



FELDER FOCUS



CHAIRMAN
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS
REVIEW COMMISSION

COMMITTEE MEMBER
BUDGET AND REVENUE
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
COMMERCE, ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND
SMALL BUSINESS

DOMESTIC ANIMAL WELFARE
SOCIAL SERVICES

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



SIMCHA FELDER
Senator, 17th District

ALBANY OFFICE:
ROOM 504
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247
(518) 455-2754 • FAX: (518) 426-6931

FLATBUSH OFFICE:
1412 AVENUE J, SUITE 2E
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11230
(718) 253-2015 • FAX: (718) 253-2030

BOROUGH PARK OFFICE:
4623 16TH AVENUE
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11204
(718) 484-3216 • FAX: (718) 484-3218

E-MAIL ADDRESS:
FELDER@NYSenate.GOV

Dear Fellow New Yorker,

We are searching for words of comfort to ease your pain, but words inevitably fall short. Losing a loved one is always so hard. Our inability to ease the suffering of your personal and painful loss, under these challenging circumstances, leaves us all deeply saddened. Please know that your community mourns with you.

Profound experiences of loss and grief often compel us to think back with regret on the missed opportunities. The days we didn't take time to talk...The ways we wanted to show we care...The times we hoped to share- if only we had more time. The swell of emotion stirred up in even the toughest New Yorkers is a strong reminder that what we share in common is the best part of humanity. As we travel the road to recovery together, we will never regret the moments that we pause to offer a smile, a kind word, or a hand, to a friend or neighbor in need.

During the pandemic, there is a lot of focus on the numbers, but people are so much more than just numbers. Their stories deserve to be recounted, their hopes and dreams remembered. **I look forward to a day in the near future (to be announced) when we can safely gather for a Celebration of Life to share our stories of loved ones.** I hope you will all join me to honor their memory by sharing your memories with us. Our community grows stronger when we know what makes each individual so special and so loved.

It is my deepest hope that we continue to support each other with care, concern, respect and tolerance and move forward together with peace in our hearts. G-d grant us all comfort, strength and success.

I wish you all health and happiness.

Sincerely,

Supporting Seniors



See story on page 8

Fighting for Education



See story on page 3

Law and Order



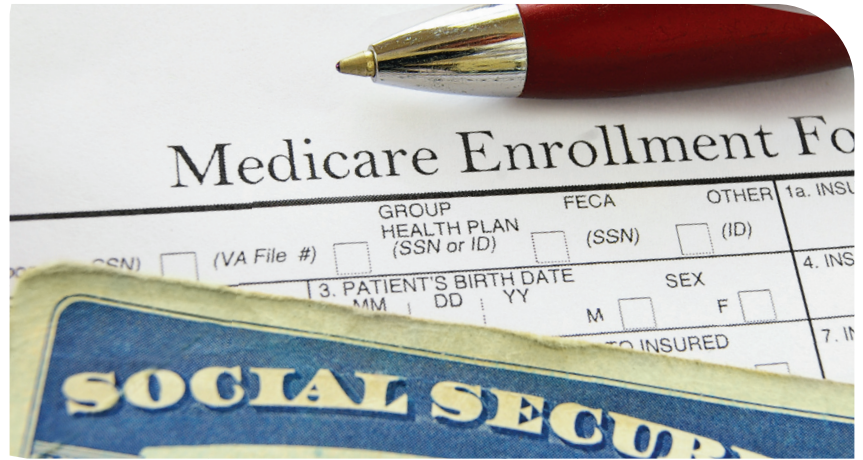
See story on pages 6-7



We take pride in helping our constituents resolve quality of life issues. Here we share some of our recent success stories.

MediCARE Emergency

At 75 years young, Mrs. N. still worked at a large firm and had no need to apply for Medicare. Unfortunately, a sudden adverse health condition left her in need of special care. The long-term facility her doctors recommended only accepted Medicare. Her children quickly applied on her behalf and then called my office requesting help expediting the approval. Within 24 hours of contacting the Social Security Administration, their mother was being transferred for appropriate care. We wish her a full and speedy recovery.



It's Impossible!

