of intransigence in Washington. The impacts on the needy in many other states have been even worse, and many other states and localities have not attempted to maximize benefits in the way New York has. Unfortunately, there is little reason to believe that the climate in Washington will improve with regard to addressing food insecurity anytime soon.

One thing the state can do to address food insecurity is to increase wages for low-income New Yorkers by raising the minimum wage. Approximately 58 percent of households with working-age, non-disabled adult members that receive SNAP benefits have members of the household with jobs. Raising the wages of these and other low-income workers would be an incredibly effective way of reducing food insecurity. One of the most disturbing aspects of the current economic recovery is how many people it has left behind, with people earning LESS than they did before the recession. I will be advocating for the state legislature and governor to take action to increase the minimum wage, whether in a special session later this month or during the new legislative session beginning in January. Since I don’t have

What’s Inside

Message from Liz	1
Community Update	2
- Roundtable for Boomers and Seniors December 18th	
- SCRIE/DRIE Seminar January 8th	
- Emergency Preparedness Training December 13th	
- New York’s Health Plan Marketplace - Open Enrollment is Here	
- New Government Benefits Hotline	
- Kindergarten Directories Now Available	
- Opt Out of Junk Mail	
- Legal Advocacy Clinics From Lenox Hill Neighborhood House	
- VOLS Legal Clinics for Low-Income Residents Over Age 60	
- Monthly Housing Clinics and Workshops	
- Affordable Housing at Hunters Point South in Queens	
- Metrocard Bus and Van Schedule	
- Heat Season Rules	

much faith in the federal government's ability to act to raise the national minimum wage, New York must protect our own people by taking action at the state level to increase the minimum wage to at least \$12 per hour and index it for inflation.

PS: Another shocking statistic is the number of people who are eligible for SNAP / food stamps who do not apply, and this is particularly true of seniors in my district. I was shopping in Fairway the other day when a very elderly woman stopped me to thank my office for helping her get approval for SNAP. She told me she receives \$106 per month in benefits and that it has saved her life to have this additional money for groceries. If you want to find out if you may be eligible for SNAP, you can call the Council for Senior Centers and Services SNAP Outreach Program at 212-398-6565 ext. 221. You can also call the Lenox Hill Neighborhood House SNAP advocate at 212-218-0431 ext. 2.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Roundtable for Boomers and Seniors December 18th:

Senator Liz Krueger's Roundtable for Boomers & Seniors is a 5-part program that provides an opportunity for constituents to come together to explore life issues that are relevant across the age span.

On Thursday, December 18th, Senator Liz Krueger's Roundtable for Boomers & Seniors will be holding the second of a five-part discussion for caregivers and the people in their lives.

"Legal and Financial Preparation for Long Term Care," will take place at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, 331 East 70th Street, from 8:30 am to 10:30 am. The discussion will feature expert speakers:

- Mia Kandel, Esq.
Director of Health and Wellness, Lenox Hill Neighborhood House
- Martin Petroff, Esq.
Elder Attorney, Martin Petroff & Associates

For more information or to RSVP, contact tammie4nys@gmail.com or call 212-490-9535.

SCRIE / DRIE Seminar January 8th:

Are you 62 years or older, or do you receive disability benefits? Do you live in rent regulated housing? Is your household income less than \$50,000/year, and your rent more than 1/3 of your income? If you can answer "yes" to these questions, you may be eligible to have your rent frozen!

Join us for a **SCRIE/DRIE** (Senior Citizen/Disability Rent Increase Exemption) **Seminar:**

Thursday, January 8, 2014
6:00 pm- 8:00 pm
Lenox Hill Neighborhood House
331 East 70th Street (between 1st & 2nd)

Presentation by Diane Lutwak, Esq. & Lauren Sismondo, Esq., attorneys in the Legal Advocacy Department of Lenox Hill Neighborhood House. After the presentation, attorneys from Lenox Hill's legal staff will be on hand to answer your questions and to make individual appointments.

This event is sponsored by Senator Liz Krueger & Lenox Hill Neighborhood House. For further information, contact Alice Fisher at alicefisher37@gmail.com or call 212-490-9535. NO RSVP NEEDED.

Emergency Preparedness Training December 13th:

Governor Cuomo and the East Side's elected officials invite you to participate in the New York State "Citizen Preparedness Training Program." Through the Citizen Preparedness Corps Training Program, approximately 100,000 New Yorkers will be provided with the tools and resources to prepare for emergencies and disasters, respond accordingly, and recover as quickly as possible to pre-disaster conditions.

The next training on the East Side will be:

Saturday, December 13, 2014
1:00 P.M.
The 69th Regiment Armory
68 Lexington Avenue (between 25th & 26th Streets)
New York, NY 10010

All participants must register in advance at www.prepare.ny.gov.

