



Assembly Member Dick Gottfried **Community Update**

Manhattan Community Board 4, April 1, 2015

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Proposed Rezoning Raises Concerns

In order to advance its important goal of adding 200,000 units to New York City's stock of affordable housing, the De Blasio administration recently proposed a "Zoning for Quality and Affordability" text amendment to the City's zoning regulations. The proposed rezoning would increase the allowable height of new development across the city, including in "contextual" zoning districts — areas where specific limits on building height, streetwalls, and setbacks help ensure that new buildings fit their context.

For many years, elected officials, community boards, and community activists have worked to protect the character, quality of life, and affordability of our neighborhoods. The City's proposed rezoning plan undermines these hard-won gains by lifting the height caps by as much as 20 to 30 percent. In communities like the Special West Chelsea District and the Clinton Special District in Hell's Kitchen, it would undo efforts to maintain the communities' residential, low-rise character and affordable rents. It undermines contextual zoning.

I joined Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and my colleagues in Manhattan in testimony to the City Planning Commission voicing these concerns.

Assembly Passes Reproductive Health Act

Last week, the Assembly passed the Reproductive Health Act ([A. 6221](#)) the day after it was favorably reported by the Health Committee, which I chair. Sponsored by Manhattan Assembly Member Deborah Glick, the RHA would align State public health law with the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision.

In practice, *Roe* has guaranteed abortion rights in every state, including New York, since 1973. However, while New York's own pioneering 1970 abortion rights law contains many protections similar to those established by *Roe*, several protections in *Roe* would be lost in New York if that landmark Supreme Court decision were overturned. The Reproductive Health Act (RHA) will permanently codify in State law the rights that *Roe* has guaranteed since 1973.

The ability of a woman to make her own decisions regarding her reproductive health is a fundamental right. New York State must strengthen reproductive

health rights and respect women's decisions by enacting the RHA into law. (To learn about other legislation reported by the Assembly Health Committee in the past month, please see the attached press release.)

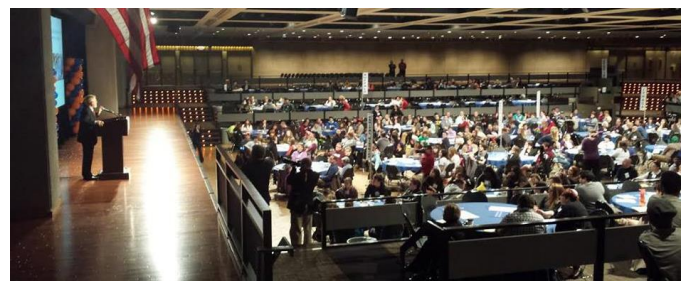
Get on the Bus for LGBT Equality & Justice Day in Albany 4/28: Time to Pass GENDA!

For seven years in a row, the Assembly has passed the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA), legislation I sponsor in the Assembly to ban discrimination on the basis of gender expression or identity. This long-overdue bill is the top priority for the Empire State Pride Agenda (ESPA), New York's statewide LGBT advocacy organization.

Last month, ESPA joined with other advocates and elected officials supporting LGBT rights to hold a news conference to focus attention on the need to pass this important civil rights legislation and to press the State Senate into allowing the bill onto the floor for a vote.

This year, advocates of LGBT rights will be traveling to Albany for ESPA's annual "Equality and Justice Day" at the State Capitol, on **Tuesday, April 28**. If you are interested in traveling to Albany to help rally support for GENDA and would like transportation, please register with ESPA at

<http://www.prideagenda.org/events/equality-justice-day>.



At last year's Equality & Justice Day in Albany, I spoke about the importance of enacting GENDA into law before hundreds of New Yorkers advocating for LGBT rights.

