

NEWS FROM NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLYMAN

# PETER J. ABBATE, JR.

49<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, Brooklyn

2017

Dear Neighbor,

*As you know, I have always made helping senior citizens a top priority of mine. Whether it's fighting to ensure that funding is available in the state budget, or supporting legislation that benefits seniors, I have consistently been there to help meet the needs of our state's elderly.*

*Enclosed, you will find some information pertaining to senior citizen issues that we have addressed in the NYS Legislature this year. Although we have made great strides in improving the quality of life for seniors, much more still needs to be done.*

*I will continue working to make sure that the senior citizens of our community get the representation and the kind of benefits they truly deserve. I will also do all I can for our community, as well as advocating for our elderly citizens.*

Sincerely,

Peter J. Abbate, Jr.

## Join EPIC to Save More on Prescription Drug Costs!

- Are you 65 years or older?
- Is your annual income below \$75,000 for a single household or \$100,000 if you are married?
- Are you enrolled in Medicare Part D drug plan?

EPIC (Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage) Program is a New York State initiative that provides secondary drug coverage and premium assistance for seniors with Medicare Part D. Epic will enroll lower income seniors into a fee plan and higher income seniors into its deductible plan.



## Questions?

You can call the NYS EPIC Hotline at: **1-800-332-3742**

Or my District Office at **718-236-1764**

*It's easy to join!*

## Assemblyman Abbate Contact Information

### District Office:

6605 Fort Hamilton Parkway  
Brooklyn, NY 11219  
718-236-1764

### Legislative Office:

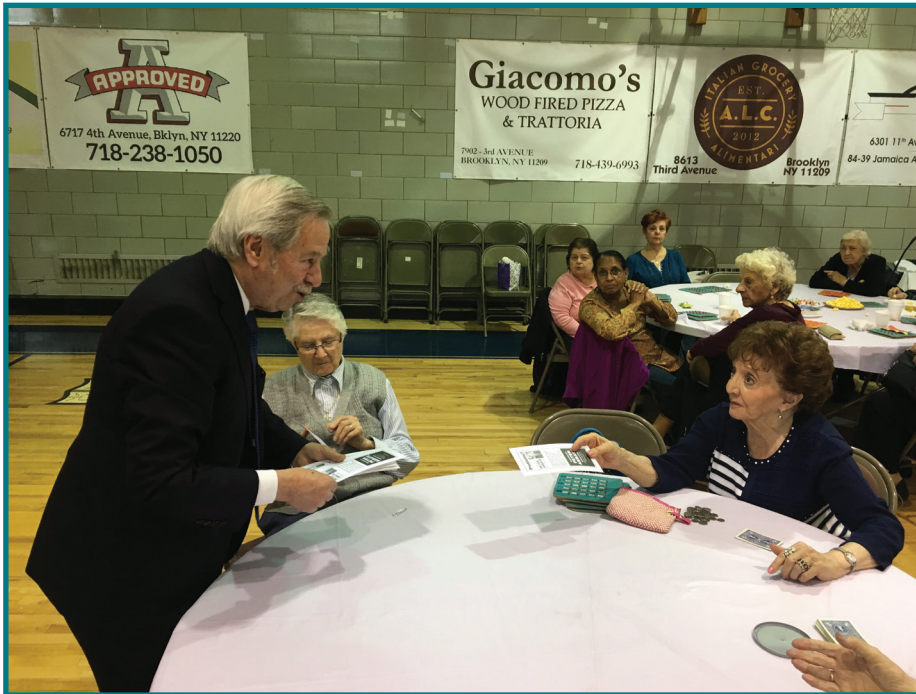
839 Legislative Office Building  
Albany, NY 12248  
518-455-3053

Abbatep@nyassembly.gov

## Fighting For Seniors in the NYS Budget

As the baby boom population ages, New York State's older population is growing fast and will continue to grow significantly. By the year 2025, it is estimated that New York State's overall older population will comprise nearly a quarter of the State's total population – making services that New York State and New York City government provide extra beneficial.

The 2017-18 NYS budget provides **\$13.5 million** to support long-term care, including restoring \$10 million to preserve spousal refusal. This ensures couples do not lose their life savings in the event a spouse becomes ill and needs nursing home care.