Training participants (one per family) will receive a free [Citizen Preparedness Corps Response Starter Kit](#), which includes:

AM/FM pocket radio with batteries - Regular flashlight - Plastic drop cloth - Light Stick - (2) D Batteries - First Aid Kit - Face mask - Safety goggles - (6) packs of drinking water - (6) food bars - Emergency blanket - Duct tape - Work gloves - Water bottle

Please contact Erik Bottcher with questions at [\(212\) 681-4605](tel:2126814605) or erik.bottcher@exec.ny.gov.

New York's Health Plan Marketplace - Open Enrollment is Here:

New York's Marketplace, *NY State of Health*, is a way for individuals, families, and small businesses (under 50 employees) to find quality health insurance. It can help if you don't have coverage now, or if you have insurance but want to look at other options under certain conditions (the Marketplace is not for people who have Medicare). The Marketplace is being administered as part of the federal health care reform law.

When Do I Apply? Open enrollment for 2015 runs from November 15, 2014 - February 15, 2015. Coverage starts as early as January 1, 2015. Apply by the 15th of any month for coverage effective the 1st of the following month.

Special Enrollment Day! Friday, November 21, 2014. I am partnering with Lenox Hill Neighborhood House to provide you with an opportunity to meet with an enrollment counselor on November 21st. Lenox Hill has a certified application counselor who can help you understand your options and enroll in a plan. Call to make an appointment: 212-218-0432, 331 E. 70th Street (no walk-ins).

If you cannot make the enrollment day, contact Lenox Hill to make an appointment for another time. For a complete list of health care navigators and counselors, go to <http://info.nystateofhealth.ny.gov/IPANavigatorSiteLocations> or call 1-855-355-5777. These services are free for you. For more information or to apply for a plan call the Marketplace toll-free: 1-855-355-5777, go online to the Marketplace's website: <http://www.nystateofhealth.ny.gov/> or contact my office with additional questions at 212-490-9535.

Free and low-cost options are available, including Medicaid, Child Health Plus, and financial aid. Financial aid to buy insurance is available for certain small businesses, individuals who earn up to \$46,680 a year, or \$95,400 a year for a family of 4. All plans provide essential care, including doctor visits, emergency care, and prescription drugs. You cannot be denied coverage for a pre-existing condition.

New Government Benefits Hotline:

Legal Services NYC has launched a centralized Government Benefits Hotline (917-661-4500) for residents in need of assistance with Public Assistance, SNAP (Food Stamps), HASA, one-shots, and Medicaid (primarily Spend Down and Home Care) matters. Hotline callers can obtain advice, referrals and appointments with advocates in each of our local borough offices by calling the Central Hotline number Monday through Friday, between the hours of 10am – 4pm. They provide free legal advice and representation to low-income New York City residents in all languages.

Kindergarten Directories Now Available:

2015 Kindergarten Directories are now available online at <http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/Elementary/kindergarten!>

If you live in NYC and your child was born in 2010, you can use the Directories to help you decide which schools you'd like to apply to for fall 2015. Each borough's Directory contains information about the kindergarten admissions process, schools located in that borough, district maps, and a list of charter schools.

During the month of December, you can pick up printed copies of the Kindergarten Directories from your local elementary school or at an Enrollment Office. Translated directories will be available in early December on our website.

The Kindergarten application period for the 2015-2016 school year will be January 7 through February 13, 2015. Be sure to check our website as updated information becomes available. If you have any questions throughout the process, please call 718-935-2009, email ES_Enrollment@schools.nyc.gov or visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/Elementary/kindergarten>.

Opt Out of Junk Mail:

GreenNYC has set up a website to allow you to opt out of receiving unwanted solicitations, catalogs and other junk mail. New Yorkers receive more than 2 billion pieces of unwanted mail annually. By signing up to opt out of unwanted mail, you will eliminate mailbox clutter and reduce paper waste. Reducing the amount of paper we use is a great way to protect the environment. It conserves precious resources like water, wood and fuel. By opting out of unwanted mail, you can eliminate mailbox clutter while helping make New York City greener and greater. To sign up, visit <http://www.nyc.gov/html/greenyc/html/campaign/campaign.shtml>

Additional Legal Advocacy Clinics From 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 schedule of upcoming clinics:

- **SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) Clinics:** Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. 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. Call 212-218-0503 ext. 2 for the SNAP advocate.
- **SCRIE Clinics:** call 212-218-0503 ext. 6 from assistance in applying or recertifying for the Senior Citizens Rent Increase Exemption Program (SCRIE).
- **Eviction Prevention:** Walk-in clinic, every third Monday of the month, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at 331 East 70th Street. For more information, call 212-218-0429.
- **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, please call our intake hotline at 212-218-0503 (choose option #4).

