



Assemblymember
Jo Anne Simon

52nd District



Announcements & Upcoming Events

February 2019

A Message from Jo Anne...

I am so pleased that the legislature continues to pass historic legislation this session, including bills to protect the rights of transgender people, expand access to higher education for Dreamers, provide justice for child victims of abuse, and more. The Assembly has passed these bills repeatedly, but we finally have a partner in the Senate who is working with us to stand up for New Yorkers. I know that many of you have been involved in advocacy efforts to push for these bills and are impacted by them - I thank you.

Sincerely,

Jo Anne Simon

Java with Jo Anne, Boerum Hill – 2/14/2019.

Is there a community issue or current event you're passionate about? Come and talk about it! Join me for a cup of coffee through my "Java with Jo Anne" series. The next one will take place Thurs., February 14th at Rucola (190 Dean St.) in Boerum Hill from 8:30-10:30AM. I hope to see you there.

Standing Up for Transgender Rights – GENDA Signed into Law.

All too often, transgender individuals come face to face with bigotry, inequality and discrimination solely because of who they are. From housing to health care, the essentials that so many of us take for granted are regularly denied. That's why the Assembly has once again passed the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA). GENDA protects the rights of transgender and gender-nonconforming New Yorkers and makes gender identity and expression one of the state's protected classes so that no one can be denied essentials like housing, health care, education and employment solely because of who they are ([A.747](#)). For over a decade, the Assembly has passed GENDA only to see the measure ignored in the Senate. I am absolutely thrilled that, under their new leadership, we have made history - the Senate has also passed this bill and it has been signed into law.

For transgender and gender-nonconforming people who have unfairly been seen as unequal in the eyes of the law for far too long and who have been undermined by this presidential administration, this is your victory. Here in New York, we know that everyone deserves respect and equal protection under the law.

NY Bans Conversion Therapy.

I also helped pass a ban on conversion therapy ([A.576](#), Glick/Hoylman). This bill would prohibit a mental health professional from engaging in efforts to change the sexual orientation of an individual under the age of 18. The bill also ensures that any mental health professional that is found to have violated this prohibition would be subject to professional misconduct and its applicable penalties. [Click here for my remarks on the bill.](#)

Child Victims Act is Passed.

Survivors of childhood sexual abuse have been denied justice for too long. I am relieved to have helped pass the Child Victims Act to allow more victims of childhood sexual abuse to face their abusers in a court of law ([A.2683](#)). The bill extends the civil and criminal statutes of limitations, as well as institutes a one-year “look-back window” during which past victims will be able to seek justice in court.

Childhood sexual abuse is an indescribably traumatizing experience that can take a lifetime to come to terms with. In many cases, it can take many years for a survivor to be ready to confront their abuser. While we cannot erase what happened, we can give power to victims and help them move forward with their lives without letting the perpetrators of these unthinkable crimes off the hook. Unfortunately, many criminals go uncharged, as the majority of perpetrators are known to the child, in a position of power and may even reside in the home.

The bill extends the statutes of limitations for criminal cases, allowing them to be commenced until the victim turns age 28 for felonies and age 23 for misdemeanors. Under current law, cases for the most serious sex offenses can already be commenced at any time. The bill would also push back the statute of limitations to permit civil actions to be brought until the victim’s 55th birthday. Further, the measure creates a one-year window for adult survivors to commence civil cases that, under current law, are barred because the statute of limitations has expired. This one-year window will allow victims who have lived with the terrible effects of childhood sexual abuse to finally seek the justice they’re owed.

[Click here for my remarks on the bill.](#)

Supporting our Dreamers: Dream Act is Passed.

The legislature also passed the Jose Peralta New York State DREAM Act to help ensure the children of immigrants can achieve their college dreams ([A.782](#)). The legislation is named in honor of the late State Sen. Jose Peralta, who championed the bill and who tragically passed away in November. Dreamers may not have been born here, but ‘Dreamers’ are New Yorkers through and through. They grew up here, went to school here and they deserve the same opportunities to succeed as everyone else. The legislation would allow undocumented college-bound students who meet certain eligibility requirements – such as attending high school in New York – to access the state Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and other assistance programs, including similar programs at community colleges. While the White House is more committed to building walls and tearing families apart, New York is standing up for our immigrant communities, promoting equality and investing in our future. [Click here for my remarks on the bill.](#)

Save the Date: Dyslexia Awareness Day in Albany, 3/14/2019.

You are cordially invited to attend the 4th Annual Dyslexia Awareness Day on Thursday, March 14th, 2019 at the New York State Capitol in Albany. This extraordinary event brings together students, parents, advocates, and experts from across the state who care about this issue. You will have an opportunity to hear from and network with others, and meet with legislators to share your experiences. Please check out the event page to RSVP and for more updates soon. Call 718-246-4889 for more details.

Carroll Park Community Visioning Session: Tues., Feb 26th, 6:30pm.

Join the Parks Department for this community meeting to discuss Carroll Park’s first renovation in 25 years. You can share your thoughts with Parks planning office at the first community visioning session at the PS58 cafeteria at 330 Smith Street (enter on Carroll St.). I hope to see you there!

Pre-K for All Applications – Due 3/15/2019.

