



Assemblywoman

Michelle Schimel

Reports to the People

FALL 2008

Dear Friend,

I love my job. There, I said it. My first year as your Assemblywoman has been a whirlwind. Lots of changes: new Governor, new Senate Majority Leader and big ticket issues were the norm. All told, I am pretty satisfied with the results of my first year, and I hope you will be too. You will be reading about some of the accomplishments and challenges I faced in Albany.

One thing I have repeated to all who would listen in the Capital region is that I represent the best district in New York State, the 16th Assembly District. You are engaged, informed, and aware of your community, and that makes my job that much easier and rewarding. Thank you for your interest in reading my report.

As always, if you would like information on a state related matter, please feel free to call my District Office at (516) 482-6966, the office that never sleeps; well maybe a wink or two.

Best Wishes,

Michelle Schimel

Member of Assembly

ENSURING QUALITY EDUCATION

Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel and Senator Craig Johnson worked hard to ensure that North Hempstead's schools received their fair share of state funding in the 2008-2009 State Budget.

When Assemblywoman Schimel and Senator Johnson felt that the state budget didn't do enough for North Hempstead's schools, they fought to secure \$300,000 in unrestricted discretionary funding, also known as "bullet aid." These additional funds will ensure that our children receive a quality education while helping to offset additional school budget increases.

"Senator Johnson and I used every tool at our disposal to make sure our schools had what they needed to give our children the education they deserve," said Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel. "Our schools are the foundation of our community. It is our duty to remind Albany of their commitment to our educational system."

Despite a challenging economic climate, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel and Senator Craig Johnson worked hard to secure the following state aid for the schools in the 16th Assembly District:

- \$1.9 million in increased education aid over last year
- \$1.5 million in increased foundation aid
- \$200,000 in bullet aid for the Great Neck School District
- \$50,000 in bullet aid for the Port Washington School District
- \$50,000 in bullet aid for the Roslyn School District



Pictured left to right are Dr. Jack Bierwirth, Superintendent of the Herricks School District, Dr. John Richman, Superintendent of the Roslyn School District, Senator Craig Johnson, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel, Dr. Lorna Lewis, Superintendent of the East Williston School District, and Dr. Ronald Friedman, Superintendent of the Great Neck School District.

"In the original state budget, Great Neck was slated to lose several hundred thousand dollars in aid. I'm thankful that Assemblywoman Schimel's and Senator Johnson's efforts were successful in keeping our state school aid at the level it was during the past year. This assistance allowed us to present the community with a lower tax levy increase than we otherwise could have done," said Dr. Ronald Friedman, Superintendent of the Great Neck School District.

Local Government Efficiency and Transparency

Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel serves on the Assembly's Local Government Committee. Her years as North Hempstead Town Clerk have made her uniquely qualified to understand how local governments work. Always mindful of governmental efficiency and eliminating wasteful spending, she has sponsored a number of legislative initiatives that encourage the practice of shared municipal services and cost-saving measures.

Home-to-School Transportation Bill

This past session, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel worked closely with the Manhasset Citizens Advisory Committee for Legislative Affairs on drafting cost-saving legislation (A.11427) that will allow school districts to enact a policy of home-to-school transportation based upon patterns of actual bus ridership.

Under current state law, school districts are required to provide a seat for every pupil eligible for home-to-school transportation. For a variety of reasons however, many eligible students do not use bus transportation provided by the district. Notwithstanding patterns of low bus ridership, current law requires school districts to continue to transport empty seats twice a day. This results in added expenses to the district, unnecessary congestion around schools, and increased air and noise pollution.

"Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel's bill gives school districts the latitude they need to schedule buses based on actual utilization so that empty buses are not driving around wasting gas, polluting our environment and throwing away taxpayer dollars. We support this proposal and hope that the state legislature will as well," said Cindy Cardinal, President of the Manhasset Board of Education.

Increased Governmental Transparency

In an effort to increase transparency of special improvement districts, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel co-sponsored Assembly bill A.11156, which has been passed by both houses of the State Legislature and awaits the Governor's signature. Under this legislation, all public notices of a special district, including but not limited to notices of public meetings, public hearings and elections, are required to be posted on the websites of the district and the town in which the district is located. This bill also requires all copies of annual reports on district finances and audit reports of district operations to be posted on the websites of the district and the town in which the district is located.

Municipal Contract Legislation

In a collaborative effort with the Great Neck Park District, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel and Senator Craig Johnson introduced legislation (A.10061/S.7479A) that would allow villages, special districts and local authorities to purchase off of county contracts and off of contracts from other local governments located within the same county.

Under current law, municipalities that undertake public works projects and/or make purchases must engage in a costly and timely competitive bidding process. The legislation proposed by Assemblywoman Schimel and Senator Johnson would help local governments be more efficient in purchasing goods and services because they would not have to go through the competitive bidding process for contracts that have already been competitively bid.



