

Dear Friends,

When I ran for the Assembly last year, I recognized that there would be daunting challenges to help the state and our community pull out of the COVID-19 pandemic. I did not anticipate that I would be an Assemblymember potentially deciding on whether to impeach Governor Cuomo. I wish to share with you information regarding the Assembly's recent actions in this regard and my views on it.

At the same time, it is critical that we do pull out of the pandemic. To that end, I also would like to share with you positive developments on that front, as well as a report on other work in which I am involved.

### **[Assembly Launches Impeachment Investigation Into Governor Cuomo](#)**

Yesterday, New York Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie [authorized the Assembly's Judiciary Committee](#) to commence an impeachment investigation into Governor Cuomo and the allegations made against him. The authorization came following a conference with majority members of the Assembly, of which I am one. **I fully support this action by the Speaker.**

I anticipate that – in addition to investigating sexual harassment allegations – the investigation will encompass other allegations of the Governor's misconduct, including his handling of nursing home patients and the failure of his administration to be transparent in the reporting of COVID-19 deaths amongst the nursing home population.

**The Assembly has a paramount duty to obtain the facts through a dispassionate and thorough investigation**, which the Judiciary Committee will conduct. To uphold the due process rights of all parties, we have a duty to refrain from predetermination or prejudgment pending the completion of the Committee's work and report to the full Assembly.

Additionally, there is the ongoing investigation into the sexual harassment allegations that is being overseen by Attorney General Letitia James, in whom I have full confidence.

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## COVID-19 Vaccination Eligibility Update

The Governor [announced earlier this week](#) an expansion of those eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine:

- New Yorkers **60+ years** are now eligible
- **Beginning March 17**, the following **essential workers** will now be eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine:



- Public-facing government and public employees
- Not-for-profit workers who provide public-facing services to New Yorkers in need
- Essential in-person public-facing building service workers

*This includes workers such as public works employees, social service and child service caseworkers, government inspectors, sanitation workers, DMV workers, County Clerks, building service workers and election workers.*

**Vaccine distribution eligibility also has been expanded:**

- In addition to those who are 60+, **pharmacies now can also vaccinate teachers**
- Beginning March 17, ALL providers -- with the exception of pharmacies -- can vaccinate any eligible New Yorker

To schedule your appointment via the state website go to [am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov](https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov) or call 1-833-NYS-4-VAX (1-833-697-4829). For the most updated list of non-State providers in the area, [please click here](#).

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There continues to be many more New Yorkers who are eligible to be vaccinated than there are vaccine doses available, although the situation is slowly improving. I personally feel very fortunate that I was able to receive my first vaccination this past weekend.

**Please contact my office if you need help getting an appointment.** Call us at (914) 244-4450 or e-mail me at [burdickc@nyassembly.gov](mailto:burdickc@nyassembly.gov) and we will do what we can to help. Please also check back on [our website](#) for the most up-to-date resources and tips. **Let's get to herd immunity!**



At the White Plains Community Center for a 'pop up" vaccination event this past weekend.

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## COVID-19 Economic Relief

The **American Rescue Plan** was signed into law yesterday by President Biden. This legislation will provide much-needed relief for millions of Americans:

- **\$1,400 per person (including children) stimulus payments** for individuals earning up to \$75,000 per year and couples earning up to \$150,000 per year (*the amount of the stimulus payment begins to phase out after those amounts; individuals earning over \$80,000 and couples earning over \$160,000 will not qualify for a payment*)
- **An increase in the annual child tax credit** for tax year 2021 to \$3,000 per child ages 6 to 17 and \$3,600 for children under 6
- **Extends unemployment benefits through September 6**, with an extra \$300 a week over the amount provided by the state, continuing the supplement that has been in effect since January
- **The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program**, which covers the self-employed, freelancers, gig workers and others not able to receive regular unemployment benefits **has also been extended until September 6**
- **Waives federal (*not state*) taxes on the first \$10,200 of unemployment benefits.** Married couples who file jointly would not be taxed on the first \$20,400

With so many New Yorkers continuing to suffer the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, I couldn't be more pleased that relief is on the way.



