

Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal

Community Report May 2014



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Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal Update on Beacon School Building

After years of work and advocacy, the community has finally been heard! In September 2015 Beacon High School will move into its new home downtown, and 227 West 61st Street will be transformed into a brand new middle school and high school.

Everyone knows that School District 3 has seen an explosion of growth in population over the last several years. This growth has created a dire need for new middle school seats to accommodate growing families and newcomers alike. The community has also expressed a desire for a high school that serves District 3 families.

After numerous public forums on the issue last year and months of advocacy by the District 3 Community Education Council (CEC3) and Manhattan Community Board 7, along with all the West Side elected officials, I am pleased to report that the community was able to demonstrate to the New York City Department of Education (DOE) that the new schools were desperately needed.

Students will be able to enroll in the new middle school for the September 2015 academic year. The school, along with critical information such as the school leader and programmatic details, will be listed in the Middle School Directory in time for the first round of middle school admissions. Many decisions still need to be made about the new school, and made quickly. The community will continue to work closely with the DOE in the coming weeks, and I urge you to share with me any suggestions that you might have.

Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal Update on Imperial Court Hotel

I have continued to oppose the Imperial Court Hotel's appeal to the New York City Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) to reopen the hotel that formerly operated illegally on the premises at 307 West 79th Street. I have met with tenants and neighbors who were targeted by the owner Grand Imperial LLC's attempts to intimidate the community into supporting his bid with BSA by threatening that, if he is not successful, he would install a Safe Haven-model homeless shelter in the building.

I testified twice before BSA in opposition to Mr. Edelstein's appeal, joining tenants, neighbors and affordable housing advocates. I was pleased that the BSA indicated skepticism of the owner's arguments and hope that the Board will soon deny the appeal and send a message to Grand Imperial and other landlords of class A Single Room Occupancy buildings that illegal hotels are not welcome in New York City.

I also wrote to Mayor de Blasio New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) Commissioner Gilbert Taylor opposing the Safe Haven shelter application, which would allow Grand Imperial to avoid renting over 150 vacant units to tenants who need them. DHS thankfully denied the proposal and chose not to reward a slumlord for his bad behavior. I will keep working to ensure that Grand Imperial returns all units in the Imperial Court to their intended use as permanent affordable housing.

ASSEMBLYMEMBER LINDA B. ROSENTHAL UPCOMING EVENTS

SCRIE, DRIE AND HOMEOWNERS' EXEMPTION CLINIC

With the New York City Department of Finance

For current recipients of and those interested in:

- Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE)
- Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE)
- Senior Citizen Homeowners' Exemption (SCHE)
- Disabled Homeowners' Exemption (DHE)

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 2014
2:00-5:00 P.M.**

**DISTRICT OFFICE OF ASSEMBLYMEMBER ROSENTHAL
230 WEST 72ND STREET, SUITE 2F
(BETWEEN BROADWAY AND WEST END AVENUE)**

If you are 62 or older or disabled and are a rent-stabilized or rent-controlled tenant or live in a Mitchell-Lama or other subsidized development, you may be eligible for a rent freeze! If you are a homeowner, co-op or condo owner, you may be eligible to have your taxes or maintenance reduced!

Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal, her staff and representatives from the Department of Finance will assist with filling out applications and answer any questions regarding the program or application process.

**TO RSVP, PLEASE CONTACT 212-873-6368 OR
ROSENTHALL@ASSEMBLY.STATE.NY.US.**

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY PUBLIC HEARING: IMPACTS OF RADON FROM NATURAL GAS ON INDOOR AIR QUALITY

**FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2014
10:00 A.M.**

**250 BROADWAY, 19TH FLOOR
(BETWEEN PARK PLACE AND MURRAY STREET)**

Please join me at an official hearing on my bill, A.6863-B, that would require gas companies delivering natural gas in New York State to set up a comprehensive system to ensure that the gas delivered into people's homes does not contain deadly levels of radon, a cancer-causing radioactive toxin. Though oral testimony is by invitation only, you may submit written testimony that will be entered on the official record.



Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal Releases Recommendations for Overhaul of SCRIE and DRIE

I included a series of recommendations to reform the administration of Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) and Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) by the New York City Department of Finance in my testimony before a New York City Council oversight hearing on the administration of the programs.

Applying for SCRIE or DRIE should not be a guessing game for seniors. Hundreds of eligible seniors in my district have been wrongfully denied or terminated from SCRIE and DRIE in recent years because of bad or inconsistently-applied policies. These recommendations would streamline the application process and reduce bureaucratic errors to ensure that all policies are implemented fairly and consistently.

My proposed reforms call for the promulgation of comprehensive regulations to provide tenants and their advocates a clearer understanding of the internal policies used by Finance staff when processing applications. The reforms also include a series of specific changes, both to broader policies and to individual forms, which would ensure compliance with the enabling State law, streamline the application process and make many aspects of SCRIE and DRIE more equitable and accessible.

Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal Secures Critical Funding for Study of Lymphedema

I was pleased to present William Repicci, Executive Director of the Lymphatic Education & Research Network (LE&RN), with a resolution commemorating March 6, 2014 as Lymphedema Awareness Day in New York State.

In this year's State budget, I was able to secure \$200,000 in funding to support LE&RN's critically important and life-changing work. Despite the fact that lymphedema and other lymphatic diseases affect an estimated 10 million Americans, many of whom are cancer survivors, this debilitating disease does not receive the attention it warrants, either in terms of public awareness or funding. This lack of attention hurts those with lymphatic conditions, many of whom already feel isolated by the disease, and adds insult to very real suffering. It is critical that we here in New York do everything possible to raise awareness and move closer to a cure.

Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal's GMO Labeling Bill Passes Assembly Committee on Consumer Affairs

After months of hard work and despite the best efforts of lobbyists for the industry whose goal it was to 'kill this bill in committee,' I am pleased that my GMO bill was successfully reported out of the Committee on Consumer Affairs. The vast majority of New Yorkers want to know what is in the food that they feed to their families, and today New York State is one step closer to making mandatory GMO labeling a reality. I look forward to continuing to work with the advocates and my colleagues in the Assembly to bring this bill to the floor for a vote.

My bill A.3525-D will require that certain food products containing GMOs be prominently labeled, providing consumers with important purchasing information.

Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal, NYPD and SLA Get Fairytail Lounge Shut Down

For the past four years, my constituents on and around West 48th Street have been subjected to near incessant noise and regular disturbances from the Fairytail Lounge, located at 500 West 48th Street. Fairytail's management had also made numerous agreements with Manhattan Community Board 4 (such as the inclusion of tables, chairs and a menu of food offerings) that it failed to live up to.

After a New York State Liquor Authority (SLA) inspection turned up numerous serious legal issues, including operation without a liquor license, a cabaret license, a proper place of assembly permit or workers' compensation insurance, I wrote to SLA on these and other issues. On May 2, 2014, Fairytail Lounge was shut down and issued \$17,000 in fines with an additional \$2,000 per day in which the fines are unpaid. I hope that Fairytail's management has learned that it must follow the law and work with the community, and that substantial changes must be made to its operating plans before it attempts to reopen its doors.



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On May 2, 2014, I held my eighth annual Maple in Manhattan Day. The teachers and students from the Vernon-Verona-Sherrill High School gave students from P.S. 51 and P.S. 811M a demonstration of how maple syrup is made in New York, as well as some delicious maple cotton candy!

I am already looking forward to next year's Maple Day. If you are interested in having the Mobile Maple Van visit your school, please contact my office at 212.873.6368 or rosenthal@assembly.state.ny.us.