



Assemblymember

**SHELLEY
MAYER**

Fall 2013

Community Newsletter

Dear Neighbor:

I have had the honor of serving the residents of the 90th Assembly District for over a year now. It has been a pleasure attending events important to my constituents, listening to your concerns, and advocating for and representing you in Albany. Please continue to reach out to me and my staff if we can be of assistance to you or you have an event you would like to share.

Warmly,

Shelley Mayer

BUILDING A STATEWIDE FLOOD PREPARATION STRATEGY

Based upon my experiences with Hurricane Sandy in Yonkers, as well as ongoing flood concerns of Yonkers residents, together with many of my colleagues, I sponsored a bill that responded to constituent complaints about the dearth of state coordination and communication on flood mitigation. The bill passed the state Assembly, but has not yet passed the Senate.

A.6537A establishes a “flood mitigation and flood prevention task force” within the Department of Environmental Conservation, which would include representatives of state agencies and local government officials. The task force would identify regions most affected by flooding, prioritize mitigation efforts, identify sources of funding, and support additional research on mitigation efforts. The task force must consider inland, as well as coastal flooding. It would need to report back to the governor and legislature by December 31, 2015.

The recent report issued by the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force underscores the need to increase coordination among agencies and levels of government. The legislation I have introduced will provide the structure for just such communication and coordination. I am optimistic the Senate will pass this bill, and the Governor will sign it into law.

PROTECTING RENT-REGULATED TENANTS

Unfortunately, New York’s current rent stabilization law allows landlords to charge additional rent for major capital improvements (MCI) long after they have been paid for. Under current law, owners can *permanently* increase rent in order to re-coup the cost of a building-wide improvement or to replace a building system. While it might be reasonable to allow owners to pass a portion of these costs of major improvements along to tenants, once the cost of the improvement has been recovered, tenants’ rents should return to their prior rates. I am pleased that I co-sponsored, and the Assembly passed, legislation that would require that rent surcharges authorized for major capital improvements (MCI) end when the cost of the improvement has been recovered (A.5373/O’Donnell). I am hopeful the Senate will take up this legislation in the coming session, the Governor will sign it, and tenants will finally be free of this unfair and irrational burden.

FIGHTING FOR ANOTHER JUDGE IN THE YONKERS CITY COURT

I was pleased to help pass a bi-partisan bill (A.6552/S.4043) that will provide for an additional judge to the Yonkers City Court, securing the first legislative increase for Yonkers in more than two decades. The bill is now before Governor Andrew Cuomo, and I urge him to sign it into law. This “program bill,” prepared by the New York State Office of Court Administration (OCA), will provide for an additional Yonkers City Court Judge beginning service January 1, 2015. The cost of the additional judge will be supported by the OCA, not by the City of Yonkers.

Yonkers has not received a legislative increase to its number of judges since 1990, while all other large cities in New York have received at least one increase to its judicial resources since 2000.

The Yonkers City Court has the authority to hear both criminal and non-criminal cases within Yonkers. In 2011, it handled 59,691 cases with 9,949 cases per judge, yielding the highest annual average caseload per judge of any large city outside of New York City. My office prepared a detailed report describing the need for an additional City Court Judge. The report is available on my website: <http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/Shelley-Mayer/postings/>. The legislation also would provide additional judges to other local courts throughout the State, and makes other improvements to the administration of the state’s courts.

PENNSYLVANIA HYDROFRACKING TOUR

Anxious to learn more and see first-hand the impact of hydrofracking on rural communities, in August I joined a group of state legislators on a Pennsylvania hydrofracking tour. Together with New York State Senators George Latimer and Tony Avella, and Assemblymembers Steve Otis and David Buchwald, I toured Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania to observe the drilling and hydrofracking operations throughout the county, part of the Marcellus Shale region. The tour was organized by Susan Van Dolsen of Westchester for Change, and was led by Vera Scroggins and Craig Stevens, local residents and activists.

Hydrofracking involves the drilling of vertical wells and horizontal pumping of water, together with extensive transmission piping, throughout regions where shale is present. I have consistently supported a moratorium on hydrofracking in New York State until the scientific evidence regarding safety and community impact has been established. Governor Cuomo has so far postponed a decision on hydrofracking in New York State.

The tour included visits to gas pads, compressor stations, drill sites and the homes of residents directly impacted by



With Assemblyman David Buchwald listening to Ray Kemble, a resident of Dimock, PA whose water has been contaminated by hydrofracking, requiring water deliveries for household use and drinking.

the drilling. Many residents now require daily deliveries of water for household use and for drinking because their well water has been contaminated by the hydrofracking process.

Having now witnessed the process personally, I am more persuaded than ever that we should not allow hydrofracking in New York State. With the contamination of water and earth, and declining royalty checks for the farmers, who were relying on this revenue, I do not believe the benefits outweigh the very real costs to our communities.

NAMED CHAIR OF THE ASSEMBLY SUBCOMMITTEE ON STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Earlier this year I was appointed chair of the Assembly Subcommittee on Students with Special Needs. Working with Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, Chair of the Education Committee, I have been educating myself about the work of and challenges before Special Act School Districts, 853 schools, and 4201 schools – the schools designed to provide intensive remediation and

intervention to special student populations. Along with Assemblywoman Nolan, I am hosting a roundtable in October in Yonkers concerning special education issues to hear the concerns of these special schools for disabled children. The findings from the hearing will inform policy and legislative recommendations for the next legislative session.



