



*A Newsletter Update from*  
**ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS**  
New York State Senator, 35th District  
Senate Democratic Leader

*From the Senator*



Dear Friend;

The latest corruption scandal to hit the State Senate is deeply disturbing. My Senate Democratic colleagues and I attempted to remove the Senate Majority Leader from his leadership post after his arrest on May 4th on federal corruption charges, but the Republicans would not let our motion nor resolution be heard. Our motion to remove the leader was resubmitted but before it was heard on May 11th, the Republicans chose a new leader. We understood that there is too much important business that remains to be done during this legislative session to be bogged down in distractions surrounding this latest corruption case. This is not about guilt or innocence - this is about the trust you, the public, have in your government. A trust that my Democratic colleagues

*In the Community*



**(White Plains - April 26th)** Stepping off at the March of Dimes Walk for Babies in White Plains, Senator Stewart-Cousins and her grandson Kyle joined hundreds of others including White Plains Mayor Tom Roach for the annual event. The March of Dimes is celebrating 75 years of research, breakthroughs and vaccines. Still, nearly half a billion babies are born too soon each year. The event raises money for the organization's efforts to prevent premature births. [View..](#)



**(Tarrytown - April 25th)** The Tarrytown YMCA hosted Healthy Kids Day as part of YMCA's national initiative to improve the health and well-being of children during

and I continue to work diligently at restoring so we can do the people's business on behalf of our constituents.

We began the state's new fiscal year with the 2015-16 State Budget in place. It's the fifth year in a row we've been able to accomplish this - an important step in restoring the public's faith in government to function properly. While I voted for a majority of the spending bills, I disagree and voted against some of the policies that were also included, such as a new teacher evaluation system that is more closely tied to test scores. I support a delayed implementation of this new system - we saw what happened with the rushed implementation of the Common Core. Overall, I believe we need a better solution to improve our public schools, involving all stakeholders and not demonizing teachers whose students may show up for class with a host of socio-economic challenges that impact on their ability to learn.

We were able to increase school aid substantially, by \$1.3 billion. Unfortunately, districts like Yonkers are still struggling following last year's discovery of a \$55 million accounting error. Because we fought hard to aid the school district, Yonkers will get \$262 million dollars this year, an increase of \$19 million, and the Democrat-led Assembly added on another \$20 million in capital funds and \$2 million in bullet aid. The Governor, working with the Yonkers state delegation and the city, was able to find a solution to fill half of the \$55 million gap. This year, we are discussing options once again.

Finally, as the leader of the Senate Democratic Conference, we are always interested in creating jobs and new economic opportunities for New York. That's why I joined Governor Cuomo for a trade mission to Cuba on April 20th and 21st, following President Obama's lifting of travel restrictions. We met our Cuban counterparts and came home with several agreements. Just recently, JetBlue announced it would start flying directly from New York to Havana.

I look forward to seeing you in the district this spring.

Best,

**Andrea Stewart-Cousins**

New York State Senator, 35th District  
Senate Democratic Leader

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the summer months. The annual event features fun activities for the whole family, informational booths about fitness and healthy living, as well as live music by local kids bands. A member of one of the bands, *Second Son* (pictured above with the Senator), met the Senator a few years back when he was just starting to learn how to play the trumpet. He was playing in public for donation, and the Senator witnessed kids poking fun of the amateur way he sounded, so she approached him, put \$5 in a hat, and encouraged him to keep playing. He told the Senator that it was a moment in his life he will always remember, and now is the band's leader. [View..](#)



**(Albany - April 29th)** An unveiling of a new glass sculpture titled "Seeds of Enlightenment" took place on Wednesday morning at the Empire State Plaza as part of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Re-dedication Ceremony. The original sculpture designed by artist Eric Hilton was dedicated in 2000 but badly damaged in July 2014. Corning Inc. and The Corning Museum of Glass decided to replace the memorial sculpture with a new one that bears the same title as the original. The Senator took part in the unveiling and said in a press release about the event, "I'm honored to join the Office of General Services, Corning Inc., and The Corning Museum of Glass for the re-dedication of this beautiful memorial honoring the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This memorial will serve as a constant reminder to the countless New Yorkers who pass through this plaza each day of Dr. King's commitment to justice and equality." [View..](#)

## Latest News

### Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins Selects Jane Aoyama-Martin, Executive Director of the Pace Women's Justice Center, as Senate Women of Distinction 2015 Nominee



**(Albany - May 5th)** Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins selected Jane Aoyama-Martin, the Executive Director of the Pace Women's Justice Center, as her nominee for the Women of Distinction Award in 2015. The recognition is given to outstanding women living and working in New York State, whose contributions have greatly enriched the quality of life in their communities and beyond. The award, sponsored by the New York State Senate, was bestowed during a ceremony in Albany on Tuesday.

