

# Assemblyman Nader J. Sayegh

## Reports to the People

90<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Fall / Winter 2019

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Dear Neighbor:

This year has been very gratifying for us here in the Assembly. Over the course of the past year, my team and I have worked diligently to help pass monumental legislation, address constituent concerns and effectuate inclusive positive change across our district at large. We've collaborated with dozens of community-based organizations to highlight the incredible work people from all walks of life are doing here in our district. Thanks to new incentives from New York State, businesses like MGM and UPS are expanding operations and calling our city home. In addition, we've introduced dozens of pieces of legislation, including a landmark bill which would help Yonkers and other school districts that don't get their fair share of funding achieve funding equity. New York is also leading the charge on an assortment of issues. On Climate Change, we've passed an innovative plastic bag ban which will preserve vulnerable ecosystems like the Hudson River for generations to come. We also passed the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act which will drastically scale back emissions and greenhouse gases, all while stimulating economic development. On gun safety, we passed consequential common-sense reforms that will keep firearms out of the wrong hands. Thanks to the efforts of our State Legislative Delegation, we've also held the line on state property tax increases and county property taxes for the foreseeable future. I'm proud to represent such a vibrant community and together, we're moving Yonkers forward.



Sincerely,

Assemblyman Nader J. Sayegh  
Member of Assembly

## 2019 by the Numbers

- Permanent 2% state property tax cap
- \$108.2 million in aid to municipality (AIM) funding for the City of Yonkers
- \$27.5 million in additional funding for Yonkers Public Schools
- \$1 million in grants to community-based organizations in Yonkers
- Over 475 bills signed into law
- \$438 million in CHIPS funding for infrastructure projects

## Agency of the Month



Throughout the year, our office has developed a new initiative to recognize the many agencies that work in unison across the 90th Assembly District to serve our community. These comprehensive agencies offer a variety of different services and activities to our neighbors in the area.

Agencies like the Catholic Charities of New York (Sept. 2019) are indispensable resources for residents in vulnerable communities across our district. Others like the Yonkers Philharmonic Orchestra provide invaluable cultural experiences to families across the region.

Other agencies recognized this year included:

- The YWCA of Yonkers
- The Yonkers Public Library
- St. John's Riverside Hospital
- Richmond Community Services
- Westchester County Executive George Latimer's Sprain Ridge Park and Pool
- Sans Souci Rehabilitation Facility
- The Greyston Foundation

Do you know of a community-based agency or organization that should be recognized for their efforts? If so, please reach out to our office at 914-779-8805 or email me at [sayeghn@nyassembly.gov](mailto:sayeghn@nyassembly.gov)

## New Voter Laws



Until recently, New York was known nationally for its harsh and restrictive voter laws. Thanks to new voting reforms, it has never been easier for New Yorkers to make their voices heard and exercise their right to vote. These reforms include:

- Early voting easing logistical burdens and reducing waiting time for voters on Election Day by offering an additional nine days to vote early
- Synchronizing of federal and state primary elections. New York's state and primary elections will now be held on the same day in June
- Pre-registration for minor New Yorkers ages 16 and 17 can now register to vote ahead of their 18th birthday
- No-excuse absentee voting by mail eliminating the need for a qualifying excuse for reasons other than those in the New York State Constitution. This amendment must be passed by both the Assembly and Senate in consecutive legislative terms before it goes before voters as a ballot referendum.

For more information on these new reforms, please visit [www.elections.ny.gov](http://www.elections.ny.gov)

## Town Hall Meetings

Town halls provide a great opportunity for residents and elected officials alike to learn more about what is happening in their respective communities. At this year's town hall meeting with Senator Shelley Mayer (pictured), I gained valuable insight from our constituents who expressed concerns which our office in turn translated to policy proposals and decisive action on an assortment of issues. In addition, it was great to provide up-to-date information to our constituents in the midst of a whirlwind legislative session in Albany. I look forward to hosting more town halls with my colleagues across government in the upcoming year.



## Governor Cuomo Signs A.8058, Legislation Introduced by Assemblyman Nader Sayegh Including First Responders in a Program Relating To Recertification of Persons Providing Emergency Medical Care

Assemblyman Nader J. Sayegh (D-Yonkers) is proud to announce that his bill, A.8058 has been signed into law by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo.

“This bill is a straightforward and reasonable piece of legislation which removes unnecessary bureaucratic red tape and allows for the continued growth in the EMT profession. This is necessary to address the needs of our aging population across New York State,” said Assemblyman Sayegh.

