



Assemblyman
**DAVID I.
WEPRIN**
**Reports to the
Community**

Spring 2012

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Dear Friends,

I hope you are looking forward to the sunny days of summer and taking advantage of our beautiful white sand beaches and wonderful state parks.

This year's legislative session in Albany was one of the most productive in history. We addressed the issues that New Yorkers demanded we tackle, and the results will be overwhelmingly positive for the people of Northeastern Queens.

This March, I helped pass an on-time New York State budget. We closed the state's \$3.5 billion deficit, restored critical funding for education and health care, and funded important job-creation and infrastructure programs. The budget continued the lowest middle-class tax rate in 58 years, which cut taxes for 99 percent of New Yorkers in December.

My Assembly colleagues and I also passed an important package of bills to end pay inequity and demand equal pay for women.

This year, the legislature redefined district lines throughout New York State – reshaping the 24th Assembly District. I voted against the new maps put forward by the Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment (LATFOR) as I felt the maps failed to keep communities of interest together. I continued to call for the appointment of an independent redistricting commission. Now that the new lines have been approved, I look forward to continuing to serve as your Assemblyman in the 24th Assembly district and to welcome new communities to our district.

Thank you for your continued support and activism. My staff and I continue to receive your letters, calls, visits, and emails with great enthusiasm and work diligently to address your concerns. If you have any concerns or would like to know more about an issue, please don't hesitate to contact my office at (718) 428-7900 or email me at weprind@nysa.us.

Best wishes for a healthy and restful summer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David I. Weprin".

David I. Weprin

Member of Assembly

ASSEMBLYMAN WEPRIN MAKES A DIFFERENCE FOR OUR KIDS

“The key to a successful future for our children starts in the classroom. That’s why I work hard to make sure our children have access to the quality education they deserve.”

Dream Act



Assemblyman Weprin joins Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, other elected officials, and children of immigrants to advocate for access to financial aid. The New York State Dream Act (S.4179/A.6829) would allow undocumented students who meet New York in-state tuition requirements to access state financial aid for higher education.



Assemblyman David Weprin visited the Minkwon Center for Community Action to sign the NYS Dream Pledge.

Assemblymember Weprin honors MS 74 student and Bayside Hills resident, Arvind Mahankali - this year’s New York City Spelling Bee winner. Arvind will be traveling to Washington, D.C. to represent New York City in the National Spelling Bee.

Beacon Program

The Beacon program at MS 158 provides free after-school services to elementary, middle school, and high school students throughout our community – yet this year, the city has proposed to close the door of the MS 158 Beacon Program and 6 other Beacon programs.

Assemblymember David I. Weprin wrote a letter to Mayor Bloomberg and attended several rallies to denounce the proposed closure of this and other Beacon programs throughout New York City.

“Beacon programs provide vital services for children and their families,” wrote Assemblymember Weprin. “Cuts to these programs will have detrimental effects on the children and families that rely on them for a safe and supportive place to go after school.”



Assemblyman David I. Weprin joins parents, educators, students and community members outside MS 158 to demand that funds be restored to the MS 158 Beacon program.



Early Intervention

Early Intervention programs help children under the age of 3 who have been diagnosed with a disability or developmental delay get the care they need. Early intervention makes a world of difference for the children who receive treatment. Beginning therapies like speech pathology and physical therapy early on in the lives of these children can help improve their quality of life for a lifetime. The counseling and social services support helps families understand what’s happening with their children and prepares them for what to expect in the future.

Recognizing the importance of this program, The New York State Assembly unanimously passed Assemblyman Weprin’s resolution to recognize March 1 as New York State Early Intervention Day and fought to ensure that vital Early Intervention funding was protected in the budget.



Assemblyman David Weprin visits Quality Services for the Autism Community (QSAC) to celebrate New York State Early Intervention Day with Executive Director Gary Maffei and an early intervention class.



Assemblymember Weprin met Brigadier General Timothy Trainor, Dean of the Academic Board at the United States Military Academy, and West Point Cadet Eric Fan in Albany. Mr. Fan, a junior at the United States Military Academy, is a resident of the 24th Assembly District.

Autism Awareness



For the first time ever, the Unisphere in Flushing Meadows Corona Park was illuminated to promote autism awareness on April 1, 2012. Assemblymember Weprin joined Leslie Grubler of United New York Early Intervention Providers, Annette Schroter of Autism Storybook Mom, Dr. Sima Gerber, elected officials, and hundreds of parents and children for this historic event.



Diana Schroter reads her poem inspired by the Unisphere Lighting and her sister, who was diagnosed with Autism at age two and a half.

Working to Protect Consumers at the Pump



Assemblymember Weprin and State Senator Eric Adams urge consumers to report suspected price gouging.

With the cost of oil on the rise, serious competition between gas distributors has caused many stations to charge outrageous amounts for a gallon of gasoline. In fact, some gas merchants have been known to continuously raise their prices over the course of a 24-hour period, often dramatically increasing consumer costs without the actual price of gas going up. This predatory practice, known as price gouging, allows a deceitful gas distributor to make unreasonable profits at a time when many families are struggling to make ends meet.

As gas prices constantly fluctuate, we must make sure our families don't fall victim to price gouging at the pumps. That's why the Assembly passed legislation, co-sponsored

by Assemblymember Weprin, that would ban gas stations from adjusting their prices multiple times daily (A.1970) and allow victims to directly sue price gougers (A.8340).

Assemblyman Weprin also introduced legislation to require all gas stations in the State of New York to post a sign near each gas pump that lists contact information for the NYS Consumer Protection Board, which is authorized to investigate such complaints and take action against violators.

If you suspect you have been the victim of price gouging please call the Consumer Assistance Services Unit's toll-free helpline at 1-800-697-1220 Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Remember...

Clothing, footwear and related items sold for less than **\$110** each are now exempt from the state's 4 percent sales tax so working families can save more of their hard-earned dollars.

Lowering Co-pays for Seniors

Assemblymember Weprin recognizes the need to ensure our seniors are getting the medicine they need in an affordable way. This year, the state budget restored \$30.6 million to the Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) program – helping reinstate co-payment assistance for approximately 300,000 EPIC enrollees. Currently, seniors enrolled in the EPIC program are forced to pay 25 percent of the cost of each prescription drug. With the co-payment assistance restored, enrollees will return to paying no more than \$20 co-payment for each prescription.

Alice's Law



Assemblyman David Weprin has been working to pass a law that would protect New Yorkers against criminals who intentionally crash vehicles into the cars of unsuspecting drivers as a way to fraudulently collect insurance money. A loophole in New York State's no-fault insurance laws has led to a dramatic increase in the number of these staged accidents -- creating a cottage industry of auto fraud. The Assemblyman's bill, "Alice's Law," would make staged accidents a stand-alone crime. The bill has already passed the Senate.

Alice Ross, a constituent of Assemblyman Weprin, with her 4 grandchildren. 71-year-old grandmother Alice Ross was tragically killed during a staged accident 9 years ago.