Study on New York Health Act: It Would Save Almost Every New Yorker Money and Provide Better Care

A new economic analysis of the New York Health Act ([A.5062, Gottfried/S.3525, Perkins](#)), my bill to establish publicly funded universal health care in New York, shows that the bill would net New York savings of \$45 billion a year, even after counting increased spending to cover the uninsured and eliminate co-payments, deductibles and out-of-network charges. Last month, Professor Gerald Friedman, Chair of the Economics Department at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, released a comprehensive economic study on the economic impact of the bill.

The study's key findings include:

- The Act would save \$71 billion in its first year:
- \$26.5 billion by eliminating private health insurance administration and profit;
- \$20.7 billion by reducing healthcare provider administration of health insurance claims;
- \$2 billion by eliminating employer administration of health insurance benefits;
- \$5.4 billion by reducing fraudulent billing;
- \$16.3 billion by capturing savings from over-priced drugs and medical devices.
- \$26 billion of the savings would be used to increase coverage, meet demand for increased utilization, pay healthcare providers fairly and retrain displaced workers, leaving \$45 billion (\$2200 per New Yorker) in net savings.
- 98% of New Yorkers (families making up to \$436,000 a year) would spend less on health care coverage under the Act than they do now.
- Overall savings to businesses would spur the creation of over 200,000 new jobs.
- Property taxes could be cut as local governments would save over \$13 billion, because New York Health would take over the local share of Medicaid and the cost of public employee benefits would be reduced.
- 14,000 deaths would be prevented by providing universal access to healthcare.

This detailed economic study provides clear proof that a universal health care plan is the right move for New York. The New York Health Act would reduce costs for families, employers, health care providers and taxpayers; create jobs; reduce property taxes and make sure every New Yorker has high-quality health care.

The study can be read online at:

<http://www.dickgottfried.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Friedman-Fiscal-Study-New-York-Health-Act-FINAL-3-13-15.pdf>

Fighting to Raise the Minimum Wage

On March 27, I joined fast food and airport workers, other elected officials, and advocates from organizations including the Working Families Party, 32BJ-SEIU, New York Communities for Change, and Make the Road New York in a rally at City Hall to call for raising New York's minimum wage to \$15 an hour. It is now \$8.75 and will go to \$9.00 next year – still far too low to make ends meet for a family in New York.



Speaking out at City Hall for a livable minimum wage.

Governor Cuomo proposed increasing the hourly minimum wage to \$10.50, and establishing a higher minimum wage of \$11.50 in New York City. I strongly support raising New York's minimum wage to \$15.00. I also support Mayor de Blasio's call to allow New York City to establish its own higher minimum wage, as other cities around the country have done.

This is a critical step to reducing the widening income inequality in New York.

Family Leave Legislation Passes Assembly

Last month, the Assembly passed the Paid Family Leave Act ([A. 3870](#), introduced by Assembly Member Cathy Nolan), strong legislation that would ensure employees keep their jobs and still earn some income while taking time off from work to manage an unexpected medical emergency or care for a family member, including domestic partner, or newborn, foster, or newly adopted child.

The federal Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 provides an employee with as much as 12 weeks of unpaid leave. But most workers cannot afford to go completely without income for long, if at all, and not all are covered by the federal law in the first place.

Under this bill, paid leave would be a new benefit under Workers Compensation, paid for by workers paying up to 45 cents per week. Employees would be entitled to up to 12 weeks of paid family leave, two-thirds of the worker's salary during the leave, and guaranteed job security during the absence.

Union Square Pavilion Update

During the Bloomberg administration, against the community's wishes, the Parks Department chose to use the Union Square Park Pavilion and part of the Park's northern plaza part of the year for a restaurant. The community had been fighting for years to restore the Pavilion and the north plaza for public use. Community members and I took the Parks Department to court, arguing this was not an appropriate use of park space. The case went all the way to the State Court of Appeals, but sadly, we lost.

