



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

*From the Senator*



Dear Friend;

The 2015 State Budget negotiations are heating up Albany. As the Leader of the 24 member Senate Democratic Conference, my colleagues and I have detailed our budget priorities, including an additional \$2 billion for education, increasing the minimum wage, creating more affordable housing and job opportunities through capital projects and increasing aid to local municipalities to help reduce property taxes.

As a former teacher, who attended public schools, sent her children to public schools, and have grandkids in public school, I am invested in public schools. We must work together to improve and

*In the Community*



**(Tarrytown - March 15th)** Senator Stewart-Cousins marched along Main Street in the Tarrytown-Sleepy Hollow St. Patrick's Day Parade. [View..](#)



**(Hastings-on-Hudson - March 15th)** The Senator presenting a proclamation to Zachary Armacost at the Troop 2 Eagle Scout Court of Honor Ceremony recognizing his achievements. [View..](#)

reform our education system, so that the next generation of New Yorkers has the skills and opportunities they need and deserve. We do not agree with the Executive Budget proposal linking critical school funding to education reforms. Our students deserve better.

The Senate Democratic Conference that I lead has also introduced important initiatives aimed at restoring trust in government, creating more jobs and economic opportunities, and making significant investments in our infrastructure, not just our highways and bridges but also our schools. The state has a unique opportunity this year, with a windfall of \$5.1 billion from housing settlements, including allocating funding for the new Tappan Zee Bridge. I hope you will take the time to read more about our Fair New York Plan and Clean Up Albany proposal detailed below.

Thank you for your continued support.

Best,

**Andrea Stewart-Cousins**  
New York State Senator, 35th District  
Senate Democratic Leader

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## *Latest News*

### **Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins Releases 2015-16 State Budget Priorities**

**(Albany - March 18th)** Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and her Senate colleagues have released their 2015-16 State Budget priorities. The priorities include: adding another \$2 billion in funding for education; increasing the minimum wage; creating more affordable housing and job opportunities through capital projects; increasing aid to local municipalities to help reduce property taxes; increased funding for EPIC, the prescription drug plan for seniors, and for kinship care. The list of priorities were included in a budget letter to the republican Senate Majority Leader. The Conference has also issued requests for use of the \$5.1 billion in settlement funds available for one-time investments this year, including \$275 million in zero interest loans for the Tappan Zee Bridge replacement project. [More..](#)

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**(Hastings-on-Hudson - March 14th)** At the NAACP's ACT-SO Breakfast in Hastings, Senator Stewart-Cousins helped honor former County Legislator Lois Bronz, 100 year old civil rights pioneer Dr. Olivia Hooker, former NAACP Leader and WestCOP (Westchester Community Opportunities Program) Executive Director Winston Ross and County Legislator Lyndon Williams. [View..](#)



**(Albany - March 9th)** The Leader attended the Housing rally where members from the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition gathered to emphasize the importance of housing in New York State. In her address to the crowd, the Leader recollected memories of her youth growing up in affordable housing, remembering it as always being "a place that was safe, secure, and consistent." where "all of the injustices that plagued the world outside were left at the door." [View..](#)



**(Tarrytown - March 6th)** The Senator supporting the Yonkers Police Department at the PBA dinner honoring Yonkers PAL Boxing legend Sal Corrente, a retired police officer, and Vincent "Zip" Green, who have helped improve the lives of city kids through their teaching and mentoring. [View..](#)

## Senator Stewart-Cousins Calls for a More Inclusive State Budget Negotiation Process at the Westchester Women's Agenda Breakfast



**(White Plains - March 13th)** While attending the Westchester Women's Agenda breakfast meeting, Senator Stewart-Cousins discussed the budget negotiation process, and how the Governor has opened the door beyond the traditional 'three men in a room' this year, when he invited in a fourth man to join himself, the Senate Majority Leader and the Assembly Speaker. The reality is, she explained, her Democratic Conference represents 8 million New Yorkers yet she, the first female legislative leader in New York State history, has no seat at the table where the state's \$142 billion budget is negotiated. The Senator told the women that if they want the issues they care about to be included in the state budget, they need to speak up. The Westchester Women's Agenda agreed that more voices should be heard, and they initiated a campaign entitled #MakeRoomNYS. If you agree, [click here to learn more about the WWA campaign](#). [There is also a petition](#).