With Assemblyman Steve Otis, Assemblyman James Skoufis, Chair of the Assembly Education Committee Cathy Nolan, and Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther calling on NYSED Commissioner John King to ensure fair funding for after school programs in Yonkers.

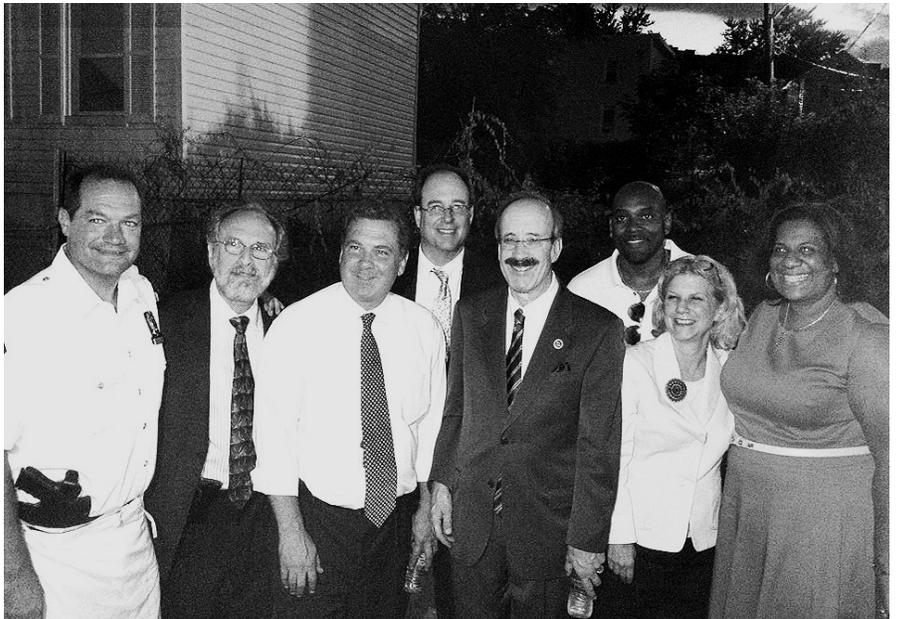


At Summer Reading Buddies, a great program of JCY-Westchester Community Partners.

YONKERS' NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

National Night Out is an annual summer event designed to strengthen community, raise awareness about crime and drug prevention, build stronger relationships between our police and community, and generate support for and participation in local programs. I enjoyed attending each of the four police precincts' National Night Out events and seeing the excellent coordination between our police department and our communities.

At the 4th Precinct's Yonkers National Night Out event with Captain Mueller, Councilman Michael Sabatino, Mayor Mike Spano, Yonkers City Council President Chuck Lesnick, Congressman Eliot Engel, and Shawyn Patterson Howard, Chief Executive Officer of Yonkers YMCA.



With Dilcia Mena, celebrating opening day of the Yonkers Soccer League with my own jersey! Congratulations to all the teams in the Eastern District Soccer League and to the four all-women teams as well. I am proud to support them!

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE AND THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Over the summer, I teamed up with St. John's Riverside Hospital to provide a forum entitled, "Health Insurance Coverage & The Affordable Care Act: What You Need To Know." The information session addressed several topics including healthcare exchanges, individual and small business health insurance, Medicaid and Medicare. With so many parts to the new law, I was pleased to provide a forum in which Yonkers residents received answers to their questions from knowledgeable professionals, including Timothy Foley, Health Care Policy Advisor, Greater NYC for

Change and Political Director for the Committee of Interns and Residents/SEIU Healthcare, a labor union for resident physicians; Michael LaMagna, LNHA, MPA, a lawyer specializing in elder and health care law; and Pat Esposito, Director, Westchester Seniors Out Speaking, a program of the Medicare Rights Center. As New York's exchange becomes operational in October, my office will organize additional forums to help residents and businesses navigate the new terrain. We remain available to assist constituents in getting answers and services they need.



With nurse Fred Nozil of the Visiting Nurse Service of New York visiting his patient, 102-year-old Gavino Moya and his daughter Martae Moya in Yonkers.

Please join us!

State Senator George Latimer and I will be holding a coffee hour for constituents on **October 26th** from **9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.** at the **Argonaut Diner** located at **1084 Yonkers Ave., Yonkers, NY 10704.**

Light refreshments will be provided and no appointments are necessary.

For more information, call **914-779-8805** or email **mayers@assembly.state.ny.us**



Honoring three Yonkers members of the Cadet Nurse Corps on the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Bolton Act with Ann Kakos, Dorothy Yambrick and Annalisa Zansota, together with Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Yonkers Councilman Michael Sabatino.

If you would like to receive my e-newsletter or information about events I am organizing, please send your name and email address to: **mayers@assembly.state.ny.us**.

ASSEMBLYMEMBER SHELLEY MAYER

35 East Grassy Sprain Road, Room 406B • Yonkers, NY 10710 • 914-779-8805
323 Legislative Office Building • Albany, NY 12248 • 518-455-3662
mayers@assembly.state.ny.us