Then the de Blasio administration agreed to return the covered Pavilion to its original intended community use after only one season of restaurant use, starting last October. Unfortunately, I recently learned that the administration has reneged on its commitment to return the Pavilion to full time use, which means the restaurant will be allowed to operate from approximately April 15 - October 15 and the community is only allowed to use the Pavilion in the fall and winter (October 15- April 15).

I am angry about this, and, along with U.S. Rep. Carolyn Maloney, Manhattan Borough President Brewer, State Senators Krueger and Hoylman, Assembly Member Glick, and Councilmember Johnson, I have written to the City urging it to abide by the promise previously made to free the Pavilion completely for the use and enjoyment of the public (*attached*).

New York Public Library Reorganization

The New York Public Library held a town hall meeting on March 26 to solicit feedback and ideas from the public about the Library's plans to reorganize the Midtown Campus. Approximately 300 people attended.

The library plans to increase circulation and enlarge the research staff to better assist the public in accessing the vast archival materials in its collections. It will open more space to the public, increase the hours, stay open later, offer more variety and flexibility, and make expert staff more accessible.

The NYPL also plans to increase the services in the business library to help entrepreneurs to start new businesses, increase programs and services for Pre-K through 12th grade by creating a learning center, and serve the needs of adults by increasing technology services, job search information, learning foreign languages, and other programs for adults.

For more information and to send your thoughts on the plans visit: <http://www.nypl.org/>.

Legislation to Require Community Advisory Boards for Hospitals

Hospital community advisory boards provide a vital public service to New Yorkers. Last week, my bill that requires every hospital in New York to have a community advisory board was reported out by the Assembly Health Committee. The bill, [A. 376](#), would mandate that every non-profit and public hospital in New York State have a community advisory board (CAB) that would advise the hospital and cooperate in issuing the hospital's organizational mission statement identifying the populations and communities it serves; stating its commitment to serving the health care needs of its catchment area, including undertaking charitable care; and soliciting the views of the communities it serves.



Speaking at last month's Bellevue Hospital Community Advisory Board Annual Legislative Breakfast. (Photo credit: Bellevue Hospital)

Last month, I spoke at the Bellevue Hospital CAB's Annual Legislative Breakfast, as I do every year. I talked about the New York Health Act, the bill I've introduced in the Assembly to establish publicly funded universal healthcare in New York; the proposed State budget and its impact on health care; and the critical role that public hospitals play in health care delivery. (To learn about other legislation reported by the Assembly Health Committee in the past month, please see the attached press release.)

Progress in Washington on Medical Marijuana

Our U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand joined Senators Cory Booker of New Jersey and Rand Paul of Kentucky to introduce the CARERS Act (S. 683, the “Compassionate Access, Research Expansion and Respect States Act”), a federal bill that would allow the use of medical marijuana without fear of federal prosecution in states where such use is legal under state law.

Twenty-three states plus the District of Columbia have already legalized medical marijuana, including New York, thanks to the 2014 Compassionate Care Act that Senator Diane Savino and I sponsored in the Legislature. New York’s law includes provisions for the legal use of medical marijuana for patients with certain medical conditions, establishes a certification and registration process for patients registered with the New York State Department of Health (DOH), allows organizations registered with DOH to manufacture and dispense medical marijuana, and imposes an excise tax on medical marijuana.

The federal bill is an important step ahead for intelligent, science-based health policy. It would help us implement our medical marijuana law, by reducing doubts about what the federal government will or won’t allow. Even more important, it would move marijuana from being a Schedule I drug to Schedule II, meaning a controlled substance with recognized medical use. New York then made the same change (we always keep our schedules in line with the federal classifications), medical marijuana would be available on the same basis as morphine, hydrocodone, and many other drugs. It continues to defy logic that New York’s medical marijuana law remains much more restrictive than the laws governing drugs that are so much more dangerous.

I have strongly criticized the overly burdensome restrictions imposed by the executive branch on the production and dispensing of medical marijuana in New York under the new law. Because of changes insisted upon by the administration, the law only allows five licenses and 20 dispensaries in New York, a state whose population numbers nearly 20 million residents.

