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**AROUND TOWN WITH MIKE NORRIS**



**DEAR NEIGHBORS:**

While the 2019 Legislative Session presented some challenges, there were also some important wins for our community – such as the state’s announcement of \$300 million in funding for projects to stabilize and revitalize communities along Lake Ontario – as well as some important new laws that will better protect New York State children.

Ensuring public safety is one of my top priorities, and whether it be to protect our community from flooding, stop domestic violence through greater public awareness, assisting our local fire and ambulance companies, or to ensure people with disabilities have the best possible care, I am always working hard to make sure everyone in our community is safe.

Inside this newsletter, you can learn more about some of my specific efforts as well as information about changes in our state laws that could affect you. The modifications made to how bail is imposed will have wide-reaching impacts, and federal changes to our state’s driver’s license in the Real ID Act will impact everyone’s ability to travel.

As always, I hope you will share your feedback with me. Please email me at [norrism@nyassembly.gov](mailto:norrism@nyassembly.gov) to sign up for my e-newsletter if you’d like to receive more timely updates on what is going on at our State Capitol and around our district.

Working for you,

*Michael J Norris*

**WANT TO LEARN MORE?**

E-mail Mike Norris at [norrism@nyassembly.gov](mailto:norrism@nyassembly.gov) to sign up for his e-newsletter.



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THERE IS NOTHING MORE IMPORTANT THAN PUBLIC SAFETY.

However, this year in Albany a concerning platform moved forward, including measures hidden in the state budget to change the state’s bail code (A.2009-C). Setting bail is an important tool used by judges to ensure that a defendant returns for future court appearances. Unfortunately, the legislation passed takes that choice out of the hands of judges and removed bail requirements for the following serious offenses:

- Aggravated vehicular assault
- Aggravated assault upon a person less than 11 years old
- Criminally negligent homicide
- Aggravated vehicular homicide
- Manslaughter in the second degree
- Grand larceny in the first degree
- Criminal possession of a weapon on school grounds or criminal possession of a firearm
- Criminal possession of a controlled substance in the first and second degrees
- Criminal sale of a controlled substance on or near school grounds
- Specified felony drug offenses involving the use of children, including the use of a child to commit a controlled substance offense and criminal sale of a controlled substance to a child
- Money laundering in support of terrorism in the third and fourth degrees
- Making a terroristic threat
- Promoting an obscene sexual performance by a child
- Promoting a sexual performance by a child
- Failure to register as a sex offender
- Tampering with a juror and tampering with physical evidence
- Aggravated harassment in the first degree
- Criminal sale of a firearm to a minor
- Aggravated cruelty to animals, overdriving, torturing and injuring animals
- Animal fighting



NOT ONLY DID I VOTE AGAINST THESE CHANGES, BUT I AM ALSO WORKING WITH MY COLLEAGUES TO TRY TO CORRECT THESE DANGEROUS MODIFICATIONS AND GIVE BACK JUDICIAL AUTHORITY WHEN IT COMES TO DETERMINING BAIL:

- I’m working across the aisle on legislation that would give judges additional discretion in determining whether a criminal defendant should be held in custody or required to post bail (A.8502).
- I am also sponsoring legislation that would repeal these changes as they relate to Class A and B felony drug offenses because there have been widespread concerns by law enforcement, prosecutors and judges that the changes will hamper their ability to build thorough cases against major drug traffickers if they are simply allowed to freely leave jail pre-trial without bail (A.7409). This is especially concerning as our state continues to tackle the opioid crisis. If we are truly serious about getting drugs off our streets, out of our schools, and away from our neighborhoods, we should not be making it easier for criminals.

**BEGINNING ON OCTOBER 1, 2020,** New Yorkers will no longer be eligible to board a domestic flight without a new form of driver's

license or a valid passport (if they have one). Here in Western New York, this is a big concern because many of us travel across the border and many of our friends

and family are in the military. I've received lots of questions from the community about the changes and hope the following information will be useful to you.

## WHAT **REAL ID** MEANS TO YOU:

In order to travel to Canada, enter a military base or certain federal facilities, or board domestic air flights, you will need to have either a valid passport or an Enhanced driver's license. In New York State, this means most New Yorkers will need to either obtain a passport or upgrade their driver's license well ahead of any travel or business plans they may have on or after October 1, 2020, when the new rules take effect.

## HOW TO OBTAIN A U.S. PASSPORT

If you have an existing passport that will expire, you can follow your regular process to renew your passport through the federal government. Some people are even eligible to renew their passports through the mail.

