

Assemblywoman Michaëlle C. Solages



Spring 2016

Serving the communities of Bellerose, Bellerose Terrace, Elmont, Floral Park, Franklin Square, North Valley Stream, North Woodmere, South Floral Park, South Valley Stream, and Valley Stream.

Dear Neighbors,

The Assembly Majority has long advocated for investments and policies that support workers and enable them to climb the ladder of economic opportunity. We have always believed that if we put our families first and invest in their future success, our state will move forward in a direction that promotes a better New York for all the communities in the state.

I am proud of the victories we have won in the State Fiscal Year 2016-17 budget. It is proof of our commitment to the promises we have made to stand by hardworking families. With this proposal, we have won our longstanding fight to raise the wage floor across New York to \$15 per hour, and we have provided every worker and every family with the long awaited protection of paid family leave benefits.

This budget is a win for New Yorkers across this state. Landmark accomplishments like paid family leave and a robust increase in the minimum wage have long been priorities of the Assembly Majority, and New York families will greatly benefit from their enactment. Local victories like the no casino deal at Belmont Park are highlighted in this budget season. This fair and fiscally responsible plan is what our state needed to move forward.

Enclosed in this Newsletter, please find information about the happenings in our district, and detailed information about the State Fiscal Year Budget. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to my district office at 516-599-2972.

Sincerely,

Michaëlle C. Solages
Assemblywoman

VICTORY: NO CASINO AT BELMONT PARK



A Casino at Belmont Park would not positively contribute to the economic development in our suburban community. Acknowledging this, the constituents of the Twenty-second Assembly fought relentlessly to assure that their voices were heard loud and clear.

Efforts ranged from posts on Facebook and Twitter to rallies and marches. Local legislators came together with the community to unify as one cohesive voice. From our collective efforts, the children's safety is no longer jeopardized and property values are no longer at risk of falling.

The Assembly Committee on Racing and Wagering set the tone for the anti-casino battle by passing Assembly bill A.9206; this bill repealed the Video Lottery Terminal authorization on Long Island. This legislation, co-sponsored by Assemblywoman Solages, spoke volumes to the forward-thinking and progressive action that needed to be initiated.

Assemblywoman Solages supports and welcomes ideas for alternative building projects, including community centers, SUNY/CUNY school buildings, and business incubators. Together as a community, we can work together to develop concepts that can perpetuate progress and build a better future for everyone.

MIDDLE-CLASS TAX CREDIT

The year's budget lowers Personal Income Tax rates for middle class New Yorkers. With the middle class tax cuts of 2012, rates were lowered from 6.85 percent to 6.45 percent for taxpayers in the \$40,000-\$150,000 income bracket, and to 6.65 percent in the \$150,000-\$300,000 income bracket. Under these new reforms, the rate will drop even further beginning in 2018 and will continue to drop all the way to 5.5 percent when the cuts are fully phased in.

These new lower tax rates will save middle class New Yorkers nearly \$6.6 billion in just the first four years, with annual savings reaching \$4.2 billion by 2025. As the new rates phase in, they will be the state's lowest middle class tax rates in more than 70 years. When the tax cuts begin, they will benefit 4.4 million filers, growing to 6 million filers when fully phased in.



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NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY BUDGET VICTORIES

The 2016-2017 New York State Budget was a hard-fought battle, but I am confident that the outcome will produce a stronger and fairer New York State for its citizens. From the ending of the Gap Elimination Adjustment to the implementation of a 12-Week Paid Family Leave, New York State has taken strides in the right direction to improve the overall quality of living.



Assemblywoman Solages stands with the Long Island Progressive Coalition on their fight for the fifteen dollar minimum wage increase.

FIFTEEN DOLLAR MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

Every New Yorker who puts in an honest day's work deserves a livable wage. The state budget recognizes this and increases the minimum wage to help lift working families out of poverty and give them a pathway to the middle class. The budget includes a historic raise in the minimum wage, gradually increasing it over several years. The minimum wage increase reflects the disparate costs of living and economic realities in various regions of the state. For workers in Nassau, Suffolk and Westchester Counties, the minimum wage would increase to \$10 at the end of 2016, then \$1 each year after, reaching \$15 on 12/31/2021.