On Monday, June 29 a fast-moving storm blew through the region leaving behind a mess of toppled trees and debris. On Wednesday, Mrs. S. called for help. An enormous tree that had uprooted in the storm was laying across her sidewalk. It made access into or out of her home difficult for anyone, but impossible for her wheelchair-bound husband. She was worried. In case of an emergency, how would her husband get out? We called NYC Parks Department immediately and they arrived to remove the tree that same afternoon. Thank you, Brooklyn Borough Parks Commissioner Marty Maher, for coming to the rescue!



Life Support

Mrs. Q's husband was in the hospital fighting for his life when she called my office. The family was doing their best to cope through a trying time and she was relieved to learn that her husband qualified for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance. Mrs. Q filed the application to help keep the family afloat. Then the Department of Labor responded with a request for her husband's signature. He was hospitalized, isolated and ventilated; there was no way to provide his signature and desperately needed assistance was stuck in bureaucratic red tape. I am thankful that DOL Commissioner Reardon immediately resolved the issue when we brought it to her attention.



Felder Fights For Education

“I fought at every level to prioritize education and to give every student the option of learning safely in a classroom with their teachers and classmates. Our students are our future and their education is essential, so I will always fight to support every student’s right to an appropriate education.”

– Senator Felder

The COVID-19 crisis compelled many difficult measures. However, for many children and their parents, remote learning was at the fore, costing students a year of learning—even with intensive adult participation. It was appalling to find education slated for Phase 4 of New York’s reopening plan. So, I fought at every level to ensure that every child

Felder Wins For Education

“All our schoolchildren are struggling, but none more so than special needs students, who are bearing the greatest burden for school closures. The current system in place for special needs students is worse than neglectful and it needs to be addressed immediately.”

– Senators’ joint letter to Chancellor Carranza

Remote learning was nearly impossible for many students with severe or multiple disabilities. As a result, calls from parents of special needs students were flooding my office. In response, I wrote to Chancellor Carranza at NYC Department of Education (DOE). Together with my colleagues, Senators Benjamin, Gounardes, Kavanagh and Persaud, we urged him to address the serious issues they faced. Met with little response from DOE, I brought the issue to the Governor, who issued an Executive Order barely two weeks later that empowered school districts to authorize in-person special education.



and parent who wants it has the option of safely returning to learn in classrooms with teachers and classmates this year.

Non-public schools in our district faced another challenge. For families that avoid internet technology by choice, remote learning is exceedingly difficult to maintain and lacks even the basic engagement made possible through Zoom (etc.). Many administrators, students, and parents were ready to get back to school, but their hands were tied. I worked with the Governor to ensure that thousands of private school students could get back to school safely, as soon as possible, and on August 7, all schools with approved safety plans were authorized to provide in-person education for the upcoming school year.

