

# 2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

## SURVEY RESULTS:


Thank you to all who participated in my survey this year. Your responses have provided critical insights into the concerns and priorities of our community. Here are a few key takeaways and initiatives I'm focusing on based on your input:

- More than 70% of respondents feel New York is on the wrong track.
- The most pressing concerns identified include the migrant crisis, cutting taxes and public safety.
- Many of you expressed significant hardships due to rising costs, particularly affecting those on fixed incomes and working families across Long Island.
- Nearly 65% of respondents believe crime in New York state is a very serious problem.
- Approximately half of respondents are somewhat or very likely to leave the state, primarily due to high costs of living, concerns over crime and dissatisfaction with current policies.
- 73% oppose the Governor's proposal to spend more than \$4 billion on migrant services.
- 65% feel New York state is not doing enough to support small businesses, capping high taxes, excessive regulations and inadequate incentives.

In response to your feedback, I am actively working on initiatives aimed at saving taxpayers money, reducing taxes and enhancing public safety. I will continue to advocate for policies that prioritize our community's needs and address the challenges we face together.

New York State Assembly, Albany, NY 12248

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**ASSEMBLYMAN  
JOE DESTEFANO'S  
YEAR IN REVIEW**

**2024** Assemblyman  
**Joe DeStefano**



Assemblyman  
**Joe DeStefano**



## DEAR NEIGHBOR,

During this Session (2023-24), more than 10,000 bills were introduced, and I have worked tirelessly pass meaningful legislation that addresses the pressing issues facing our district and all New Yorkers. Now, I'm rededicating myself to Suffolk County, listening closely to your concerns and advocating for practical solutions that make a real difference.

Please know that I am always here for you! If you have any questions, comments or concerns please feel free to reach out:

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# 2024 IN REVIEW

## MY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES THIS SESSION:



### MELANIE'S LAW

On Feb. 28, I joined my colleagues and Cheryl Chianese, Melanie's mother, to call for the passage of "Melanie's Law"<sup>1</sup> to strengthen domestic violence protections.<sup>2</sup> Melanie's life was tragically taken by her mother's ex-boyfriend while he was under supervised release pending sentencing after pleading guilty to a domestic violence felony. Melanie's Law would allow courts to issue orders of protection for family members of victims of domestic violence, regardless of age.



### VETERANS FUNDS

On April 9, my colleagues and I urged the governor to end the unlawful practice of withholding donated tax check-off funds from veteran service agencies and release them immediately. In May, New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli released a report disclosing that millions of dollars in taxpayer-donated funds meant for veterans are being held back. This money has languished unused for years—an unacceptable oversight that deprives veterans of critical assistance. It's time to streamline the process of getting funds out, promote transparency and create accountability by making sure all veteran-related tax check-off programs are administered by the Department of Veterans' Services instead of multiple agencies, eliminating miles of bureaucratic red tape to ensure veterans get what they deserve. I appreciate the sacrifice of all the men and women who have served or are currently serving our nation and will not stop advocating for their needs on a state level.<sup>3</sup>



### OPIOID CRISIS

On May 7, I supported colleagues and law enforcement agents in addressing New York's opioid epidemic by calling for widespread access to FDA-approved opioid reversal agents.<sup>4</sup> This crisis has continued to grow significantly, transitioning from prescription drugs to heroin, and now predominantly fentanyl, a synthetic opioid responsible for mass overdoses in recent years. With fatal opioid overdoses skyrocketing in our state from 664 in 1999 to more than 5,400 in 2022, it is evident our state is not doing enough to combat this epidemic.<sup>5</sup> Passing legislation to increase the availability of opioid overdose reversal agents across New York state<sup>6</sup> will be the first step in the right direction toward preventing future overdoses and saving our families and friends.



### PAROLE BOARD REFORM

On June 4, I advocated for urgent reforms to the NYS Board of Parole to ensure the safety of law enforcement and restore public safety.<sup>7</sup> Since 2017, the parole board has released 41 people convicted of murdering cops. We need to get our state back to a place where law and order prevail, and that starts with stronger oversight of the New York State Board of Parole.

### I INTRODUCED LEGISLATION THAT WOULD:

- ✓ Classify xylazine as a Schedule I controlled substance, thereby criminalizing the sale and possession.<sup>8</sup>
- ✓ Increase the penalty for crimes committed against law enforcement, EMS and firefighters by designating them as hate crimes.<sup>9</sup>

### I HELPED PASS LAWS THAT WILL:

- » Reduce opioid-related deaths by increasing access to FDA-approved opioid reversal agents for those in need.<sup>5</sup>
- » Improve Suffolk County's water quality by reducing pollution and upgrading wastewater systems, ensuring cleaner drinking water and healthier coastal areas.<sup>10</sup>
- » Prohibit addictive social media feeds for children with the Stop Addictive Feeds Exploitation (SAFE) for Kids Act.<sup>11</sup>
- » Protect children's data from being collected by apps and online sites with the Child Data Protection Act.<sup>12</sup>
- » Allow courts to issue protection orders for the family members of victims, regardless of age.<sup>1</sup>

1. A.6026  
2. <https://www.assembly.state.ny.us/mem/JoDeStefano/story/109333>  
3. <https://nyassembly.gov/mem/JoDeStefano/story/109948>  
4. <https://nyassembly.gov/mem/JoDeStefano/story/110409>  
5. [spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/central-ny/news/2023/08/14/inside-new-yorks-plan-to-curb-opioid-overdoses?cid=share\\_clip](https://spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/central-ny/news/2023/08/14/inside-new-yorks-plan-to-curb-opioid-overdoses?cid=share_clip)  
6. A.8075-D

7. [nyassembly.gov/mem/Keith-P-Brown/story/110744](https://nyassembly.gov/mem/Keith-P-Brown/story/110744),  
[nyassembly.gov/mem/Jeff-Gallahan/story/110739](https://nyassembly.gov/mem/Jeff-Gallahan/story/110739)  
8. A.8130  
9. A.6792  
10. A.8993  
11. Chapter 120 of the Laws of New York State 2024  
12. Chapter 121 of the Laws of New York State 2024

Assemblyman  
**Joe DeStefano**