12 WEEKS OF PAID FAMILY LEAVE

No New Yorker should have to choose between collecting a paycheck and taking care of a loved one. Paid family leave will ensure that workers can take time off to care for a newborn or sick relative without having to sacrifice their financial security.

The budget includes a paid family leave provision that, when fully implemented, will allow employees 12 weeks of paid leave per year to care for a new child or family member in need. The measure will be funded through a small weekly employee contribution and offer up to two-thirds of an employee's salary during their absence, not to exceed two-thirds of the statewide average weekly wage. The policy will be implemented at a gradual rate, starting in 2018 with 8 weeks of paid leave offered at 50 percent of weekly income; in 2019, the benefit will increase to 10 weeks, and in 2021, employees will be able to take 12 weeks of paid leave at the full two-thirds of weekly pay. Workers will be eligible for the program after six months of employment.

INVESTING IN OUR SCHOOLS AND ELIMINATING THE GEA

Assemblywoman Michaelle C. Solages helped Secure a \$1.47 billion increase in education aid.

The 2016-17 state budget increases education aid by \$1.47 billion – or 6.3 percent – for a total of \$24.7 billion, representing the largest investment in education in New York history and highlighting the Assembly's commitment to helping every child achieve their full potential. To help ensure all New York State schools are fairly funded and have the resources they need to provide a quality education, the state budget increases Foundation Aid by \$627 million.

The budget also provides \$433 million to fully eliminate the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) once and for all, putting an end to the hardship it has caused our schools and to the burden it has placed on local taxpayers. Finally doing away with the GEA will help prevent teacher layoffs and program cuts.

Recognizing the importance and lasting benefit of early childhood education, the budget provides \$807 million for continued implementation and development of the statewide universal pre-kindergarten program. The budget also continues funding the Smart Schools program, which increases and improves education technology and infrastructure in schools throughout the state, at \$2 billion.

The 2016-17 state budget marks the largest investment in New York's education system, a total of 24.7 billion including:

- \$627 Million Increase in Foundation Aid
- \$175 Million to Convert Schools into Community Schools
- \$20 Million to Implement My Brother's Keeper
- \$14.3 Million for Teacher Resource and Computer Training Centers
- \$1 Million for Career and Technical Education Programs

ASSEMBLYMEMBER SOLAGES IS A NEW MOTHER ADVOCATING FOR LEGISLATION THAT EMPOWERS MOTHERS AND FAMILIES

Assemblywoman Solages has been working vehemently on creating new legislation for mothers. The benefits of breastfeeding are well-documented, but stigmas and legislative blocks stand in the way of allowing mothers to freely partake in this natural process. Assemblywoman Solages has been the a pioneer in creating beneficial and inclusive legislation for mothers.

Assemblywoman Solages' noteworthy bills this session include:

- **A.9353** Provides medical assistance coverage for the cost of donor breast milk which is medically necessary for certain prematurely born infants.
- **A.8512** Requires human breast milk banks, companies and cooperatives to comply with certain standards and provides for education and support of certain breastfeeding mothers.
- **A.7989** Mandates the provision of lactation accommodations in airports.

These bills are a massive step forward in the process to reforming legislation to accommodate the needs of both expecting women and current mothers across the state.



ASSEMBLYMEMBER SOLAGES' DISTRICT EVENTS

WOMEN OF DISTINCTION CEREMONY

The Women of Distinction Ceremony was held in honor of Women's History Month. The Annual Women of Distinction Awards Ceremony took place at the Gateway Community Center in Valley Stream. This year's program, "Healing our Families," honored women from the Twenty-second Assembly District who positively impacted and healed lives within the community.

Keynote Speaker Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul spoke on the critical issues that affect people throughout New York State, especially women. During the ceremony, Assemblywoman Solages gave special recognition to nurses within the community who provide superior and compassionate care. It is important that during Women's History Month we honor and remember how much women give of themselves to better the community around them. Too often the contributions of these women are not lauded, and so this is a way for the Twenty-second Assembly District to say thank you.



Assemblywoman Solages and Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul honor community members for their positive impact on the community.