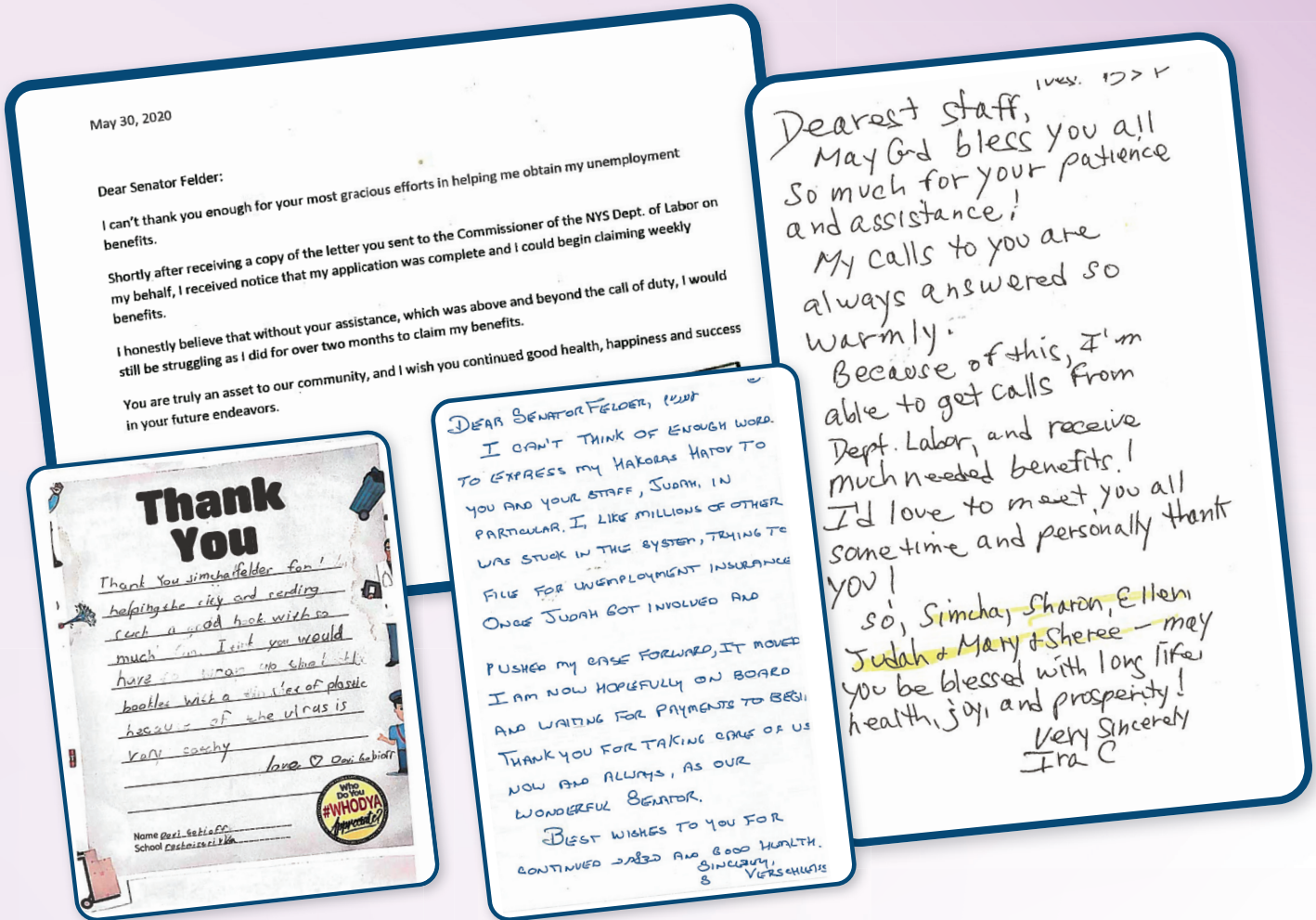
While thankful that the Governor heard the pleas of tens of thousands of our special needs students, there were looming concerns. The language in both the Executive Order and the NYS Department of Health Guidance gave school districts the **option** to offer in-person special education services.

Without language requiring school districts to provide in-person special education services, districts like NYC Department of Education (DOE) may fail to do so.

I immediately brought these concerns to NYS Department of Health Commissioner Zucker. Responding quickly to the needs of NYC’s 25,000 District 75 students and thousands more in private schools, DOH issued new guidance. The update authorized independent special education schools with safety protocols in place to resume in-person services immediately for the summer session and compelled NYC DOE to take action.

Constituent Services

"6 days a week, every New Yorker who called my office found a live person to talk to, ready to listen and assist." – Senator Felder



Just as unprecedented numbers of hardworking New Yorkers found themselves in uncharted territory, the very same circumstances made it nearly impossible to find help and access information. My office remained a consistent, reliable and compassionate source of help to tens of thousands of people in need.

As we work toward a strong and steady recovery, my commitment to you is stronger than ever. We are pleased that we can once again offer in-person assistance on Tuesdays and Thursdays at our Boro Park location, 4623 16th Avenue, by appointment only. Please call 718-253-2015 (Flatbush) or 718-484-3216 (Boro Park), Monday-Friday, 9AM–5PM, for appointments or assistance.

Do you have unclaimed funds?

NYS has \$15 billion waiting to be reclaimed, and some of it may be yours. An unclaimed funds representative will be available through my office to assist your search and claim by phone.

What: Unclaimed Funds Phone Event **Date:** Wednesday, November 4

Time: 10AM to 3PM, By Appointment Only **Where:** Over the phone from any location (consider connectivity)

BY THE NUMBERS



177

FREE Health Screenings



2,183

Resolved Department of Labor Unemployment Cases



80,624

COVID Updates & Resources



15,000

Masks Distributed



11,603

Live Responses to Constituent Calls



651

Referrals for Food Assistance



\$112,020

Returned Unclaimed Funds



\$30,000

Heartshare Grants



429

Senior Citizens Programs (Application Assistance)

NEW YORK TIMES

Jul 15, 2020

The Wave of Rising Gun Violence in NYC

NEW YORK POST

July 28, 2020

Apparent junkies turn stretch of Midtown into a shooting gallery

NEW YORK TIMES

June 24, 2020

New York City Sees Its Most Violent Start to Summer Since 1996.