New York’s law and the implementing regulations are far more restrictive than necessary and reflect an unjustified hostility to medical marijuana. I will continue to press DOH to amend the regulations to make New York’s regulations of medical marijuana more workable and patient-friendly, so that New Yorkers suffering from serious medical conditions and who would benefit from medically prescribed marijuana can do so without unnecessary interference by the State.



Last month I spoke about New York’s overly restrictive medical marijuana regulations at a forum in Albany hosted by the media outlet Capital New York. (Photo credit: Capital New York)

Pre-K Enrollment Period Open Until April 24

Children in New York City born in 2011 are eligible to attend a free, high-quality pre-K program starting in September 2015. The pre-K enrollment period ends on Friday, April 24, 2015.

Pre-K programs are available at NYC Department of Education (DOE) district schools, NYC Early Education Centers (NYCEECs), and charter schools. Some district programs provide a Dual Language option that offers instruction in two languages—half in English and half in the target language—with the aim of enabling students to become bilingual. Some NYCEECs provide Enhanced Language Instruction that supports language development in the native languages spoken by children.

Parents and guardians can use the New York City Department of Education (DOE) School Search tool to find a list of pre-k programs. There are three ways to apply:

- 1) Online through DOE’s application site at <https://prod.semsnycdoe.com/parentsite/>.
- 2) Over the phone by calling 718-935-2067.
- 3) In person at a Family Welcome Center (for a list, please go to <http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/NewStudents/WelcomeCenters/>).

The same application can be used for pre-K programs at all district schools and full-day programs. You can choose up to 12 programs and list them in order of preference, and you can update and resubmit your application until the April 24, 2015 deadline.

The online application is available in 10 languages. If you apply over the phone or in person, interpretation services are available in over 200 languages.

It's Tax-Filing Season: Free Tax Preparation and Tax Credits to Help Ease the Burden

Federal, State, and City taxes are due April 15. There are several free resources to help New Yorkers prepare their returns, as well as access information about tax credits that can be worth up to \$10,000.

Any New Yorker earning up to \$60,000 annually can obtain free on-line assistance by going to www.nyc.gov/taxprep. The online service is easy and secure; please use a secure computer to protect your privacy. You can also call 311 and ask for tax preparation assistance.

There are also more than 200 "Volunteer Income Tax Assistance" (VITA) sites across the five boroughs where New Yorkers with income under certain limits can file their taxes for free – including several in our Assembly district (see addresses below). At these sites, hosted by the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), free, in-person tax preparation is offered to New Yorkers with children who have annual incomes up to \$53,000, or to those without children earning up to \$18,000 a year.

Every year, thousands of New Yorkers – about one in five – miss out on up to \$10,000 in tax credits, like the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) or the Child Care Tax Credit (CCTC). These credits offer a powerful tool to combat poverty, but far too many remain unaware of how to benefit from them. The free assistance at VITA tax preparation sites can help eligible New Yorkers qualify for these credits and claim them when filing their returns.

Tax preparers at VITA sites are IRS-trained, familiar with tax credits like the EITC and the CCTC, and know how to protect your documents and use a secure website to share them for tax preparation.

There are free VITA tax prep sites at:

The Financial Clinic 115 West 30th St. New York, NY 10001	Fulton Senior Center 119 Ninth Avenue New York, NY 10011 212-924-6710
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Muhlenberg Library 209 West 23rd St. New York, NY 10011 212-924-1585	Community Church of New York 40 East 35th Street New York, NY 10016 212-683-4988
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Science, Industry and Business Library
188 Madison Avenue
Manhattan, NY 10016

In addition, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) operates a free "Tax-Aide" available to low- and moderate-income earners (no specific income cap is specified, however) through April 17.