Assemblyman Sayegh's bill, A.8058 allows certified first responders and people providing emergency medical care to continue to participate in what was initially a pilot program. The program allows the expedition of the recertification process if Emergency Medical Technicians and other prospective first responders demonstrated competence and their job performance was deemed satisfactory. It passed overwhelmingly with bipartisan support and also passed in the Senate by a similar margin, where it was sponsored by Senator Gustavo Rivera (D-Bronx).

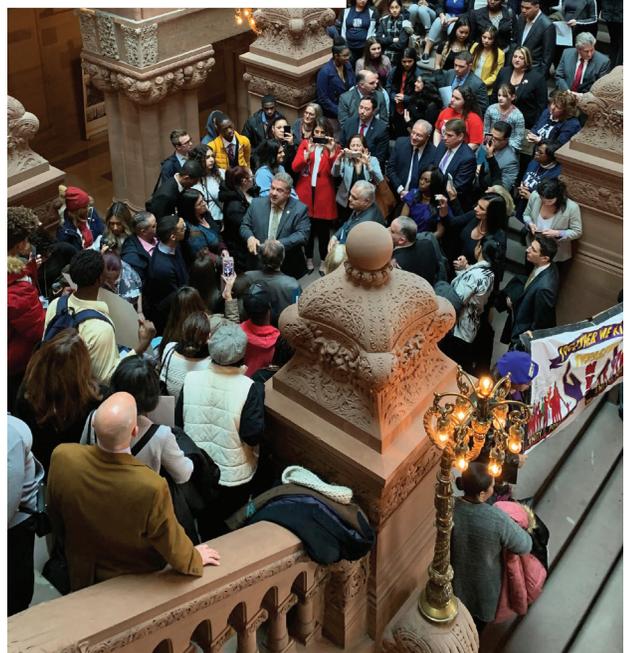
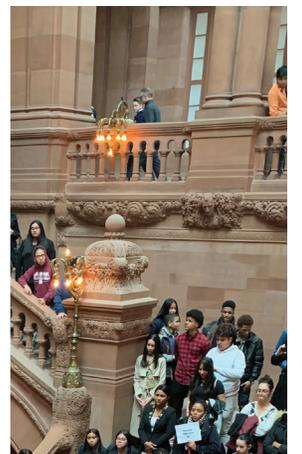
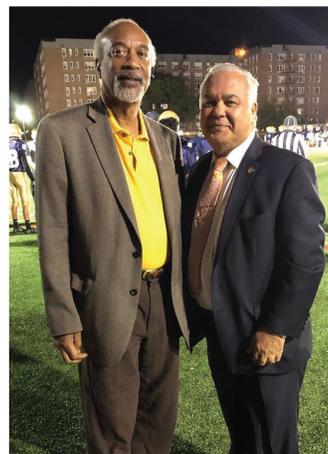
Other Bills Introduced by Assemblyman Nader Sayegh Include:

- A.6917** Relates to raising the retirement age of city court judges to 76 years of age
- A.7111** Relates to providing translators at certain polling places when necessary
- A.7205** Directs the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation to conduct a study on the implementation of traffic control devices at intersections with a high volume of visual and hearing-impaired pedestrians
- A.8719** Relates to requiring the disclosure of fees on certain internet websites and mobile applications
- A.7108** Relates to the apportionment of moneys for capital outlays and debt service for school building purposes
- A.8711** Relates to including if a person has autism spectrum disorder on his or her driver's license or non-driver's identification card
- A.8700** Relates to increasing foundation aid to certain school districts



## Supporting our Schools

Throughout my life and my time in office, I've always been an ardent supporter of public education. As a veteran educator with over 40 years of experience, I understand that one of the most fundamental responsibilities of government is to ensure that all children have access to a sound public education. It's why throughout this year I've worked alongside members of our State Legislative Delegation to continue to push for the reforms necessary to ensure the continued success of our students, especially with the support of my colleagues; Assemblyman Gary Pretlow 89th District (pictured), Education Chair Senator Shelley Mayer, and Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins. This year, with the support of Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano and Schools Superintendent Dr. Edwin Quezada, we secured big wins for our students, including record education funding and over \$27 million in one shot aid to prevent layoffs and cuts. Despite being shortchanged by systemic inequities, students in the Yonkers Public Schools continue to thrive and outpace other students in NY's Big 5 school districts by remarkable margins, especially in graduation rates and test scores.



## The Kids Are Alright

This year, I was impressed by the number of young people in our community who have devoted themselves to giving back.

One Yonkers resident and Iona Prep senior, James Chirco, took the initiative to collect gently used and outgrown hockey equipment for the benefit of special needs hockey players of the New York Raptors, a non-profit organization and special needs hockey team. In this effort, James collected over 500 pieces of equipment, eventually filling the basement of his home. Players on the New York Raptors were offered the opportunity to take any of the collected gear for their own use. The remaining gear was sold for a total of \$1,000, and all proceeds of the sale went to the New York Raptors. I was proud to present James with a New York State Citation for his efforts.