## [Domestic Travel Update](#)



The Governor [announced yesterday](#) that **beginning April 1, quarantine will no longer be required for domestic travel**, although it is still advised as a precaution. Travelers *will* continue to be required to fill out the [Traveler Health Form](#) upon arrival.

International travelers will continue to be subject to [mandatory quarantine](#).

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## [Nursing Home Reform Legislation Update](#)

Perhaps the greatest tragedy of the COVID-19 pandemic has been deaths of nursing home patients. A recent report by the Attorney General found that many nursing homes failed to comply with safety protocols and lacked sufficient COVID-19 tests, personal protective equipment and staff, putting residents at risk. The report also disclosed that the NYS Department of Health (DOH) undercounted nursing home deaths by as much as 50%.

New Yorkers who lost loved ones in nursing homes last year faced unimaginable challenges on top of their grief, including a lack of clear communication and an inability to visit their family members or hold proper memorial services. **They deserved better.**



In reality, abuses in the nursing home industry have been occurring for years and these reforms are long overdue. The legislation recently passed by the Assembly reimagines nursing home care, increases oversight and transparency, prepares for future public health threats, guarantees safe nursing home visitation, and cracks down on unscrupulous nursing home operators that put profits over people.

### **These reforms include:**

- The requirement that nursing home operators spend 70% of revenue on resident care and a significant portion specifically on direct care nursing staff
- An increase in monetary penalties for violations
- The requirement that nursing home operators make available online the materials and information residents and their families need – including complaints, citations, inspections, enforcement actions and penalties – so they can make informed decisions when choosing a facility
- The repeal of the civil and criminal liability immunity for negligence given to nursing home operators during the height of the pandemic crisis



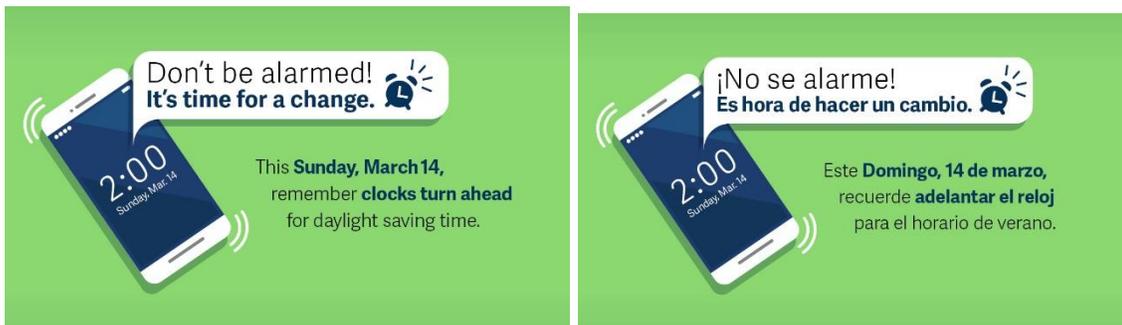
people with developmental disabilities). All the while being prudent and mindful of the taxpayer's money.

In light of the state's improved revenue outlook, as well as the billions in funds New York will receive under the American Rescue Plan, **I am optimistic that there will be significant upward revisions in all the major budget areas.** I can assure you that I will continue to press hard. Stay tuned.

For a primer on the budget process go to: <https://www.budget.ny.gov/citizen/process/process.html>

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### **A Final Note: Time to Spring Ahead!**



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As always, if there are any issues that you would like to see covered in a future newsletter, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at [burdickc@nyassembly.gov](mailto:burdickc@nyassembly.gov) (or simply reply to this email). **Please also follow me on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for the most up-to-date information.**

Sincerely yours,

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