NEW YORK POST

August 16, 2020

76 injured, 14 killed by gunfire this week as NYC shootings skyrocket

Fox News

July 11, 2020

NYC daylight shootings from May to July more than doubled in 2020, data shows

Law and Order

Op-Ed by Senator Simcha Felder

From my days in the City Council, I have been, and remain, a staunch believer that we are all safer when police have the tools and support they need to be out on the streets every day protecting us from terrorists, gang violence and crime. I first voiced concern at the rhetoric surrounding the outlaw of stop and frisk and the rejection of Broken Windows policing. I begged for the return of sanity to a system bent on coddling criminals but handcuffing police.

It was too easy for the Administration to wave away the resurgence of graffiti and vagrancy as a minor nuisance. As quality of life crimes swelled and festered, more voices joined in sounding the alarm. When quality-of-life-crime reached noxious levels and New Yorkers no longer felt as safe as they once did on the streets and in the subways, the writing was already on the wall. Lawlessness spread like a virus infecting the bedrock of security we all rely on, until no one could deny that destruction, terror and devastation are the result of wanton violence and rampant crime left unchecked.

There is no doubt that the hard-won achievements of the 80s and 90s made New York City safer. But just as there is no perfect person, there is no perfect organization. Dissatisfied with weeding out the bad cops,

we bypassed supportive solutions, withheld compassion, and cancelled law enforcement and authority completely. So, we watched as they repeatedly constrained policing. We watched as they vilified and criticized law enforcement. We watched nasty epithets hurled at police officers become commonplace. Then we watched that give way to dangerous projectiles - we are all eyewitnesses to the death of Law and Order.

"By undermining the only thing that stands between law-abiding citizens and violent crime, we have become our own worst enemy."

In this topsy-turvy world, troublemakers and criminals call the shots, and Police Officers are expected to fall in line, abandon their post, or endure public harassment and degradation. By undermining the only thing standing between law-abiding citizens and violent crime, we have become our own worst enemy.

The constant barrage of blame and condemnation that poisons the collective consciousness must end. Members of the NYPD are mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, friends and neighbors. They drop their kids off at school. They hug their loved ones, promising to be back later. They are people like you and me. Except that unlike you and me, they sign up for perilous work in unpredictable situations. Knowing that daily, they will face life-threatening situations and life-altering decisions. Head-on, they confront the worst behavior of humankind, so that everyday New Yorkers like me and you, won't have to. Finding a way to support them in that endeavor seems more than reasonable. Our success and theirs will be evident in crime prevention and the return of law and order.

If you have ever called 911 and seen our men and women in blue rush to the rescue, support our cops. If you live with hope that you will never again fall victim to crime, support the cops. If you never personally experienced a traumatic crime, thank a cop. Their job makes our neighborhoods safer. Our families safer. Us safer.

As New York's Finest head out on their next tour, I hope they know with certainty that we value their work, have faith in their ability to make us proud, and wish them safe return.

THANK A COP!



Thank you, Chief Scholl

Deputy Chief Charles Scholl is a 41-year veteran of the NYPD. Chief Scholl has spent his entire career patrolling the streets of Brooklyn, where he oversaw a massive reduction in crime and quality of life violations – earned the status of being promoted twice while commanding the same precinct – and has received over 60 departmental recognitions. He is a shining example of what a Police Officer is and should be.



Thank you, Chief Stephenson

Over 25 years, Deputy Chief Ruel Stephenson has climbed the ranks of the NYPD with hard work, heart and dedication. Deputy Chief Stephenson shares a strong and genuine bond with the communities in his command. He has demonstrated a commitment to reducing crime and improving quality of life, while maintaining respect and trust. He is an outstanding officer and a real mensch. I welcome the opportunity to work with him.

