



January 2015

Dear Neighbor:

I hope you and your family are having a good start to the New Year.

As I'm sure you know, we began the legislative session in Albany with news of yet another scandal that unfortunately will further undermine public trust in our state government. Since being elected to office, I've made ethics reform and government transparency a top legislative priority, having introduced more than a dozen separate bills in this area, including creating the crime of undisclosed self-dealing by legislators ([S.500](#)), restricting the personal use of campaign funds ([S.44](#)), prohibiting the use of campaign funds for legal fees ([S.338](#)), forfeiture of legislative pensions upon state court or felony convictions ([S.125](#) and [S.126](#)), and barring state employees in policy-making positions from using their office for political fundraising ([S.510](#)).

As we've seen in recent weeks, another serious flaw in our state ethics laws concerns the outside income of some legislators, the details of which are often shrouded in secrecy and can contribute to conflicts of interest. The first bill I reintroduced this year, [S.34](#), would impose the same restrictions on Albany lawmakers that apply to the U.S. Congress by sharply limiting outside income and banning fiduciary relationships, such as the practice of law. You can read more about my bill [here](#). The New York Times recently editorialized in support of my legislation, which you can read [here](#). Just yesterday, the Governor delivered a [strong address demanding ethics reforms](#) and as a result I'm hopeful that both houses of the legislature will support this proposal.

Below is news about some of my other work. As always, please contact me at 212-633-8052 or hoylman@nysenate.gov if you have any questions or comments or ideas about how I might be helpful.

All best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brad".

Brad Hoylman
State Senator
27th District



Starting the 2015-2016 Legislative Session

Last month I was honored to begin my second term as your State Senator. I was recently appointed to serve as the ranking Democratic member of the Senate's Environmental Conservation Committee and again as the ranking member of the Committee on Investigations and Government Operations. I will additionally serve as a member of the Judiciary, Health, Cultural Affairs and Tourism, Aging, and Local Government committees.

I'll be reintroducing many important bills over the coming weeks, including legislation to end the "secret income" of some lawmakers (as mentioned above), promote tax equity and fairness on ultra-luxury second homes, and ban the practice of so-called "conversion therapy" by therapists that claims to turn LGBT kids "straight," but in actuality amounts to child abuse and consumer fraud.

I'll also be introducing new bills this session in the areas of environmental protection, public health and more. I look forward to representing you in Albany over the next two years and will continue to fight to restore people's trust in government, protect our natural resources, and provide a voice for our state's most vulnerable citizens.

Funding for Runaway Homeless Youth

On January 16, I wrote to Governor Cuomo to request that he allocate \$4.75 million for Runaway and Homeless Youth in the Executive Budget to create new beds to address the 5,041 annual instances when children are turned away from shelters because of overcrowding. In the past 90 days alone, shelter providers across New York State have been forced to refuse entry to nearly 400 children because of the lack of beds. Help for our state's homeless youth is a moral imperative to protect innocent kids from exploitation of life on the street and over the next month I'll be working with advocates to address this oversight in our state budget. Please see my letter [here](#).



Calling Out Anti-Choice Lawmakers

As its first major legislative action of 2015, the Republican-controlled State Senate passed only a portion of the Women's Equality Agenda, falling short of the

Governor's ten-point plan and excluding a measure that would codify a woman's right to choose. The Senate is trumpeting these bills as a "comprehensive package" to protect women, but it failed to include the basic reproductive health protections as set forth more than forty years ago in *Roe v. Wade*.

The bills passed by the Senate included legislation to stop human trafficking; ensure equal pay for equal work; combat sexual harassment in the workplace; end gender discrimination in employment, housing and credit decisions; make reasonable work accommodations available for pregnant women; and provide stronger protections for domestic violence victims. These are all necessary measures that I support. However, as I stated on the Senate floor, I view the partial package as a cynical ploy by the Senate leadership to provide political cover to anti-choice lawmakers at a time when laws ensuring access to reproductive healthcare have come under attack across the country.

Criticizing Senate Republicans' "Back Door Vouchers" Proposal

Two weeks ago, I was proud to join many of my colleagues in opposing the Senate Republicans' proposed Education Income Investment Act, which would provide tax credits to wealthy donors and corporations supporting private and religious schools. This bill is not only a corporate giveaway, but it also undermines two longstanding American principles – free, universal public education and the separation of church and state. I'm very concerned this legislation would siphon off money from the State's general fund that should be used to support our public schools, which are still underfunded by more than \$5 billion. You can see my floor remarks on the bill at <http://bit.ly/1AYSnsQ>.

My Legislation to Close Charter School Loopholes

Over the past few months, many parents and community members were shocked to learn of a loophole that allows charter school operators to change the location of a new school application after it has been approved by State University of New York Charter Schools Committee, as long as the school site remains in the same borough. This loophole allowed a charter school, which had applied to School District 2 to change to School District 1 after approval – dodging public hearings in the affected community. This loophole as it currently exists is a detriment to our communities and I am introducing legislation this month to require charter schools to hold public hearings prior to their authorization by SUNY in the actual school district where they are seeking to locate. You can read about my efforts [here](#).