Another resident, Natalie Schonfeld, dedicated her summer to creating the iCan Bike Camp here in Yonkers. Natalie stepped up to the plate to help develop and direct a program to help other children with disabilities learn to ride a conventional two-wheel bicycle. According to research, over 80% of people with Autism Spectrum Disorder and 90% of people with Down Syndrome never experience the thrill of riding a bicycle. Bridging this divide is what inspired Natalie to work on this program. Natalie was also presented with a New York State Citation for her efforts.



## Ice Bucket Challenge



This summer, I was proud to take part in one of our city's great new traditions, the Quinn for the Win/ Yonkers ALS Ice Bucket Challenge. Many people don't know that the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge was actually co-founded by Pat Quinn, a lifelong Yonkers resident who was diagnosed with ALS in 2013. This event helps generate awareness for ALS, a progressive neurodegenerative disease that impacts nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. In addition, the ALS Greater NY Association was the recipient of a \$250,000 grant from the New York State Legislature in this year's budget. The Challenge is a fundraiser which benefits not-for-profit ALS research organizations. To learn more about ALS and how you can help, please visit their website.

## Open for Business

This year, our area continued to attract new businesses thanks to favorable statewide economic policy, a qualified workforce, a strategic location and other factors that have made our area an environment friendly to businesses both large and small. In November, UPS opened a massive new 400,000 square foot distribution facility in Yonkers which is expected to meet the growing consumer demands of the New York Metropolitan Area. This development is expected to create 200 well-paying part- and full-time jobs, with expansion likely in the future.

Across town on McLean Avenue, a lifelong resident realized his dream of opening one of our area's sweetest shops. Stevie's Crepes & Waffles is a culinary delight which opened to rave reviews this summer for its delicious desserts.

Whether you're a trans-national corporation delivering packages to millions of clients worldwide, or a local resident delivering the sweetest treats in our community, it's clear that Yonkers and New York State are open for business.



## We want to hear from YOU!

While the Assembly Majority delivered big wins for New Yorkers in the 2019 legislative session, our work is not yet done. There are still big issues which haven't yet been addressed, including the legalization of recreational marijuana, single payer healthcare, and legislation to fund our schools in addition to helping rebuild our schools. We want to hear your thoughts on these issues.

### Legalizing Recreational Marijuana

In 2019, New York State effectively decriminalized marijuana and expunged the records of thousands of New Yorkers who had been adversely impacted throughout their lives for nonviolent possession charges. Proponents of recreational usage legislation insist that the legalization of recreational marijuana would add accountability through the elimination of the black market, while also generating a new stream of taxable revenue for New York State.

### New York Health Act/Single Player Health Plan

The New York Health Act is a landmark proposal which would replace all private and public (including Medicare and Medicaid) health insurance coverage for New York State residents with state-sponsored health coverage funded through new state payroll and other taxes. The coverage would include all the healthcare services covered by Medicare, Medicaid and commercial health insurance—including, under the most recent amendments, long-term care services—and would not require the payment of any deductibles, co-payments or co-insurance.

### Foundation Aid Funding Legislation

Foundation Aid formula is the de-facto way that New York allocates funding for public schools across the state. However, the formula has been heavily scrutinized by critics who allege that high-need districts like Yonkers are consistently shortchanged by a formula that doesn't take into account the higher costs associated with educating certain student populations in many areas across New York State.

### Rebuilding Our Schools

The average age of a Yonkers Public School is over 75 years old. While many of these schools have served us well and have become community landmarks, many of these schools are neglected facilities which are ill-equipped to accommodate the demands of education in the 21st Century. In addition, education analysts agree that Yonkers Public Schools are overcrowded by thousands of students. While New York State has made a concerted effort to rebuild public schools in other large cities including Buffalo, Syracuse, and Rochester, it has not done the same for kids here in Yonkers.

### Online Sports Betting

Sports betting is a \$13 billion industry in the 11 states that have chosen to expand wagering laws to allow for it. In the 18 months since New Jersey expanded their wagering laws to accommodate for sports betting, the state has generated nearly \$4.5 billion in revenue. Of these bets, nearly 80% came from bets placed online. Proponents of this legislation argue that New York continues to leave money on the table by not expanding its laws. At present time, New York State exclusively allows sports betting in-person at 4 Upstate casinos.



New York State Assembly • Albany, New York 12248



Assemblyman

**Nader J.  
Sayegh**

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## HOLIDAY TOY/BOOK DRIVE

Please bring a wrapped toy (specify age/ gender) to the office by **December 20<sup>th</sup>** and we will distribute them to the children at The Andrus Home for the holidays.