Tax-Aide sites are open a minimum of one day a week for three to five hours, with most sites staffed by three to six volunteers. Most Tax-Aide sites require an appointment, but some accept walk-ins; appointments usually take about an hour. In the 75th Assembly District, Tax-Aide services are being offered at the Muhlenberg Library, the Fulton Senior Center, the Community Church, and the Science, Industry and Business Library (see addresses above).

For more sites, see:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dca/html/TaxMap/index.html>.

To learn more about AARP's Tax Aide services or to make an appointment, please call 888-OUR-AARP (888-687-2277) or go to www.aarp.org/taxaide.

State Budget Passed by Legislature

On Tuesday, March 31, the Assembly and Senate passed the 2015-16 New York State budget. The \$150.3 billion plan increased funding for our public schools, expands access to health and child care, supports new housing for the homeless, makes it easier for more New Yorkers go to college, and helps struggling families.

The budget also includes **ethics reforms** that require public officials to publicly disclose more details about outside income they receive from non-government employment, be required to list the names of any clients or customers from whom they receive more than \$5,000 (with limited privacy exceptions) and describe the types of services provided to them, establish provisions for the forfeiture of the government pensions of any State or municipal officials convicted of criminal misconduct in their public office, reforms the system of per diems and travel reimbursements, and strengthens the ban on using campaign funds for "personal use."

By the way, I am a lawyer, but I do not have a law practice, or any outside income. I only work for you.

Unfortunately, the State Senate would not agree to reforms in the most important problem in public ethics – campaign financing – or to limit outside income of elected officials.

Key elements of the budget include:

- **a \$1.6 billion increase in education aid** over last year, including an additional \$30 million for pre-k programs, for a total of \$23 billion in education spending. The Assembly turned down the Governor's proposal for teacher evaluation. The Board of Regents – a panel of education experts – will develop systems for evaluating teachers in individual school districts.

- **increasing access to affordable health care** by moving ahead with the new Basic Health Program for over 400,000 moderate-income New Yorkers above Medicaid eligibility. The new State budget also:
 - restores \$78.9 million to Medicaid;
 - restores \$10.7 million to preserve so-called “spousal refusal,” which protects couples from losing their life savings if a spouse requires long-term care.
 - creates a \$19.5 million community health center revolving loan fund.
 - rejects the governor’s proposal to greatly reduce pharmacy reimbursements, which would have resulted in severe consequences for providers that care for the neediest individuals in our state.
 - rejects the governor’s proposal to permit hedge funds and other “private equity” to own and control hospitals. Currently, hospitals in NY are not-for-profits or publicly-owned. Allowing corporate ownership of hospitals would put profits over the well-being of patients and community needs.
 - provides an additional \$1 million – on top of the \$7.8 million in the governor’s budget – to support opiate abuse prevention and treatment services, as well as an additional \$2 million to be used to hire additional substance abuse prevention and intervention specialists.
 - restores \$21.3 million in spending for 39 health program categories that would have had their funding cut by 15 percent and been restructured into five grant pools;
 - provides \$4 million (\$1 million more than the governor’s proposal) for the Nurse Family Partnership, a community health program that assists first-time and low-income mothers;
 - provides \$3.3 million in funding for the Enhancing the Quality of Adult Living (EQUAL) program to improve quality of care for residents of adult care facilities;
 - adds \$1.5 million to the Spinal Cord Injury Research Program to encourage innovative research into the treatment and cure of paralysis and damage caused by spinal cord injury, for a total funding of \$8.5 million;
 - provides \$2 million to support infertility services;
 - rejects the Governor’s proposal to end the New York State physician profile website, which gives New Yorkers information on physicians, including any malpractice or other claims against them;
 - adds \$750,000 in support for family planning services;
 - provides \$525,000 for the HIV/AIDS Community Service Program (CSP);
 - provides \$525,000 for HIV/AIDS Multi-Service Agencies (MSA);
 - provides \$500,000 for Community Health Advocates;
 - provides \$400,000 for the Primary Care Development Corporation;
 - provides \$200,000 for the National Lymphatic and Tissue Bank;
 - provides \$50,000 for the New York State Breast Cancer Network; and
 - provides \$39,000 for the New York State Coalition for School-Based Health Centers.
- **making higher education more affordable** through greater investment in City University of New York (CUNY) and State University of New York (SUNY) colleges and students. The budget includes:
 - a 20% overall increase in funding for opportunity programs such as
 - the Educational Opportunity Program (\$4.4 million increase for a total of \$26.8 million);
 - the Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge program (\$3.9 million increase for a total of \$23.4 million);
 - Higher Education Opportunity Program (\$3.8 million increase for a total of \$29.6 million);
 - Liberty Partnerships (\$1.9 million increase for a total of \$15.3 million);
 - the Science and Technology Entry Program (\$1.7 million increase for a total of \$13.1 million);
 - the Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (\$1.3 million increase for a total of \$9.9 million);
 - College Discovery (\$187,000 increase for a total of \$1.1 million);
 - CUNY LEADS, a specially designed academic and career program for students with disabilities (\$500,000 more, for a total of \$1.5 million in funding);
 - \$250,000 for CUNY Pipeline to help bring more diversity to graduate programs;
 - \$5 million for a new New York AIMS Merit Scholarship program;
 - \$5 million for the Get On Your Feet Loan Forgiveness program;
 - \$1.4 million to allow disabled students greater access to the Tuition Assistance Program;
 - and a \$250,000 increase for the Social Worker Loan Forgiveness program, for a total of \$1.5 million.