Pier 55

On January 12, I submitted testimony to the Hudson River Park Trust (HRPT) on the proposed "Pier 55" project in the footprint of the current Piers 54 and 56. I commend the Diller – von Furstenberg Family Foundation for their history-making philanthropic commitment to the arts and culture in New York City, and specifically, the West Side of Manhattan, by proposing to build this exciting and innovative new public space and performance venue on our waterfront. Despite this generosity, I'm concerned about

the process that guides such a significant modification to the park's original plan. As a result, I am examining ways to legally mandate a more inclusive, open process for any future proposals. In addition, I strongly encourage the HRPT to give great weight to the recommendations of Manhattan Community Board 2. I attended CB2's Parks and Waterfront Committee's review of this project, and thank CB2 members for their thoughtful consideration of this proposal. Please see my testimony [here](#).

Illegal Hotels Testimony

On January 20, I submitted testimony to the New York City Council regarding the explosive growth of illegal hotels, also known as “short-term rentals,” and their effect on our communities. I represent neighborhoods with the highest number of illegal hotels in New York City, including Hell’s Kitchen, Chelsea, the Village and the Lower East Side – areas which, according to data released by Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, accounted for one third of units booked and 55% of illegal hotel revenue from 2010-2014. Illegal hotels create a number of quality of life and safety concerns for neighboring residents while undermining our rule of law and diminishing our housing stock. Please see my testimony [here](#).



Testifying on the Cross Harbor Rail Freight Tunnel

On January 23, I testified before the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey and the Federal Highway Administration on the Cross Harbor Freight Program, a major plan to ease truck congestion and foster more efficient, cost-effective and environmentally sustainable movement of goods throughout our region. Currently, New York City is the only major city in the country that is not connected to the national freight rail network. It is clear that the best long-term strategy is to construct a double-stack, double-track rail tunnel known as the Cross Harbor Rail Freight Tunnel that will help get trucks off of our roads and make our neighborhoods safer. I thank my colleague, Congressman Jerrold Nadler, for his historic leadership advocating for the Cross Harbor Rail Freight Tunnel for nearly 30 years. Please see my testimony [here](#).



Unveiling the New Asser Levy Playground

Last week, I helped cut the ribbon on the new and improved Asser Levy Playground alongside my colleagues Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Council Member Dan Garodnick, State Senator Liz Krueger and Community Board 6 chair Sandro Sherrod. I commend Council Member Garodnick for securing over \$1 million to enhance the Playground, as well as Assembly Member Brian Kavanagh, CB6, the NYC Parks Department and the United Nations Development Corporation for their steadfast commitment to expanding this park. This vital open space is a wonderful addition to our community and will greatly enhance local residents' quality of life.

Keeping Damrosch Park Open for Our Community

On December 16, Supreme Court Justice Margaret Chan issued terms for a settlement agreement stating that New York Fashion Week must leave Lincoln Center and Damrosch Park after its final event in February 2015. Justice Chan affirmed that the city will not hold events in Damrosch Park that are similar in nature and size to Fashion Week, although the Big Apple Circus and smaller educational and cultural events will be allowed to continue. The agreement includes developing a new landscaping plan for the park. New York Fashion Week first came to Lincoln Center in 2010. For several months a year it spills into Damrosch Park, destroying plantings and denying residents access to this open space. I'm very pleased that Damrosch Park will remain open and accessible to the local community and thank the Committee for Environmentally Sound Development, Friends of Damrosch Park, and NYC Park Advocates for their advocacy on this matter.

Port Ambrose Comment Period Open

In 2013, Liberty Natural Gas LLC issued a proposal to build Port Ambrose, a liquefied natural gas (LNG) deepwater port facility located about 20 miles south of New York's shore. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) has been issued and the public comment period is now open. I have expressed concern that the public comment period has been rushed and, along with Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal, wrote a letter to the Maritime Administration and U.S. Coast Guard requesting they extend the period from 60 to 90 days and hold a hearing in Manhattan. Last week, we learned that in response to our request, the comment period will be extended to 90 days (until March 16, 2015) and another hearing will be added at a date and location to be determined. Last month, we submitted joint testimony opposing the project. For more information or to submit comments, visit 1.usa.gov/1zPc31V. Please see our testimony [here](#).

Google Computer Science Summer Institute for High School Seniors

This summer, Google will be hosting their eighth annual [Computer Science Summer Institute \(CSSI\)](#), a three-week introduction to computer science for graduating high school seniors with a passion for technology — especially students from historically underrepresented groups in the field. The day camp will be held in New York City from July 20 - August 7. The application deadline is March 5, 2015. Please visit www.google.com/students/cssi for more information and to apply.