The Commissioners of the Great Neck Park District discuss the municipal contract legislation (A.10061/S.7479A) with Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel and Senator Craig Johnson. Pictured (L to R): Senator Craig Johnson, Park Commissioners Robert Lincoln, Ruth Tamarin and Ivar Segalowitz, and Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel.

Supporting Our Local Veterans

Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel is a member of the Assembly's Committee on Veterans' Affairs and an active participant of the Veterans Health Alliance of Long Island. She has provided funding to the Mental Health Association of Nassau County to design and distribute an informational brochure about post-traumatic stress disorder and available resources for veterans and their families.

"Long Island's veterans have served their country with honor; now, it is our duty to serve them. The least we can do for our brave soldiers is to ensure that they make a successful transition back to civilian life," said Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel.

The Veterans Health Alliance of Long Island is a collaboration of over fifty non-profits, including veterans' organizations and mental health providers, whose mission it is to promote the health and wellbeing of local veterans and their families through advocacy and a broad array of services.



On Memorial Day, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel joined Mayor Ludwig Odierna at the Williston Park Village Hall to honor local veterans. Pictured (L to R): Mayor Odierna, North Hempstead Town Clerk Leslie Gross, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel, Nassau County Clerk Maureen O'Connell, American Legion Post# 144 Ladies Auxiliary President Kay Derby, American Legion Commander John Lawless and former American Legion Commander Peter Holowecki.

Valentines For Vets

This February, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel had the honor of continuing former Assemblyman Thomas DiNapoli's Valentines for Vets Program. Twenty schools and two local community organizations participated this year.

With generous support from the community, Assemblywoman Schimel and her staff delivered truckloads of incredible merchandise and beautiful handmade cards to the Veterans Home in Stony Brook and the Veterans Hospital in Northport. There is no better way to show our veterans how much we appreciate the sacrifices they have made than to show them that they are not forgotten.



Proud to show their beautiful Valentines for Veterans (L to R): back row, Project Coordinator Fran Reid, Chloe Barocas, Allie Matter, Katie Alter, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel, Gabriella Wong; middle row, Lauren Reiss, Bonnie Charles, Erica Mossman; and front row, Rachel Brenner, Brooke Weinberger, Nicole Guiltier, Mollie Falchion, Parker Salwen-Spector, Brooke Ferber, Alexa Kolodny, Jenna Kolodny, Chloe Fishbein and Rachel Weiss.

Delivering Relief To Struggling Homeowners

According to RealtyTrac's U.S. Foreclosure Market Report, New York reported a total of 57,350 foreclosure filings in 2007, which is a 54.7 percent increase from 2005.

Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel fought to pass legislation (A.10817A) that addresses New York's subprime lending crises and provides assistance to homeowners who are struggling to pay their mortgages. Assembly bill A.10817A was approved by both houses of the State Legislature and meets the approval of Governor David Paterson.

"The subprime lending crises is crippling communities and devastating families across the state," said Assemblywoman Schimel. "This legislation helps struggling homeowners who are in danger

of foreclosure by giving them additional time to work out financial problems with a lending institution before they lose their home."

This legislation helps current homeowners by:

- Providing a 90-day pre-foreclosure notice to alert borrowers that they are in default or foreclosure
- Establishing Mandatory Settlement Conferences to bring a borrower together with the party initiating the foreclosure proceeding
- Enacting a statute requiring lenders to consider borrowers' ability to repay the loan
- Cracking down on lender scams

A Leader On Gun Safety Legislation

Background Checks

In the wake of the tragic massacre at Virginia Tech, the Assembly and Senate passed the Governor's Program Bill #57 which will help keep guns away from unstable individuals. Assemblywoman Schimel, a longtime gun control activist, co-sponsored this bill.

The legislation will require the Office of Mental Health and the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities to collect and transmit records to respond to queries from the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) and the FBI's Criminal Justice Information System. This legislation also authorizes the courts to revoke an individual's license and seize any weapons in his or her possession where a defendant is deemed to be incapacitated or has been committed to a mental health facility.



Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel is joined by (L to R) Assemblyman Charles Lavine, Port Washington Police Chief William Kilfoil, Assemblyman Steven Englebright, Chief Lloyd Perkins of the NYS Association of Chiefs of Police, and Senator Martin Golden.

Microstamping

Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel is the sponsor of legislation (A.9819A) to make all semi-automatic handguns equipped with microstamping technology by 2010. When fired, the gun will make intentional markings on shell cartridges enabling law enforcement to identify a code that will give the make, model and serial number of the firearm used during a crime. The bill has passed in the Assembly but has been blocked in the Senate, despite over 50 law enforcement agencies and police departments from around the state endorsing Schimel's legislation.

Schimel's Public Health Initiative Passes Both Houses

A key public health initiative sponsored by Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel and Senator Kemp Hannon of Garden City was passed by the Assembly and Senate this session. Schimel's expedited partner treatment bill (A.8730C) authorizes physicians and nurse practitioners to prescribe and dispense antibiotic drugs to the sexual partners of patients infected with chlamydia. This legislation now awaits the Governor's signature.