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## Civil Rights Pioneer & Centenarian Dr. Olivia Hooker of Greenburgh Honored with Senate Resolution During Black History Month



**(Albany - February 25th)** Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins met with Dr. Marsha Gordon, the President/CEO of the Business Council of Westchester and her members, to discuss their legislative priorities this Senate session. [View..](#)



**(Yonkers - February 27th)** Celebrating Dominican Independence Day with a flag raising at Yonkers City Hall hosted by the Dominican Cultural Association. [View..](#)



**(Yonkers - February 24th)** During Black History Month, Senator Stewart-Cousins, a former teacher, went back into the classroom at Lincoln High School in Yonkers to speak to students. She discussed the landmark Supreme Court case, Brown vs. Board of Education, that ended racial segregation in schools. She also discussed the federal court ruling that required Yonkers to integrate its housing and schools. And the importance of participating in democracy, including exercising the right to vote. [View..](#)



**(Greenburgh - February 21st)** Senator Stewart-Cousins recognized the extraordinary life and accomplishments of civil rights pioneer, the 100 year old Dr. Olivia Hooker of Greenburgh. A survivor of the 1921 race riot in Tulsa, Oklahoma, she would decades later fight for reparations for the destruction of what was referred to as Black Wall Street. She is the first African-American female to serve in the United States Coast Guard during World War II. She became a psychologist at a time when few women of color did. The Senator proudly gave her a copy of the Senate resolution in her honor that she introduced. [View..](#)

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## Honoring Patrick Quinn of Yonkers for Creating Awareness about ALS and the Ice Bucket Challenge



**(White Plains - February 11th)** Senator Stewart-Cousins spoke about the importance of community service and giving back at the press conference celebrating Volunteer New York's 65th Anniversary. [View..](#)

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### *Upcoming Events*

#### **Demystifying MEDICARE and Healthcare Coverage for Seniors**



This presentation of the library system's Westchester Seniors Out Speaking is perfect for anyone trying to navigate their way through our complicated healthcare system for older adults. It will help those who already have Medicare, as well as people soon to be 65, planning their retirement, or assisting relatives and friends with their medical decisions and paperwork.

#### **Greenburgh**

Wednesday, May 6th  
6:15PM - 9:00PM  
TDY Community Center  
32 Manhattan Avenue  
[View..](#)

#### **New Rochelle**

Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>  
1:00PM – 4:00PM  
New Rochelle Library



**(Albany - March 3rd)** The state delegation that represents Yonkers, Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senator George Latimer, Assembly Member Shelley Mayer and Assembly Member Gary Pretlow, honored Yonkers native Patrick Quinn for raising awareness about ALS and the Ice Bucket Challenge. Quinn and a friend, Peter Frates of Boston, are credited with co-creating the Ice Bucket Challenge for ALS, that in 2014, spread like wildfire on social media. [More..](#)

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## Senate Democrats Introduce "Fair New York" Plan

**(Albany - February 19th)** Senate Democrats introduced their Fair New York Plan for the \$5.1 billion in housing settlement funds. The plan focuses on stimulating future economic growth by creating good jobs and making New York a more affordable place to live and do business by making significant one-time investments in affordable housing, transportation and education infrastructure, environmental protections and improvements and a significant tax relief rebate for low-wage workers.” [More..](#)

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## "Clean Up Albany" Initiative Launched - Again - By Senate Dems

1 Library Plaza  
[View..](#)

### **Tarrytown**

Monday, April 4<sup>th</sup>  
6:00PM – 8:45PM  
Warner Library  
121 North Broadway  
[View..](#)

### **Yonkers**

Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>  
6:00PM – 8:45PM  
Will Library  
1500 Central Park Avenue  
[View..](#)

### **White Plains**

Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup>  
6:00PM – 8:45PM  
White Plains Library  
100 Martine Avenue  
[View..](#)

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## Contact Information

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### **Connect:**

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**(Albany - February 9th)** The Senate Democratic Conference unveiled a major legislative package to deal with the ongoing ethics crisis in State Government. This package of groundbreaking bills will cap legislators' outside incomes, end the LLC loophole, bar elected officials from using campaign funds for criminal defense and personal use and end the practice of taxpayer funded reimbursements of legal fees. The Senate Democrats also introduced measures to strip corrupt officials of taxpayer funded pensions and reform how campaigns are funded. Unfortunately, the Senate Republican Majority has consistently blocked all meaningful ethics reforms initiatives. [More..](#)