Do you have a child born in 2015 ready to enter Pre-K in September? Every NYC child can start their education with Pre-K for All. The application is available in 10 languages, with interpretation services for 200 languages available over the phone and in person. Apply online at MySchools.nyc or nyc.gov/prek, by phone at 718-935-2009, or at a [Family Welcome Center](#). For more info, contact the Pre-K for All Outreach Team at 212-637-8000 or pre-k@schools.nyc.gov. Admissions guides are also available in my District Office. Applications are due March 15th. 3-K applications are also open, for children born in 2016, and the deadline is May 3rd. [Click here for more info.](#)

Affordable Housing Opportunity in Brooklyn Heights, Due 3/27/2019.

There are 23 newly constructed units at 146 Pierrepont St., Brooklyn, 11201 currently accepting applications. Preference will be given to people already living in Community Board 2 (Boerum Hill, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn Navy Yard, Clinton Hill, Downtown Brooklyn, DUMBO, Ft. Greene, Vinegar Hill). Applications are due 3/27/2019. For details: www.thepierrepontbk.com. Apply here, or by mail to 146 Pierrepont St Apartments, 1357 Broadway, Box 309 NY, NY 10018.

Congestion Pricing included in the Executive's Budget Proposal.

I have fought for congestion pricing and the equalization of tolling policies for over a decade and I'm a sponsor of the Move NY legislation on this topic. I was pleased to see congestion pricing included in the Executive's proposed budget, and though we still need details on this particular proposal, I am working with my colleagues to include this critical initiative in the budget. The fight for congestion pricing has been and will continue to be an uphill battle, but the benefits our city would reap make it clear that congestion pricing must be part of a holistic approach to our transportation policy. Taking cars off the streets would have environmental benefits, making the air cleaner within and without the Central Business District (CBD). Funds from travel into the CBD may not be the silver bullet, but with \$1 billion in estimated revenue per year, it would be a substantial part of the funding needed for the NYC Transit's [Fast Forward plan](#) to fix our subways, and those benefits would reverberate across NY. When we fix the subways, commuters will also regain hours of their life that were once lost to delays and faltering service.

Creating toll equity across the metropolitan area would disincentivize gratuitous travel through our district on the way to the East River bridges, and could decrease traffic on the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, [potentially](#) making the BQE repairs less impactful on Brooklyn Heights and the surrounding neighborhoods ([click here to view my questions to the MTA on congestion pricing](#) at the transit budget hearing). With fewer cars making unnecessary trips, our streets will be safer for pedestrians and bicyclists, and our buses would be able to increase their speeds beyond the crawl that current gridlock resigns them to. I am proud to have been a long-time leader on congestion pricing in the legislature, and I will continue to work with my colleagues, advocates, and the Governor to make funding for the MTA our top priority in Albany this year.

Want to join the push to support congestion pricing? Connect with advocates working on this issue: Riders Alliance & [TransitCenter](#). You can also talk with your friends in nearby areas to discuss what congestion pricing is and why we need it (my office can send you basic background information & research). For example, the Community Service Society's analysis found that of the only 4% of outer-borough residents who would pay a fee, most of whom have higher incomes; and that only 2% of lower-income commuters drive to work in Manhattan. The Tri-State Transportation Campaign also publishes

congestion pricing district-level factsheets of state legislative districts that analyzes how many commuters would be affected by congestion pricing.

See my streetsblog interview on congestion pricing for more background.

Property Tax Exemption Applications – Due 3/15.

The deadline to apply for homeowner tax exemptions is March 15th. If you have questions or to download an application, call my office or visit www.nyc.gov/finance.

Property Tax Exemptions Available Include:

- STAR: for homeowners with an annual income of \$500,000 or less
- Enhanced STAR: for seniors 65 and over with annual incomes of \$86,300 or less
- SCHE & DHE: for seniors 65 and over or disabled homeowners with annual incomes of \$58,399 or less
- Veterans: for those who served in the U.S. military during designated periods of conflict, their unremarried surviving spouses, and Gold Star parents
- Clergy: for active and retired members of the clergy and their unremarried surviving spouses

For tenants interested in freezing their rent*:

You May Qualify for Rent Freeze if You:

- Are at least 62 years old, or at least 18 years old with a qualifying disability
- Have a household income of \$50,000 or less
- Live in a rent-regulated apartment (monthly stabilized, rent controlled, or SRO)
- Spend more than 1/3 of your income on rent

*Note that NYCHA residents and Section 8 recipients are not eligible for the Rent Freeze program.

Make Your Vote Count! Please spread the word about the voter registration deadlines for the upcoming New York City Public Advocate's Race on Feb. 26, 2019.

Tuesday, Feb. 26, 2019 Special Election Deadlines:

- **FEB 1** Last day to register (by mail) to vote in the special election (must be received by city Board of Elections [BOE] by February 6)
- **FEB 16** Last day to register (in person) to vote in the special election
- **FEB 19** Last day to postmark absentee ballot application
- **FEB 25** Last day to apply (in person) for an absentee ballot
- Last date to postmark absentee ballot (must be received by city BOE by March 5)
- **FEB 26** Last day to deliver absentee ballot (in person) to the city BOE

Register to Vote: <http://voting.nyc/>

<https://www.nyccfb.info/nyc-votes/vgwelcome/special-election-2019/>

For community and policy updates, sign up for my email alerts by emailing simonj@nysassembly.gov

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