“Victims of domestic violence and elder abuse know they can rely on Jane Aoyama-Martin and the Pace Women's Justice Center to provide assistance and support at one of the most difficult and stressful times in their lives,” said Senator Stewart-Cousins. “Jane is a kind, calm, even-keeled woman whose knowledge and passion for her work is clearly evident. The work she does provides the support and assistance that helps victims continue their lives with dignity and strength.” [More..](#)

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**(White Plains - April 7th)** New York's first Fathering Conference was held in White Plains on April 7th. Tony Porter, co-founder of A Call to Men, was the keynote speaker. Frank Williams of the White Plains Youth Bureau was the master of ceremonies and Bob Stien helped coordinate the event at the County Center. Some 300 participants spent time in various workshops and the Senator had the opportunity to address the group before a roundtable discussion on education. [View..](#)



**(White Plains - April 7th)** Senator Stewart-Cousins toured White Plains High School with School Superintendent Timothy Connors, Principal Ellen Doherty and White Plains Teacher's Association President Kerry Broderick, a biology teacher here. She had a chance to see a science lab, an art class and digital art display, and a workout room with donated equipment. An impressive school with 2,100 students! [View..](#)



**(New Rochelle - March 26th)** The New Rochelle YMCA's Lifesaver campaign continues as they seek to raise funds to

## Senator Stewart-Cousins on the New Teacher Evaluation System



(Albany - April 23rd) Senator Stewart-Cousins, who did not vote for the new teacher evaluation system policy included in the state budget, supports a delay in its implementation. "Rushing to implement a new teacher evaluation system would be misguided," she said in a statement released April 23rd. "We've been down this road before and we've seen where faulty and fast implementation of poorly conceived education changes leads. Demonizing teachers, over-testing students and rushing major reforms will not improve our education system, it will only cause more problems. Delaying the implementation of this new teacher evaluation system is the minimum step that should be taken." The Enacted Budget directs the State Education Department Commissioner to implement a statewide annual teacher and principal evaluation system by June 30, 2015. School districts must approve their plans and submit them to SED by November 15, 2015 in order to comply. [Click here to listen to the Senator's remarks on education before the budget vote.](#)

[Click here to learn more about what the 2015-16 State Budget means for the 35th District.](#)

[Click here to listen to the Senator's final remarks on the State Budget.](#)

make necessary repairs to the facility's pool. You can learn more about the campaign by [clicking here](#). Pictured with YMCA Executive Director Julie Gallanty, Bob Marrone of the New Rochelle Chamber of Commerce and morning personality on WVOX-AM, and other supporters. [View..](#)



(New Rochelle - March 26th) Senator Stewart-Cousins celebrated the 100th birthday of Bill Moye of New Rochelle. He's a World War II veteran that the Senator inducted into the State Senate's Veteran's Hall of Fame in 2014. The New Rochelle Housing Authority held a celebration. [View..](#)



(Albany - March 23rd) Leader Stewart-Cousins met with 5th graders from St. Anthony School in Yonkers who are studying government. The students were touring the State Capitol to learn more about how New York State government operates. [View..](#)

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## Senate Democratic Conference Calls for Passage of Critical Ethics Reform to Close the “LLC Loophole” Press Conference



(Albany - April 27th) Democratic Conference Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Senator Daniel Squadron, sponsor of the bill, held a news conference to push for legislation to tighten campaign finance regulations and close the LLC donation gap.

Representatives from organizations such as the Brennan Center and Citizens Action, Citizen Union, Common Cause, League of Women Voters, and NYPIRG also support the bill. Senator Stewart-Cousins said almost every day new allegations of abuse and corruption are leveled at state government. She applauded Senator Squadron for his leadership in filing a motion for the Elections Committee to consider bringing the bill to a vote on the Senate floor because "the Senate has a responsibility to combat the corruption crisis that is impacting state government," adding, "The only way we can begin to restore the public trust in state government is with action." [Click here to listen to the news conference.](#)

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## New York State Trade Mission to Cuba



**(Cuba - April 20th & 21st)** Senator Stewart-Cousins' recent trip to Cuba as a member of Governor Cuomo's trade mission on April 20th and 21st provided a unique opportunity to build new relationships and economic partnerships designed to benefit the people of New York and Cuba. President Obama opened the door by lifting travel restrictions to the Communist island nation located 90 miles from U.S. shores. She was proud to represent New York as the Senate Democratic Leader and the 35th District representative.

A group of business leaders traveled with them including the CEO of Tarrytown-based Regeneron, Leonard Schleifer. During the trade mission, they were able to meet with their Cuban counterparts to explore future opportunities. Two agreements were reached. The Roswell Park Cancer Center will work with Cuba's Center for Molecular Immunology on a lung cancer vaccine and Infor Global Studies will sell healthcare management software in Cuba. Other new ventures are under review.

During the whirlwind trip, the group toured Old Havana, and were taken back in time 50 years by the old American cars on the streets and toured the port where goods arrive. They also met with a group of SUNY students and SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher who discussed the exchange program. As the Governor said, "New York looks forward to the day when we welcome all Cubans with open arms. Muchas Gracias." [Catch a quick glimpse of the trip by viewing this video including meeting with the Cardinal, a tour of old Havana, and catching up with SUNY students and Chancellor Zimpher.](#)

