



Assemblyman Ken Zebrowski



2019 WINTER NEWSLETTER

Reforming Government and Protecting the Public

Dear Neighbor:

Government should constantly strive to be more transparent and ethical while maximizing participation and protecting the safety of residents.

This newsletter highlights some significant reforms that have been passed over the last year.

As always, I welcome your thoughts and ideas.

Sincerely,

Ken Zebrowski



SEXUAL HARASSMENT REFORM

Sexual Harassment is a pervasive issue that permeates all aspects of our society. Assemblyman Zebrowski has sponsored and pushed for several bills over the past year that empower victims and hold perpetrators accountable:

Criminal Coercion in the 2nd Degree:

- A bill authored by Assemblyman Zebrowski was approved as a part of the budget that created a new crime of criminal coercion in the 2nd degree.
- This bill makes it a crime to compel or induce a person to engage in a sexual act under threat of retaliatory action.

In addition to this new crime, Ken worked on additional reforms that were included in the budget including:

- A ban on confidentiality clauses that are forced on victims of sexual harassment.
- Prohibition on forcing victims into mandatory arbitration clauses.
- Directing the Department of Labor and Human Rights to develop a model sexual harassment policy and training program. All public employers must adopt this policy or develop their own consistent with the minimum standards. Those standards include:
 - Prohibition of sexual harassment in the workplace and clear sanctions against perpetrators.
 - Standard complaint forms and timely investigation procedures.
 - Prevention of unlawful retaliation.

Our work is not done! Ken is helping lead a bi-partisan, joint hearing on sexual harassment on February 13th 2019.

Sexual Assault Survivor's Bill of Rights Now NYS Law:

- In December of 2018, the Governor signed a bill into law that mandates state agencies, in collaboration with victim-rights groups, to create a "bill of rights" that law enforcement must follow when dealing with sexual assault cases.
- This new law ensures that victims are provided health care and counseling and that their case is properly reported.
- The law also requires law enforcement agencies to create a "Victim's Right to Notice" to provide information on sexual-offense evidence kits to victims who request it.

CHILD VICTIMS ACT BECOMES LAW

Child sexual abuse is a crime of unthinkable cruelty. Many times, a victim needs professional assistance and time in order to come forward to hold perpetrators criminally or civilly accountable. The legislature recently passed the Child Victims Act to give victims the time they need.

- This bill extends the age by which victims can press charges to 28 for felony crimes, 55 for civil actions, and opens up a one year window for victims to bring previously barred claims.
- Assemblyman Zebrowski is a co-sponsor of this legislation, and although it will never erase the abuse, hopefully it will hold perpetrators accountable.

INCREASING FAIRNESS IN OUR ELECTIONS

Assemblyman Zebrowski has always supported common sense election law reform. For years, Ken has advocated for and carried campaign disclosure legislation. Last year, his Democracy Protection Act became New York State law.

■ In collaboration with Governor Cuomo, Assemblyman Zebrowski drafted the Democracy Protection Act, which is now New York State law.

- The bill ends anonymous internet and social media ads by requiring disclosure of who paid for the advertisement and further regulates independent expenditures.
- In the new social media era, recent elections have been heavily influenced by anonymous negative ads, oftentimes funded by dark money.
- This law will help regulate this new type of political campaigning and re-establish transparency into the election process.

■ The legislature moved quickly in 2019 to pass several voting rights bills. These bills will modernize New York’s system and increase voter participation. Some changes include:

- Early voting
- Same day registration
- No excuse absentee ballots
- Closure of the LLC loophole to finally enforce contribution limits.



Assemblyman Zebrowski speaking at a press conference on the need to end anonymous negative campaign ads on social media.

KEY STATE FUNDING TO ROCKLAND COUNTY

- Over the past few months, Rockland has received some significant state grants to improve our community.
- The Rockland County District Attorney’s Office recently received over \$300,000 in state funding to improve investigations into state tax evasion and welfare fraud cases.
- Over \$800,000 was awarded to the County to improve our emergency communications. This will allow our local governments to expand and make technology updates in order to better protect Rocklanders.

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**Ken
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GUN SAFETY LEGISLATION

To keep our kids safe and help prevent mass shootings, the legislature passed several bills in the new session. Two of the most significant bills, co-sponsored by Assemblyman Zebrowski, include:

■ **Extreme Risk Bill:**

- This bill would empower family members, law enforcement, and school personnel to seek a Court order to prevent someone from purchasing or owning a gun who is deemed an extreme risk to themselves or others.

■ **Closing the Background Check Loophole:**

- A loophole in the background check law allowed persons to purchase a gun if their background check did not come back within three days. This new law would ensure there is enough time for all background checks to be completed before someone purchases a gun.