If you do not have a passport and would like to apply for one, please visit your local post office or visit the United States Department of State's website for details on how you can apply in person. For more information:

[HTTPS://TRAVEL.STATE.GOV/CONTENT/TRAVEL/EN/PASSPORTS/NEED-PASSPORT/APPLY-IN-PERSON.HTML](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/need-passport/apply-in-person.html)

## HOW TO UPGRADE MY NY DRIVER'S LICENSE TO BE FEDERAL REAL ID COMPLIANT



### ENHANCED DRIVER'S LICENSE

- Cost to Upgrade from Standard: \$30 fee on top of all normal transaction fees.
- Fully compliant with Federal REAL ID travel requirements.
- Accepted as identification on domestic flights.
- Accepted to enter a military base or federal building.
- Accepted as identification when crossing a U.S. border coming from Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean (except by air).

### REAL ID

- Cost to Upgrade from Standard: Free though all normal transaction fees apply.
- Accepted as identification on domestic flights.
- Accepted to enter a military base or federal building.

**TO UPGRADE YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSE,** you will need to visit your local DMV office in person, and you must bring with you the following original or certified proof documents including proof of identity, proof of Social Security Number or ineligibility, proof of your date of birth, proof of citizenship or lawful status, and two different proofs of in-state residence. You must also make sure the name you list on your application matches exactly your name as listed on these various proofs. The application process also requires the DMV to take a new photo.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

[www.dmv.ny.gov](http://www.dmv.ny.gov) • [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov)

Erie County Auto Bureau - Williamsville • Clarence-Eastern Hills Mall • 4545 Transit Road • Williamsville, NY 14221  
[WWW2.ERIE.GOV/CLERK/INDEX.PHP?Q=AUTO-BUREAU](http://WWW2.ERIE.GOV/CLERK/INDEX.PHP?Q=AUTO-BUREAU)

Orleans County DMV • Orleans County Administration Building • 14016 Route 31 • Albion, NY 14411  
[WWW.ORLEANSCOUNTYNY.GOV/DMV](http://WWW.ORLEANSCOUNTYNY.GOV/DMV)

Niagara County Motor Vehicles – Lockport • Golden Triangle Bldg. • 111 Main Street • Lockport, NY 14094  
[WWW.NIAGARACOUNTY.COM/DEPARTMENTS/MOTOR-VEHICLES-DEPARTMENT](http://WWW.NIAGARACOUNTY.COM/DEPARTMENTS/MOTOR-VEHICLES-DEPARTMENT)

**PUTTING AN END TO CHILD ABUSE** remains a top priority in our state. That's why I supported legislation to provide comprehensive reforms to protect children from abuse at school by requiring anyone working at a school or contracted to provide transportation services, such as bus drivers, to be a mandatory reporter (Chapter 164 of the Laws of 2019).

**CHANGES IMPOSED** in 2015 to New York's education system, in relation to teacher evaluations and state aid, caused a lot of confusion and unnecessary stress for students participating in state assessment testing. To reduce the negative impacts on students, I worked across the aisle with my colleagues to sponsor and enact a bill to maintain our schools' standards for excellence by creating a more fair and effective evaluation system that allows schools to decide whether to include standardized testing (Chapter 27 of the Laws of 2019).

**PREVIOUSLY, POLICE OFFICERS** could only issue a ticket for illegally passing a school bus if they witnessed the crime in person. Despite public awareness efforts like Operation Safe Stop, illegally passing school buses both on the right and left while the bus is stopped. Therefore, my colleagues and I enacted legislation that would allow schools to implement a bus camera program to better safeguard children and track down violators of the law (Chapter 145 of the Laws of 2019).

**WITH MORE THAN 65,200** reported injuries resulting from furniture tipping over, my colleagues and I also came together in 2019 to pass Harper's Law (Chapter 163 of the Laws of 2019). This new law requires tip restraint devices and warning labels to help protect children from injury or death as the result of furniture tipping over on them. The new law is named for a 3-year-old toddler who lost her life in such an accident.

## NEW LAWS TO PROTECT NY'S CHILDREN

Children's safety is always a top priority for me as your State Assemblyman. This session I helped to pass the following measures that will better safeguard and support your children:



ASSEMBLYMAN MIKE NORRIS

**QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER**

Assemblyman  
**MIKE NORRIS**

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Albany, NY 12248

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LEARN MORE ABOUT  
MIKE'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
AND LEGISLATIVE  
PRIORITIES INSIDE!

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