Monthly Housing Clinics and Workshops:

Council Member Helen Rosenthal, Goddard Riverside's SRO Law Project, and The Urban Justice Center present FREE 2014-2015 Monthly Housing Clinics and Workshops from October 2014 - June 2015 (6:00PM-8:00PM) at Goddard Riverside Community Center, 593 Columbus Avenue (between 88th and 89th Streets), Manhattan. On the first Wednesday of each month, the clinic will offer a presentation on a variety of topics, to be followed by a question and answer session. The funding is provided by the Housing Preservation Initiative of the New York City Council. Each evening, at least one staff attorney will meet with individuals who are seeking specific legal advice. (Bilingual: Español)

For questions, contact the Urban Justice Center at (646) 459-3017 or the Office of Council Member Rosenthal at (212) 873-0282. Sign-up starts at 6pm each evening.

- **January 7, 2015:** Harassment
- **February 4, 2015:** City-Wide Housing Related Campaigns
- **March 4, 2015:** DHCR Overview, including MCIs and 1/40ths
- **April 1, 2015:** Housing Court 101
- **May 6, 2015:** SCRIE and DRIE
- **June 3, 2015:** Succession Rights, Preferential Rights and Non-Primary Residence

Affordable Housing at Hunters Point South in Queens:

Applications for the first phase of the Hunters Point South affordable housing development in Long Island City, Queens will be available starting in mid-October. This phase will offer 738 “moderate income” units ranging from studios to 3-bedrooms, with rents from \$1561 to \$4346 depending on units size and income. Income requirements for these units will range from \$55,200 to \$224,020, depending on unit size. 186 “low income units will also be available with rents between \$494 and \$959 depending on unit size and income. Income requirements for these units will range from approximately \$19,000 to approximately \$48,000, depending on unit size.

Preference will be given to Queens Community Board 2 residents for 50% of units, mobility-impaired persons for 5% of units, visual- and/or hearing-impaired units for 2% of units, and City of New York municipal employees for 5% of units. For more information visit HuntersPointSouthLiving.com. To submit your application online now, please visit NYC Housing Connect at www.nyc.gov/housingconnect and select “Apply for Housing.” To request an application by mail, mail a self-addressed envelope to: Hunter’s Point South Living, 1357 Broadway, Box 308, New York, NY 10018.

Completed applications must be submitted online or returned by regular mail only the post office box that will be listed on the application. Applications must be submitted online or postmarked by December 15, 2014. Applicants who submit more than one application will 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. Vans

Buses and vans will be in my district on the following dates and locations:

- December 9, 10:30 am, 92 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- December 9, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm., 86 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- December 9, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 68 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- December 18, 7 – 9 am, 90 Street and York Avenue - Van
- December 18, 8:30 - 10:30 am, 47 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
- December 18, 1:30 - 3:30 pm, 28 Street & 2 Avenue – Van
- December 23, 10:30 am, 92 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- December 23, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm., 86 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus

- December 23, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 68 Street & Lexington Avenue – Bus
- January 2, 9 - 10 am, 57 Street and 1 Avenue – Van
- January 2, 10:30 - 11:30 am, 57 Street and 3 Avenue – Van
- January 7, 12:30 - 2:30 pm, 68 Street and 1 Avenue – Van
- January 7, 9 - 10:30 am, 79 Street & 3 Avenue – Bus
- January 7, 11 am - 1 pm, 79 Street & York Avenue – Bus
- January 7, 1:30 - 2:30 pm, 72 Street & York Avenue – Bus

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.

Heat Season Rules:

The City Housing Maintenance Code and State Multiple Dwelling Law require building owners to provide heat and hot water to all tenants. Building owners are required to provide hot water 365 days a year at a constant minimum temperature of 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

Between October 1st and May 31st, a period designated as “Heat Season,” building owners are also required to provide tenants with heat under the following conditions:
 Between the hours of 6AM and 10PM, if the outside temperature falls below 55 degrees, the inside temperature is required to be at least 68 degrees Fahrenheit.
 Between the hours of 10PM and 6AM, if the temperature outside falls below 40 degrees, the inside temperature is required to be at least 55 degrees Fahrenheit.
 Tenants who are cold in their apartments should first attempt to notify the building owner, managing agent or superintendent. If heat is not restored, the tenant should call the City’s Citizen Service Center at 311. For the hearing-impaired, the TTY number is (212) 504-4115. The Center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

District Office: 1850 Second Avenue | New York, NY 10128 | (212) 490-9535 | Fax: (212) 490-2151
Albany Office: Legislative Office Building, Room 905 | Albany, NY 12247 | (518) 455-2297 | Fax: (518) 426-6874
Email: liz@lizkrueger.com | On the Web: <http://krueger.nysenate.gov>