



Assemblywoman STACEY PHEFFER AMATO

Legislative and Community Report for the 23rd Assembly District

YEAR AT A GLANCE 2020

Dear Neighbors,

I'm proud to represent you in the New York State Assembly and will continue to work tirelessly on behalf of Ozone Park, Lindenwood, Howard Beach, Hamilton Beach, Broad Channel, Rockaway Beach, Belle Harbor, Neponsit, Breezy Point, Far Rockaway, Bayswater, Edgemere, and Arverne.

There is no doubt that 2020 has been a challenging and difficult year and I know these are uncertain times, but our community has been through adversity before, and we've always come out stronger and more resilient. As always, I am committed to making our neighborhood a safe and healthy place to live, work, and raise a family - with a focus on building an economy that generates jobs and an education system that prepares our children for a bright future.

Inside this edition of the 2020 Legislative and Community Report for the 23rd Assembly District are updates from over the past year, and other items of interest to neighbors. Your thoughts, input, and other important issues are valuable to me, and I welcome your viewpoints. Please feel free to contact my office by phone, email, or social media, and sign up for our regular email updates by sending a note to amatos@nyassembly.gov, or by calling my office at 718-945-9550.

*Stacey Pheffer Amato
Member of Assembly, 23rd District*

2020 LEGISLATIVE AND COMMUNITY UPDATES

Investing in Education

Schools are not just places to learn, they are communities that help our children grow, develop new skills and find interests and passions that will stick with them for the rest of their lives. From pre-K to graduation day, our children's education is one of the most formative elements of their upbringing. Even when kids cannot physically go to school, like during this crisis, we have seen our school communities work to bring education, meals, outreach and hope to our children. That is why it is critical that, even in the wake of the ongoing public health crisis, we continue to invest in our schools.

Every child, no matter where they live, deserves a quality education, and through the NYS budget my office has voted to secure:

- \$27.9 billion in education funding, an increase of \$93.2 million – or 0.3%– over the previous year; and
- \$ 848 million for pre-K funding.



In recognition of the 2019 Summer Reading Challenge, Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer Amato held an awards ceremony honoring the participants from MS 137 in Ozone Park, Queens.

Higher Education

Our students need to know that we always have their backs, and that doesn't end when they graduate from high school. Higher education is a critical step to building a bright and successful future, and we can help ensure a college degree is within reach for every one of our young New Yorkers. Through the budget the Assembly secured:

- \$2.5 million in restored funding for the CUNY Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP);
- \$35.5 million for the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP);
- \$32.2 million for the Education Opportunity Program (EOP); and
- \$28.1 million for Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge (SEEK).



Assemblywoman Pheffer Amato greets graduate students from the Communication Workers of America in Albany.

Investing in Families and Children

This year, new laws (A.6296-A and A.7371 Englebright) went into effect that will protect children from harmful chemicals found in children's products. The new laws allow the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to review and update the toxic chemicals database, increase reporting standards and frequency for companies who have used chemicals in products to the state, and prohibits the sale, effective January 1, 2023, of children's products containing certain dangerous chemicals including organohalogen flame retardants, tris, and asbestos, amongst other changes.



Assemblywoman Pheffer Amato engages with children at a daycare center in Howard Beach, Queens.

Continued on next page



Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer Amato and Senator Joseph P. Addabbo Jr., at a press conference announcing legislation.

Strengthening Transportation and Infrastructure

This year the legislature invested billions of dollars in strengthening and repairing crumbling public transportation in this state including:

- Committing \$3 billion in state funds to the MTA's 2020-2024 Capital Program;
- \$25 million for the MTA School Fare Subsidy to help students ensure they can get to and from school safely;
- \$20 million for electric buses;
- Providing \$100 million each for Pave NY and Bridge NY; and
- \$438 million for the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS).

Protecting Our Environment

Preserving the environment for future generations is one of the critical issues of our time, and we took action to preserve and protect our environment throughout the last year. Our community came together to fight the construction of the Williams Pipeline and we won! This is a HUGE victory not only for the Rockaway community, but for everyone who came together with a united voice to speak out for our environment. Additionally, through the budget we secured funding for the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) and established the Environmental Bond Act. The bond act will provide funding for:

- \$1 billion for restoration and flood risk reduction;
- \$700 million for climate change mitigation; and
- \$550 million for water quality improvement and resilient infrastructure.

This year's budget also includes provisions that would prohibit high-volume hydraulic fracturing for oil and natural gas wells, place a moratorium on the use of gelled propane and prohibit the sale or distribution of disposable polystyrene food containers and loose-fill packaging beginning January 1, 2022.

Earlier in the session, the New York State Assembly passed a bill I introduced, A.9595 which would permanently extend requirements to continue protection of Jamaica Bay. This bill will also strengthen protection of the Jamaica Bay waters making it safer for current and all future generations.



Assemblywoman Pheffer Amato presents Lisena Gardening Center in Broad Channel with her Small Business of the Month award for January 2020.