"Expedited partner treatment has been proven to be a safe

and effective method of preventing the spread of chlamydia. I'm very pleased that the Assembly and Senate have recognized the importance of combating this serious public health threat, and I urge Governor Paterson to quickly do the same by signing this bill into law," said Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel.

The Center for Disease Control has concluded that expedited partner treatment is a safe and useful option to facilitate partner management of chlamydia.

Preserving Our Parks

Last winter, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel, together with State Senator Craig Johnson and Nassau County Legislator Wayne Wink, secured a \$400,000 grant from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund to finance improvements for Stannards Brook Park Preserve in Port Washington. This state grant will be matched by Nassau County with \$440,000 in previously secured funding.

"Maintaining our parks and preserves has always been a top priority for the residents of Port Washington," said Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel. "This grant will fully restore the Stannards Brook Park Preserve, a hidden jewel that can now be polished and reset because of New York's commitment to the environment."

Stannards Brook Park Preserve is located within the Long Island North Shore Heritage Area and is one of only six existing bird sanctuaries in Nassau County.



Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel Pictured at Stannards Brook Park Preserve (L to R) are: Eric Pick, Elizabeth Allured, Assemblywoman Schimel, Legislator Wink, Valerie Taylor, Myron Blumenfeld and Elizabeth Moran.

Protecting Our Water From Pharmaceutical Drugs

Recent studies have found that our drinking water is being contaminated with commonly used pharmaceuticals. Unwanted or expired medications are frequently disposed of in household garbage or flushed down the toilet.

To combat this public health hazard, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel and Assemblyman Steven Englebright of Setauket sponsored legislation (A.840B), which establishes a public awareness campaign on the proper disposal methods for unwanted or expired medication.

Assembly bill A.840B, which was recently passed by the New York State Assembly, requires the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to develop and implement a public information program on the proper disposal of unwanted prescription and over-the-counter drugs. Under this legislation, the DEC is also required to establish a notice containing information on the proper storage and disposal of pharmaceutical drugs, which is to be conspicuously displayed in every pharmacy and retail business authorized to sell drugs in New York State.

Guilt-Free Green

This past year, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel launched Guilt-Free Green, a series of environmental forums around the 16th Assembly District. This program provides residents with tips to help make their lives healthier, happier, and greener. Panelists discussed recycling, energy conservation, and decreasing exposure to toxins used in the home and garden.

Guilt-Free Green is a collaboration between Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel, Fran Reid and Patty Katz of Reach Out America, Frank Morris, Executive Director of the Long Island Sierra Club Foundation, and Laura Weinberg, President of the Great Neck Breast Cancer Coalition. Be on the lookout for future dates.



Pictured in front of a three day tower of aluminum cans at the Brookhaven Municipal Recycling Facility (L to R) are Fran Reid, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel, and Patty Katz.

Promoting Clean & Renewable Energies

Recognizing the burdens placed on residents and businesses by the rising cost of energy, the New York State Assembly and Senate recently passed legislation (A.11146) that expands the Net-Metering Law to allow net energy metering for non-residential solar electric generating systems.

Assembly bill A.11146, which was co-sponsored by Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel, expands net energy metering

for solar technology to all utility customer classes and increases the size of a solar electric system that can be net-metered for residential customers to 25 kilowatts.

Net-metering enables customers with on-site electric generating systems to send excess power back to the utility grid in exchange for credits valued at the retail energy rate. The credits roll over from month to month and never expire.

Want To Be The Next Assembly Intern Idol?



Assemblywoman Schimel's Summer Intern Idols (L to R): Sebastian Deri of Great Neck, Anthony Dedousis of Manhasset, Claire Tucci of Merrick, Megan Loeb of Port Washington, and Christine Chung and Rebecca Leber of Roslyn.

Applications are now being accepted for the fall legislative season.

Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel is looking for talented and personable undergraduate and graduate students to join her District Office team this fall. No singing is required, but good phone voices are a plus!

To become a fall Assembly Intern Idol, please send a cover letter and resume to Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel's District Office at 45 North Station Plaza, Suite 203, Great Neck, New York 11021. For additional information, please contact Emily Frankel, Chief of Staff, at (516) 482-6966.

AROUND THE COMMUNITY



Great Neck South High School students travel to Albany to lobby state lawmakers on sensible gun legislation. Pictured (L to R): Sebastian Deri, Jon Weinberg, Joshua Brenner, Andrew Marcy, Project Coordinator Fran Reid, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel, Alexa Kolodny, Scott Savell, Jarred Muller, Dylan Reid and Chief of Staff Emily Frankel.



Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel was the guest speaker at the Great Neck Clergy Association's Community Interfaith Service in Memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The service was held at the St. Paul AME Zion Church.



Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel with members of the Mineola Golden Age Club at Funday Monday at Bar Beach. Featured are Peggy Hassett, Lillian Barnola, Joe Amplo and Edward Barnola.



Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel and local elected officials meet with the Conference of Jewish Organizations.

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