“If you have ever called 911 and seen our men and women in blue rush to the rescue, *SUPPORT OUR COPS.*”

“If you hope that you will never be victimized, *SUPPORT OUR COPS.*”

“If you never experienced a traumatic crime, *THANK OUR COPS.*”

“Their work makes our neighborhoods *SAFER.* Our families *SAFER.* *US SAFER.*”

“Safety and security issues are fraught with stress and fear. It’s important to take the time to strengthen the relationships you rely on and appreciate.”

– Senator Simcha Felder



Senator Felder recently met with local members of the NYPD to express his support and the support of the community.

Top Row, L-R: Captain Crystal Suarez, XO 61 Pct.; Captain Gaby Celiba, CO 61 Pct.; Inspector David Wall, CO 70 Pct.; Chief Chuck Scholl, XO PBBS; Senator Simcha Felder; Deputy Chief Ruel Stephenson, XO Patrol Borough Brooklyn South; Captain Richie Taylor, CO Community Affairs Outreach; Lt. Ira Jablonski, Community Affairs; Police Officer Josue Ortiz, NCO 70 Pct.

Bottom Row, L-R: Det. Scott Nuzzi, 70 Pct; Police Officer Thomas Kukla, 66 Pct; Sgt. Ralph Postiglione, 66 Pct; Det. Sam Shaya, 61 Pct; Police Officer Lauren Au, 61 Pct.

AARP'S STATE LEGISLATORS FORUM

Brooklyn's State lawmakers discuss legislation and policies affecting seniors

"We start with the foundation that we must do everything humanly possible to help our Seniors."

– Senator Simcha Felder



Felder on prescription drug prices:

I believe very strongly that the most critical strategy is to increase competition, and if that's done, it will inherently reduce the cost of drugs, which is such an important issue for our seniors. We have legislation in the Senate right now that would allow us to import drugs from Canada at a much more reasonable price. Because there is nothing that takes the place of good competition. So I'm pleased that recently the President issued an Executive Order to lower drug prices the same way, by buying drugs from outside the United States where prices are much cheaper. The proof is that Big Pharma, the big companies, came out fighting against it immediately. So, if you're not sure whether it's a good idea, the fact that they are very, very opposed to it, and have been doing everything possible to stop it, is telling us something

Watch it: <https://www.cityandstateny.com/events/aarp-ny-brooklyn-virtual-state-legislative-forum>.



FELDER LEADS HEARING ON ISOLATION & VISITATION POLICIES

The hearings my colleagues and I held were very revealing. It is clear to me that the guidance issued to hospitals and nursing homes, while well-intentioned, had a direct and negative impact on patients, and eliminating the harmful effects of isolation policies must be our top priority. At the height of the crisis, I introduced the Volunteer Compassionate Care Bill to ensure patients had someone looking out for them. The Governor later instated the program, but it is not enough. The Department of Health must commit to upholding family members' human right to safely care and advocate for their hospitalized loved ones.

Anyone who has ever had a family member in an emergency room, or nursing home, knows that nothing can take the place of a family member or trusted friend. I have family members with frequent mileage in both places. I have not had one experience where I could look back and say, "She didn't need somebody from the family there; He would have been just fine if he were alone." The testimony I heard indicates that this experience is universal and pervasive, and the pandemic exacerbated the consequences. *The isolation and visitation policies directly contributed to the deaths of thousands of people in New York.* If medical staff can utilize proper PPE protocol to stay safe, then we can train a family member to use those same safety measures for daily visits.



Hearing on Covid -19 Isolation/Visitation Policies & Mortality in Hospitals & Nursing Homes

Sen. Felder, Chair, Administrative Regulations Review Commission (top, second from R), Sen. Rivera, Chair, Standing Committee on Health (top, L), Sen. Skoufis, Chair, Standing Committee on Investigations & Government Operations (top, second from L), Dr. Howard Zucker, Commissioner, NYS Department of Health (top, R), Standing Members of the NYS Assembly

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Felder: "NY Drivers Deserve to Pay the Fine - Not Do Time"

"In NYC, where everyone is over-taxed, over-ticketed and over-fined, living paycheck to paycheck is not a crime, but driving with a suspended license is! Crushing surcharges, fees and fines used to trap people in financial quicksand - putting them at risk of grave consequences. Giving drivers the option of paying off their fines in a reasonable way is just good, common sense."