The budget also provides \$181 million in capital funding for CUNY.
- **support for affordable housing and to assist the homeless.** The 2015-16 State budget provides \$415.6 million for housing and community development programs, including:
 - \$100 million for New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) capital repairs;
 - \$25 million for Mitchell-Lama Repair and Revitalization;

- \$34.7 million for community development programs and \$155.5 million for affordable housing programs, and;
- Restores \$742,000 in funding for the New York City Housing Authority Tenant Watch Program.

The budget also significantly increases funding for services and programs for homeless New Yorkers by providing nearly \$440 million for homelessness services and programs over the next four years, including:

- \$1 million for the Emergency Needs for the Homeless program to address homelessness and offer essential services to those in need;
 - \$220 million to provide rental subsidies for domestic violence victims, seniors and families struggling to afford rent;
 - \$124.5 million to provide services that allow individuals to live independently in supportive housing outside the homeless shelter system;
 - \$40 million for the Living in Communities (LINC) program, which provides rental subsidies for working families living in shelters;
 - \$34.2 million for shelter, transitional housing and homelessness prevention programs;
 - \$15 million for a new pilot program in New York City aimed at preventing evictions by increasing housing allowances;
 - \$4.5 million to assist runaway and homeless youth; and
 - \$1 million for emergency homeless needs.
- **more support for small business and community development and for minority- and women-owned enterprises**, including:
 - \$365,000 in additional funding for the Minority- and Women-owned Business Development and Lending Program, for a total of \$1 million;
 - an additional \$1.5 million for the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), for a total of \$3.45 million;
 - and an additional \$300,000 – for a total of \$1.8 million – for Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), which facilitate loans to small businesses that may otherwise not qualify for a bank loan and provide counseling for small-business owners.
 - **better access to affordable child care:**
 - \$19.3 million for the Advantage Afterschool Program;
 - \$9.3 million for Facilitated Enrollment to expand eligibility for child care assistance to working families with incomes up to 275 percent of the federal poverty level
 - a \$1.3 million increase for SUNY Child Care Centers, for a total of \$2.3 million; and
 - and \$1 million for CUNY Child Care Centers, for a total of \$1.8 million.
 - **expanding broadband access** by providing \$500 million to expand high-speed broadband access across the state, with priority funding going toward public libraries and educational opportunity centers;
 - **preserving vital family services and programs** by restoring \$24 million in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) aid for every program eliminated in the governor’s original budget proposal, and provides funding for critical programs such as:
 - \$3 million for Non-Residential Domestic Violence Services to assist domestic violence victims not residing in shelters;
 - \$1.6 million for the Displaced Homemakers program to provide counseling and job training to homemakers to help them secure employment and become economically independent;
 - \$1.6 million for Preventive Services to provide prevention, intervention and treatment services to keep families together and children safe;
 - \$1.5 million for Career Pathways to provide training to low-income young adults to prepare them for jobs in high-growth sectors;
 - \$1 million for the Emergency Needs for the Homeless program to address homelessness and offer essential services to those in need; and
 - \$1 million for the Kinship Caregiver program to help caregivers access health, education, financial and legal services for children in their care.