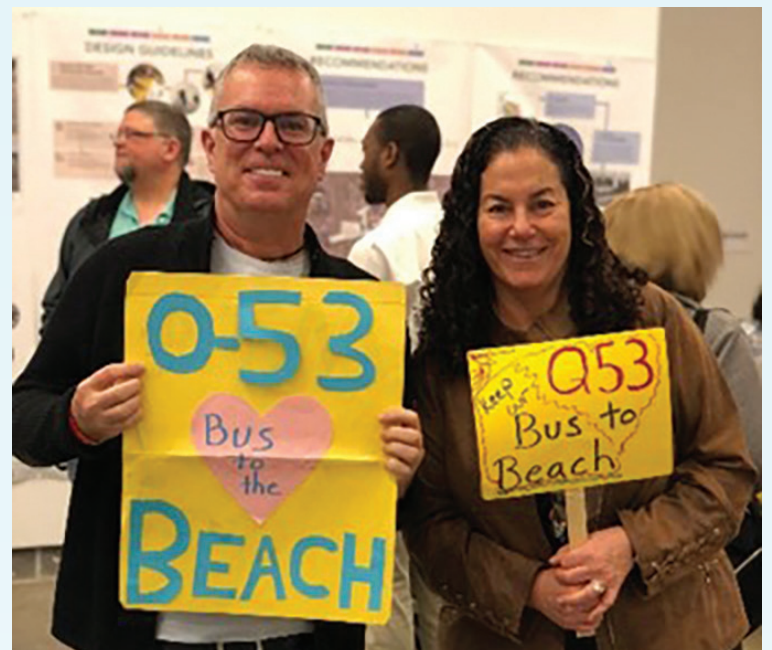
Supporting Our Businesses

During the COVID-19 pandemic our community stepped up and helped support our small businesses that were hit hard by the pandemic. It was critical to ensure small businesses and their employees had access to resources they needed, so we worked together to connect the businesses to city, state, and federal relief programs. Additionally, through the state budget, the legislature has worked to help small businesses grow by including measures that:

- Extended tax credits awarded through the Excelsior Jobs Program to ensure local businesses can continue to grow, as well as encourage more businesses to relocate to New York State; and
- Funded the Excelsior Jobs Program, which provides eligible businesses with a credit of 6.85% of wages per net new job.



Assemblywoman Pheffer Amato speaks to a commuter on the A-train during a #MassTransitMonday tour.



Assemblywoman Pheffer Amato joins local transportation activists during a meeting regarding proposed changes to the local bus network.

Honoring Veterans and Protecting First Responders

Our country is eternally grateful for the brave men and women who choose to protect and defend our city, our nation, and the freedoms we enjoy. The final budget helps ensure that veterans get essential support they need to overcome hurdles and make the transition back to civilian life as smooth as possible.

This included:

- Extending the Hire-a-Vet tax credit, which offers a tax credit for employers who hire veterans, for two additional years; and
- Allocating \$2.02 million for the Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer Support Project, a program for veterans who have returned home with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and other mental and behavioral health issues.



Pheffer Amato and State Senator Joe Addabbo confer with Members of the American Legion earlier this year.

This past legislative session, the New York State Assembly passed my bill (A.10249), which reinstates the 9/11 Worker Protection Task Force. The bill, which received unanimous and bipartisan support from the Assembly and Senate, revives the dormant Task Force to find ways to identify and help first responders and people around the World Trade Center who contracted a 9/11 related illness.



Assemblywoman Pheffer Amato attends a 9/11 Tribute at Tribute Park in Rockaway Park, Queens.

Fighting for Mitchell-Lama Residents

This year, I was appointed to the New York State Assembly Mitchell-Lama Working Group that will focus specifically on issues affecting Mitchell-Lama housing developments. The working group was created in response to several troubling reports out of Mitchell-Lama developments including a lack of transparency in their operations.



Assemblywoman Pheffer Amato helps deliver food to senior citizens in Mitchell-Lama housing after a Co-Op Board refused the delivery.

Support Programs During COVID-19

We are in the midst of a public health crisis most of us could never have imagined, and our neighbors need us now more than ever. That's why throughout this pandemic distributing masks, food, and hand sanitizer has become so crucial. Additionally, we passed bills protecting our seniors, children, renters, homeowners, essential health workers, and all our most vulnerable populations including:

- The Emergency Rent Relief Act of 2020 (A.10522): This bill created a short-term rental assistance program for renters whose income was less than 80% of the area median income (AMI) and spent more than 30% of their income on rent prior to March 7; and
- A.10351-B: This bill requires New York State regulated banking institutions to grant 180 days of mortgage forbearance, with the option for an additional 180 days, on a residential mortgage on their primary residence to any mortgagor who can demonstrate financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Assemblywoman Pheffer Amato partnered with the Ocean Park Tenants Association to distribute masks, hand sanitizer, and food in July.



Assemblywoman Pheffer Amato greets frontline health care workers while distributing masks at the Joseph P. Addabbo Family Health Center in Far Rockaway, Queens.

In District Programming: Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, many of our usual programs have been rescheduled. There will still be mobile office hours, and other events throughout the district – outdoors and socially distant!

For more information on when and where our events will be follow me on **Twitter @Stacey23AD**, on **Facebook at www.facebook.com/Assembly-womanStaceyPhefferAmato/**, call my office at **718-945-9550** or sign up for my newsletter at **amatos@nyassembly.gov**.



Pheffer Amato stands for Pledge of Allegiance with staff in Albany.

Sponsored Legislation

Throughout the Legislative Session, in addition to the bills highlighted in this update I proudly introduced over 40 bills spanning a range of topics including combating warehousing homeless individuals, property tax relief for our veterans, and innovative data policies such as:

A.06839: Establishes a real property tax exemption for veterans with a 100 percent service-connected disability.

A.09112: Relates to a tax on gross income upon every corporation which derives income from the data individuals of this state share with such corporations.

A.10659: Relates to requiring social distancing room configurations in homeless housing.

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Assemblywoman
**Stacey
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ASSEMBLYWOMAN STACEY PHEFFER AMATO

Chair, Child Product Safety of the Consumer Affairs Committee

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During COVID-19 our great team has been working remotely to help serve our neighbors. If you have any concerns, please reach out to us and we will assist you:

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