S.5348 (sent to the Governor for his signature) does away with the state's \$70 suspension lift fee. To restore driving privileges under current law, drivers must pay that fee on every suspension. It requires the Department of Motor Vehicles to send drivers reminders of upcoming court dates and offer affordable payment plans, limiting payments to two percent of net monthly income. It also allows courts to reduce or totally waive both fines and fees when appropriate.



Felder Bill Creates Crohn's & Colitis ID Card

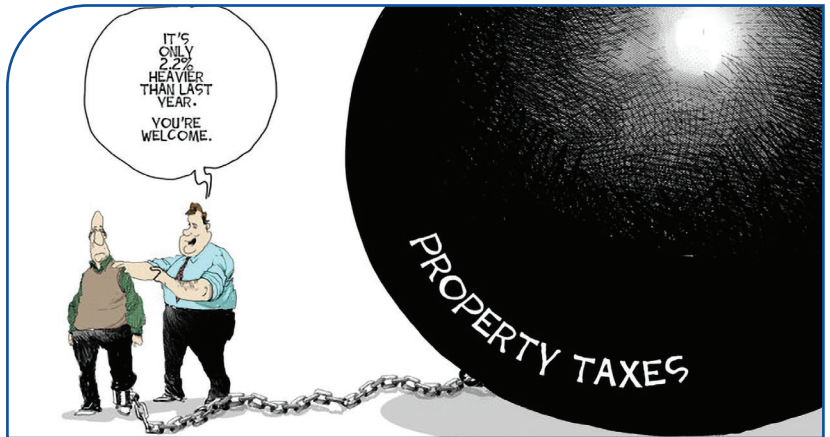
"A common sense way to educate business employees of their responsibilities under the Crohn's and Colitis Fairness Act, and prevent the need to explain or argue over qualifying conditions. Now, if a business doesn't comply, there is now a clear avenue for filing complaints."

S.6226 and S.7211 (both passed the Senate unanimously) require the NYS Health Department to offer an identification card to people with qualifying diseases that verifies their condition and explains their rights under the Crohn's and Colitis Fairness Act. Additionally, it helps those affected by giving State and local Consumer Protection Departments the power and duty to address violations of the Crohn's and Colitis Fairness Act.



Felder Co-Sponsors Property Tax Transparency Bill

"New Yorkers deserve to be informed when and how their property taxes increase dramatically, and they have a right to know where in the budget their money is being spent. People have been scratching their heads over the property tax system for years. With homeowners' property tax bills steadily climbing, it's time to shed some light on what's going on."



FELDER SUPPORTS LOCAL BUSINESSES

As businesses come back from the shutdown, commerce is slowly returning, but challenges remain. The responsibility for safety must be balanced by an equal responsibility to support small businesses with the resources they need. I've been speaking with business owners across the district to hear directly from them about the challenges and personal experience of incorporating distancing, sanitizing, and outdoor or online services.

Local business owners are our family, friends and neighbors. They are doing their best to serve us, and to keep our communities thriving, we must sustain them. Doing our part is simple - *shop local*.



SHOP LOCAL SAVE LIVES



Our local stores have been deeply wounded by the crisis.

Help them survive.

Insert business contact information here



Senator
Simcha
Felder

Coronavirus Resources

Federal Disaster Loan Assistance:

Provides low-interest loans to businesses of all sizes and private non-profit organizations:

<https://www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources>

NYC Small Businesses Relief:

<https://www1.nyc.gov/nycbusiness/article/nyc-employee-retention-grant-program>

U.S. Department of Labor - COVID-19 issues facing employees and employers:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic>

For updated information on health and resources:

Federal <https://www.coronavirus.gov/>

NY State <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>

NYC <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-main.page>

NYS Department of Health Coronavirus Hotline:

888-364-3065

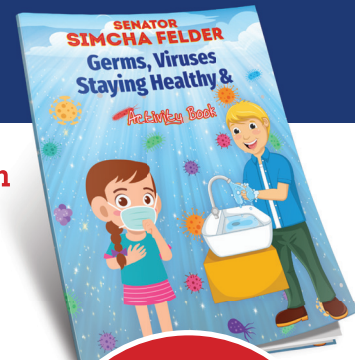
NYS COVID-19 Emotional Support Line:

844-863-9314

Unemployment Benefits: Apply Online at www.labor.ny.gov or Phone: 888-209-8124

NYS Family Leave: [https://paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/ if-you-are-quarantined-yourself](https://paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/if-you-are-quarantined-yourself)

NYC Property Tax and Interest Deferral (PT AID): <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/finance/taxes/pt-aid.page>



To request our Germs, Viruses and Staying Healthy activity booklet or others like it, please call, 718-253-2015.