Assembly Health Committee Update: Reproductive Health Act Goes to the Assembly floor

Bill Would Make "Roe" State Law

The Assembly Committee on Health favorably reported 23 bills at its meetings on Tuesday, March 3 and Tuesday, March 24, including [the Reproductive Health Act \(RHA\)](#), sponsored by Assembly Member Deborah Glick. The RHA aligns state public health law with existing federal law.

In practice, the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision has guaranteed abortion rights in New York since 1973. However, while New York's own state law is similar to the protections of *Roe*, there are some protections in *Roe* that would be lost if it were overturned. The RHA codifies in state law the rights that *Roe* has provided since 1973. "The right to reproductive freedom is a fundamental right. New York State must strengthen reproductive health rights and respect women's decisions," said Assembly Health Committee chair Richard N. Gottfried, a co-sponsor of the bill. The bill is expected to be passed by the Assembly on Wednesday, March 25.

The Committee also advanced legislation [requiring all hospitals to have community advisory boards; authorizing collective negotiations by health care providers with health plans](#); and [barring health plans from changing a patient's prescription without the prescriber's consent](#). For more information on a particular bill, please contact the sponsor listed after the description. For the text of a bill, supporting memorandum, and information on its status, go to: <http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/menuf.cgi>

Tuesday, March 3

Blood Donation Drive Grant Program - Would authorize grants to assist local community groups for conducting blood drives, within amounts appropriated. ([A375, Gottfried](#))

Requiring Hospital Community Advisory Boards - Requires every hospital to have a community advisory board. ([A376, Gottfried](#))

Responsible Pesticide Management in Hospitals - Establishes requirements for integrated pest management plans for hospitals and requirements for notification of hospital occupants about pesticide applications. ([A700, Englebright](#))

Well Water Education Act - Requires the Department of Health to prepare educational materials on the importance of testing drinking water wells. Real estate agents would provide the material to buyers of homes served by wells. ([A804, Jaffee](#))

Protecting Day Care Air Quality - Bars day care centers from being built near environmentally hazardous sites. Requires air quality and ventilation standards for day care centers. ([A947, Englebright](#))

Notifying Patients of Hospital Policies - Requires hospitals to disclose to patients, prior to admission (except in an emergency), policies that may be contrary to a patient's wishes (e.g., relating to withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment). ([A1003, Rosenthal](#))

Hospital Identification and Assistance for Domestic Violence Victims - Establishes procedures for hospitals and emergency rooms to properly identify and assist suspected or confirmed cases of domestic violence. ([A1232, Lavine](#))

Colon Cancer Tax Check-Off - Establishes an income tax check-off to fund colon cancer education. ([A1295, Cymbrowitz](#))

Clinical Trial Access & Education Fund - Promotes access to clinical trials by creating a state grant program to help pay for travel and lodging for patients and family members. ([A1567, Gottfried](#))

Proper Handling of Drug Samples - Establishes recordkeeping and safety standards for the handling of drug samples in health care practitioner offices, to reduce the risk of dispensing outdated, expired, improperly stored, or adulterated drugs that can cause adverse reactions. ([A1615, Gottfried](#))