Additionally, this budget includes:

- **\$2.7 million** to prevent limiting Managed Long Term Care eligibility to only those eligible for nursing homes; and
- **\$750,000** to restore nursing home bed hold payments for therapeutic leave.

To protect seniors' hard-earned and well-deserved property tax relief, this budget rejected the executive proposal to change the Enhanced STAR program by requiring all seniors eligible for the Enhanced STAR program to register with the state and participate in the Income Verification Program.

## Protecting Elders from Physical Abuse and Financial Exploitation

Elder abuse has emerged nationally as one of the most under-reported crimes. Often times, elderly individuals who are experiencing abuse from loved ones, friends, or neighbors refuse help out of fear, embarrassment or the desire to protect the abuser. One Assembly bill would require the State Office for the Aging to develop guidelines to assist healthcare providers and others working in healthcare settings to identify suspected self-neglect, abuse and maltreatment of individuals 60 and older.

Many seniors open joint banking accounts when seeking assistance with paying bills or budgeting for daily living expenses. Another measure that passed the Assembly requires banks to notify customers seeking to open a joint account if the bank also offers convenience accounts. Unlike joint accounts which create a legal relationship between co-owners that includes equal right to access funds in the account as well as the right of survivorship when one of the account holders dies, convenience accounts make the co-signer accountable to the best interest of the main account holder and becomes part of the estate should the main account holder pass away.

To report adult abuse, call  
(within New York State only):  
**1-844-697-3505**  
Or contact the  
New York City Department at:  
**718-557-1399**

## New York State Legislature Expands Property Tax Relief to Senior Homeowners

The NYS Legislature passed a bill this year that the Governor signed into law which increases the maximum qualifying income for the Senior Citizen Homeowners Exemption to \$58,400 up from \$37,400. Raising this cap will provide seniors in the program with an average benefit of \$1,750 off their tax bills. Once the City Council passes legislation to implement the increase, there will be a 120-day window to apply or renew if you have not already done so. As a result of the State Assembly's efforts, many new seniors will meet the requirements to receive the exemption.

This past year, the New York City Department of Finance went through all the applications for exemptions and, unfortunately, many people did not renew or were no longer qualified because their income was over the old limit. Below, please find important information regarding what to do if your tax bill this year has been changed or if you now qualify for the program.

### 1. RENEW! IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

If you did not respond to the Department of Finance mailings to renew your Senior Citizen Homeowner Exemption or Disabled Homeowner Exemption you still have time to send in your renewal application. Call 311 and ask them to mail one to you, or stop by our office to fill it out. If you qualify, your exemption will apply to this entire tax year (July 1, 2017- June 30, 2018).



### 2. IF YOU WERE DENIED BECAUSE YOUR INCOME IS TOO HIGH OR YOU DID NOT APPLY

If you sent a renewal application but lost your benefit because your income was too high, you may be eligible once again if you are under the new limit of \$58,400. With your application on file, the NYC Department of Finance will contact you once the NYC legislation is enacted. If you qualify for the first time and have never applied, please contact us to inquire about the next steps.

*Please contact our office if you have any questions, would like to receive updates or need assistance in filling out the application.*

## Supporting Local Senior Centers



It was my honor to host the three Senior Proms for all the senior centers that are in my district. I do so along with support from the Neighborhood Community Services Network and other local elected officials.

Throughout the year it is my pleasure to go to all the Senior Centers in the Sunset Park, Bensonhurst and Dyker Heights communities to talk to their members about the issues most important to them. These centers are such an important resource that it is also my pleasure to distribute State Grants to them to make sure their programming continues and their services are maintained.

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*Assemblyman*

**Peter J.  
Abbate, Jr.**

**Senior Mail 2017**

## Reduced Fare MetroCard Van Locations

The **MTA Reduced Fare MetroCard Van** is in our neighborhood regularly at their monthly locations! If you are 65 years or older you qualify for half off your fare. Currently, that means \$1.35 per ride.

**Bay Ridge at 86<sup>th</sup> Street and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue:**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month from 10:30 A.M. - 1 P.M.

**Bay Ridge at 7408 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue:**

1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month from 1 P.M. - 3 P.M.

**Bensonhurst at 86<sup>th</sup> Street and Bay Parkway:**

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month from 7 A.M. - 9:30 A.M.