Assemblywoman Solages stands with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance volunteers, that helped over twenty residents file their taxes.

VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program assisted low-income families with the completion of their taxes. This program gave low-income taxpayers free tax preparation assistance while bringing the community together. Low-income families facing a financial burden often have difficulty producing the means to file their taxes. This program gave young professionals the ability to volunteer their time in a way that is productive to them, utilizing valuable skills. With this mutually beneficial program, aspiring young professionals received the opportunity to have a hands-on experience to complete their training and assist people in need.



Assemblywoman Solages celebrates I Love My Park Day on May 7, 2016 with over 130 volunteers. Assemblywoman Solages with Tim Watson, Park Manager; Wayne Horsley, Regional Director; and volunteers.

I LOVE MY PARK DAY

Assemblywoman Solages partnered with Valley Stream State Park Manager Timothy Watson to host 'I Love My Park Day: A Day To Volunteer,' where volunteers from communities throughout the Twenty-second Assembly District assisted in the cleaning and rebuilding of their local State Park. Over 130 volunteers attended to make a positive impact on the community. Girl Scout Troop 2266, Cub Scout Pack 109, and Cub Scout Pack 294 participated to earn badges, and learn about the importance of preserving the environment. This event taught guests the meaning of community engagement and gave them a tangible sense of accomplishment after a day's worth of hard work.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND ADDICTION COMMUNITY FORUM

Assemblywoman Solages, Village of South Floral Park (SFP) and SFP Civic Association hosted a Substance Abuse and Addiction Forum, where speakers from State and local agencies provided insight and information regarding opioid abuse in New York State. Speakers discussed warning signs of addiction, current issues and trends, and preventative measures that can be taken to combat opioid addiction. Vendors set up tables to disseminate information on a wide-array of topics to guests, including rehabilitation and counseling services. The community forum was followed by a Naloxone (Narcan) training workshop. Director of Education and Training from the Nassau County Department of Human Services, David Hymowitz educated residents on how to actively assist someone experiencing an opioid overdose.



IMMIGRATION OPEN HOUSE

March's Open House featured The New York Immigration Coalition's presentation on the overview of immigrant's rights to legal counsel and health coverage. All New Yorkers have the right to equal access to health care. There are forms of assistance with health care for everyone in New York State.



Assemblywoman Solages honors the speakers for the Substance Abuse and Addiction Community Forum for educating the public about this pertinent issue.

HONORING LOCAL RESIDENTS FOR THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS



COMMEMORATES CUB SCOUT PACK 109

Assemblywoman Solages is proud to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of Cub Scout Pack 109 of Valley Stream. We applaud their work in empowering young people throughout the Twenty-second Assembly District.



NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

For their compassion and dedication to assisting others, Assemblywoman Solages honored local nurses by standing in solidarity with the New York State Nurses Association in support of the Safe Staffing Bill.

GOOD SAMARITAN OF THE MONTH FOR APRIL: AUGUSTA UWAMANZU-NNA

Assemblywoman Michaëlle Solages honored April's Good Samaritan of the Month, Augusta Uwamanzu-Nna. Augusta's dedication to socially conscious scientific research has uplifted the spirit of her community. Augusta has brought positive attention to Elmont Memorial High School for being accepted into all eight Ivy League schools. Augusta's academic rigor and desire to foster environmentally conscious change is truly admirable. Augusta is nothing short of amazing--she serves as an inspiration to all those around her.



New York State Assembly, Albany, New York 12248



Assemblywoman
Michaëlle C. SOLAGES
Reports to the People

Spring 2016

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SOLAGES: KEEPING YOU INFORMED

My Assembly Website is available to keep you informed of legislation and other issues of interest to you and the community. Please visit this page to view video footage of Assembly floor debates and more.

You can visit the site at: <http://nyassembly.gov/mem/Michaëlle-C-Solages>

**Constituent Open House:
STEM Program
June 25, 2016
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
1690 Central Court
Valley Stream, NY 11580**

UPCOMING EVENTS

**Summer Music Festival 2016
Call 516-599-2972 to RSVP**

**Children's Summer
Reading Hour
July 29, 2016
11 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Elmont Public Library
Children's Reading Room**