To join our email list and receive important updates and helpful resources as they become available, email Felder@NYSenate.gov or log on to www.NYSenate.gov/find_yoursenator

Felder's 2020 Woman of Distinction

Rizy Horowitz is a beacon of hope to thousands of Holocaust survivors. The proud daughter of a survivor, Mrs. Horowitz has devoted the last 25 years to caring for the largest community of Holocaust survivors in the Nation.

In 1995, she spearheaded the effort to assist survivors in obtaining reparations from the Claims Conference, a lengthy, challenging process. Steely determination produced positive results for over 5,000 survivors.

Together with Mrs. Frumy Cizner and the exceptional staff at Nachas, the dynamic pair created The Holocaust Survivor Program, providing social connectivity, nutritious meals, physical fitness and intellectual stimulation. During the current crisis, the Program continued to provide weekly packaged meals, and programming continued via teleconferencing.

“For her longstanding commitment to caring for our Holocaust survivors, for nurturing not only their physical and emotional needs, but infusing their lives with joy and contentment, it is my pleasure to present 2020's prestigious Women of Distinction Award to Mrs. Rizy Horowitz.”



Felder Urges Safety for Special Customers



Does Your Household Have Life Support Equipment? An important reminder to please call Con-Ed so they can take extra care in case of a power problem or contact you in case of emergency. Even if electric is included in your rent and you don't receive a Con-Ed bill, if you or a member of your household use life support equipment or have an emergency medical condition that could be affected by a power outage, Con-Ed needs to know.

Examples of life support equipment include respirators, dialysis equipment (kidney machine), and heart monitors.

To Register Life Support Equipment with Con-Ed, call 1-877-582-6633.

Felder Warns: BEWARE OF SCAMS

Senior citizens, their friends, and family should be aware that scams are a common threat. Scammers who impersonate reputable companies, government agencies or personal acquaintances use fake emails, phone calls, text messages, and social media messages to steal personal information or extort money.

Please save the important tips for avoiding and reporting fraud printed on the back of this page.

Senator Felder's Personal Account -

When the phone rang, late on a recent Friday night, it was an unusual occurrence. I suspected a wrong number as I glanced at the caller ID, still half-asleep. When I read HATZALAH (volunteer ambulance organization), I was suddenly wide-awake. Concern for the well-being of my family washed over me and that was all the proof I needed of a life-threatening situation. I braced for news of a health emergency and answered the phone. Instead, a caller from somewhere overseas was ominously warning me that I owed money to Con-Ed and could only avoid a shutoff by making a credit card payment right now. I hung up immediately, but sometimes people don't. Please make sure your loved ones know that this can happen to anyone, because it often ends badly for people who don't.





Senator Simcha Felder
1412 Avenue J, Suite 2E
Brooklyn, NY 11230

PRSRT STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
New York Senate

Avoid Becoming a Victim of Fraud and Scams:

- **DO NOT TRUST** unexpected calls or solicitations and never provide personal information
- **BE CAUTIOUS** with your personal information including Medicare/Medicaid numbers and banking information
- **ALWAYS CONFIRM** who you are talking to by calling the agency yourself
- **REMEMBER**, you can request it in writing
- **IGNORE SOCIAL MEDIA OFFERS** for coronavirus treatments or testing
- **DO NOT CLICK** links or download attachments in suspicious emails



If You Suspect Fraud, Report it Immediately:

- **Federal Trade Commission (FTC):**
Call 877-FTC-HELP or ftc.gov/complaint
(Protects consumers from unfair/deceptive practices in the marketplace)
- **National Center for Disaster Fraud:**
Call 866-720-5721 or disaster@leo.gov
(Department of Justice Criminal Division for COVID-19 Scams)
- **Report email claiming to be from the IRS:**
Email: phishing@irs.gov
- **IRS Scam monetary losses:**
Call 800-366-4484 or www.tigta.gov
(Treasury Inspector General Administration)
- **Report Elder Fraud:**
www.justice.gov/elderjustice/roadmap
(Department of Justice Consumer Fraud Task Force)