State Building Smoking Prohibitions - Prohibits smoking within 50 feet of an entrance to a state office or agency building. ([A1732, Cahill](#))

Preventing Underage Internet Purchase of Cigarettes - Requires companies that sell tobacco products over the internet to acquire a signed authorization stating the recipient is 18 years of age or older. ([A1743, Pretlow](#))

Managed Care Patients' Rights - Assures that a patient who is being treated for a terminal illness can still have access to the health care practitioner who is treating him/her even if the practitioner is no longer in the patient's health plan network. ([A1932, Dinowitz](#))

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) on Golf Courses - Requires all golf courses to have at least one automated external defibrillator and a trained operator present during hours of operation. ([A1941, Markey](#))

Expedited Partner Therapy for Sexually Transmitted Diseases - Allows for expedited partner therapy for any sexually transmitted diseases for which it is recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC.) Current law covers expedited partner therapy for chlamydia but no other STDs. ([A2170, Schimel](#))

Health Plans Switching Drugs - Bars health plans from changing a patient's prescription without the prescriber's consent, and bars contracts limiting a physician from referring a patient to an out-of-network provider. ([A2210, Gottfried](#))

Lead Hazard Clean-up - Requires the New York State Commissioner of Health to take action when an area of lead poisoning has been designated. Current law allows action but does not require it. ([A2592, Dinowitz](#))

Tuesday, March 24

Education and Outreach for Sexual Offense Victims Programs - Authorizes the Department of Health to conduct education and outreach regarding counseling and advocacy programs for victims of sexual offenses. ([A86, Paulin](#))

Health Care Provider Collective Negotiation with Health Plans - Allows doctors and other health care providers to form organizations to negotiate collectively with health plans. Negotiations could cover rates of payment, procedures for approving coverage of services, and other terms and conditions. ([A336, Gottfried](#))

Medicaid Orthopedic Footwear Coverage - Authorizes Medicaid coverage of orthopedic footwear to address consequences of illness, injury, or disease. ([A4602A, Colton](#))

Organ and Tissue Donor Age Expansion - Allows people age 15 and over, but under 18, to register as organ and tissue donors, with parental consent. ([A4990, Ortiz](#))

Notice of Patients' Rights - Requires hospitals to post notices about patient rights to receive care regardless of immigration status and bars hospitals from inquiring about a patient's immigration status. ([A5853, Ortiz](#))

Reproductive Health Act - Codifies the reproductive rights guaranteed by Roe v. Wade in New York State public health law. ([A6221, Glick](#))



April 2, 2015

Hon. Bill de Blasio
Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Re: Union Square Park

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

We have heard from your administration that you are pulling back on the commitment made to (a) remove the restaurant from the Union Square Park Pavilion and (b) allow for public programming to commence year round.

According to your staff, the reason for not removing the restaurant from the Pavilion is anticipated difficulties in having the restaurant operate on the plaza.

The obvious solution is to stand by your decision to remove the restaurant from the Pavilion, as we and the community have requested. A restaurant is no more needed on the plaza than in the Pavilion. But the community wants use of the Pavilion, not a restaurant.

This is not about what is convenient for the owners of the restaurant; it is about what is good for the community.

We urge you again to stand by the principle that parks are for the people, not meant to be cash cows. The return on the public's investment is a restored Pavilion and park. As you have said, "We believe that parkland is sacred."

We ask the City Parks Department to reclaim control over the Pavilion to allow for public, community use 365 days of the year.

Best regards,

Very truly yours,

Richard N. Gottfried
NYS Assembly Member

Carolyn Maloney
US Congress Member

Gale Brewer
Manhattan Borough President

Liz Krueger
NYS Senator

Brad Hoylman
NYS Senator

Deborah Glick
Assembly Member

Corey Johnson
NYC Council Member

cc: Manhattan Community Board 5