



Assemblymember Robert Carroll

Legislative Update



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Winter 2024

Big Wins in the Fight for Teaching Our Children How to Read

My Dyslexia Task Force Act Is Signed Into Law

Since I was elected to the Assembly in 2016, one of my top priorities has been to ensure that our schools better address the needs of students with dyslexia and related learning disorders. My initial focus was simply to see more systematic screening take place in New York City schools, but I came to realize that a comprehensive statewide approach was needed and introduced the Dyslexia Task Force Act in 2019. It has been amazing to see groups and individuals throughout the State rally around this bill and I am incredibly grateful for the efforts of so many within the district and beyond. What's more, we won! In December of last year, the Governor signed the Dyslexia Task Force Act (A.133/S.2599) into law.

This legislation requires the New York State Education Department Commissioner to establish a task force comprised of stakeholders and experts to hold public hearings and examine appropriate and effective evidence-based screening methods, reading interventions, and other educational supports for dyslexia and related disorders. By the end of the year, the Task Force will issue a report to the Governor and Legislature that should serve as a blueprint for policies to be adopted throughout the State.

The "Dyslexia Diagnosis Access Act" passes the Assembly unanimously for the second consecutive year

The Dyslexia Task Force Act focuses on best practices in terms of screening, pedagogy for teaching reading, and supports for students with dyslexia, but a significant barrier to students getting services they need is being definitively diagnosed with dyslexia.

My bill (A.2898/S.5481) would require that private health insurance policies pay for neuropsychological exams for the purpose of diagnosing dyslexia. Most medical insurance companies do not reimburse for this, and schools typically only offer limited assessments. Neuropsychological exams are often

administered over the course of two days and currently may cost more than six thousand dollars making them unaffordable to many families.

The Assembly passed the Dyslexia Diagnosis Act unanimously for the second consecutive year in early February. Now it is time for the State Senate to pass this important legislation before session ends in June.

The Governor includes parts of my "Right to Read Bill" in her Executive Budget

In the course of my work on dyslexia, I have come to understand the severity of New York State's broader early literacy crisis. Seventy percent of fourth graders in New York State are not reading at grade level according to the results of the federal National Assessment of Educational Progress for 2022. The numbers for children from low-income families are even more distressing. Despite this, the State has not revamped its approach to teaching literacy with many schools failing to use evidence-based pedagogy and New York ranking near the bottom nationally in teacher training on evidence-based literacy curricula.

My "Right to Read" bill (A.2897/S.5480), would establish policy changes that promote the use of evidence-based practices for all kindergarten through fifth grade students in schools throughout the State. Governor Hochul included key elements of my bill in her 2024-2025 Executive Budget and highlighted New York's need to reform how it teaches literacy in her State of the State Address.

This is a very important development, but it is going to take dedicated advocacy for a comprehensive approach that includes legislation and the commitment of significant resources. To this end, I was proud to stand with advocates throughout the State in Albany in January to launch the New York Campaign for Early Literacy calling for just that so all our children can be fluent readers and successful students.



Assemblymember Carroll speaking at the launch of the New York Campaign for Early Literacy in Albany.

Legislative Priorities for 2024

I am hopeful that the Assembly can pass significant legislation this session on the environment, healthcare, housing, street safety, and a host of other issues. Below is a selection of some important bills that I am either the prime sponsor of or cosponsor. I will continue to advocate for these and many other important pieces of legislation as well.

STREET SAFETY

- **Sammy's Law (A.7266 – Cosponsor)** This bill would save lives by giving New York City the authority to reduce the current citywide speed limit from 25 mph to 20 mph and on some streets from 15 mph to 10 mph.



Assemblymember Carroll speaking at the Sammy's Law campaign launch.

- **Delivery Bike Safety Measures (A.8052 – Cosponsor)** Requires mopeds to be registered at the point of sale the way that motorcycles and cars are. This should greatly facilitate enforcement of traffic rules for these vehicles. (A.7917 – **Prime Sponsor**) would require delivery app platforms to only use drivers who have taken a training course established through the legislation and (A.8871 – **Prime Sponsor**) would require these companies to carry no-fault insurance covering drivers who work for them. The intent of the second bill is to incentivize the companies to promote safe driving practices among those who work for them to keep insurance premiums down instead of prioritizing speed and volume of deliveries.

FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE & PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

- **The HEAT Act (A.4592 – Cosponsor)** This legislation would align natural gas utility regulation and planning with the CLCPA by removing subsidies for gas system expansion that would burden ratepayers for decades to repay, and instead require a statewide gas service transition plan that decreases our reliance on gas. This would both significantly reduce state emissions and lower household energy bills, with a proposed



Assemblymember Carroll rallying in support of the NY Heat Act.

energy bill cap for working families at a maximum 6% of household income.

- **The Climate Change Superfund Act (A.3351 – Cosponsor)** Would establish a climate change adaptation cost recovery program to require companies that have contributed significantly to the buildup of climate-warming greenhouse gases in the atmosphere to pay for a share of the infrastructure investments needed to adapt to the climate change effects we are facing as a result of their past actions.
- **Wildlife Crossing Planning (A.4243 – Prime Sponsor)** Lays the groundwork for federal funding for wildlife crossings in New York State, an important initiative to preserve biodiversity.
- **Protect Wolves (A.8295 – Prime Sponsor)** This bill would provide additional protections for wolves migrating into New York State and require the Department of Environmental Conservation to collect genetic data on large canids in order to more fully understand the presence of wolves in the State. Studies have shown that predators such as wolves are an important part of a healthy ecosystem.

HOUSING

- **The Good Cause Eviction Act (A.5573 – Cosponsor)** Prevents tenants from being forced from their apartments when there are no lease violations and prevents arbitrary rent increases.
- **Permanently Affordable Social Housing for New Yorkers Act (A.9088 – Cosponsor)** This bill will create a new state authority with the mandate to build, acquire, rehabilitate, and preserve permanently affordable housing statewide.
- **Housing Access Voucher Program (A.4021 – Cosponsor)** This bill creates a statewide housing voucher program to provide rental assistance in the form of vouchers to individuals who are homeless or who face an imminent risk of losing their homes.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

- **The Electronic Repair Scores Act (A.8434 – Prime Sponsor)** This bill would help consumers make informed choices regarding the purchase of electronic products while also being an important step with regards to reducing electronic waste. It requires the State to develop a methodology for establishing a repairability scoring criteria from one to ten that manufacturers would use to rate their digital electronic products such as smart phones and appliances and that retailers would have to display.
- **Reducing Utility Charges (A.295 – Prime Sponsor)** Limits the fixed charges that utility companies can bill to actual costs, saving consumers on their monthly payments.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

- **The Elder Parole bill (A.2035 – Cosponsor)** Provides that 55-year-old inmates who have served at least 15 years of their sentence would have a chance to appeal for parole every two years.
- **Fair and Timely Parole (A.162 – Cosponsor)** Requires parole to be offered to incarcerated people who are eligible unless they pose a risk that cannot be handled by parole supervision.
- **Reforming and Restricting Felony Murder (A.2899 – Prime Sponsor)** Felony murder doctrine allows a defendant to be charged and sentenced for murder in circumstances where they were committing or attempting to commit a felony but did not actually kill anyone. Evidence from across the country reveals that the impact of felony murder laws such as New York's

are highly racially discriminatory with especially negative consequences for young people and victims of domestic violence. My bill would bring New York in line with other states who have put in place reforms such as California and Colorado.



Assemblymember Carroll with members of the People's Campaign for Parole Justice.

ELECTION LAW

- **Same Day Registration (A.181 – Prime Sponsor)** This bill calls for a Constitutional Amendment to allow for same day voter registration.
- **Employee Disclosure Requirements (A.6542 – Prime Sponsor)** This bill requires employee disclosure requirements for political contributions to State candidates.

HEALTHCARE

- **New York Health Act (A.7897 – Cosponsor)** Creates a single payer health system for New York State.
- **Reproductive Freedom and Equity Act (A.361 – Cosponsor)** Establishes a grant program to provide funding to New York abortion providers and nonprofit organizations to increase access to abortion care.
- **Contingency Management (A.6674 – Prime Sponsor)** Establishes a statewide contingency management program for the treatment of substance abuse.

2024-25 State Budget Priorities

As this newsletter goes to the printer, the Legislature and the Governor are in the middle of negotiations over the 2024-25 State Budget.

The Governor's proposed budget totaled \$233 billion, a 4.5% increase from last year, reflecting her preference for no new taxes over increasing expenditures. There is a lot to unpack in a budget of this size and scope with funding increases in some areas and reductions in others. Here are few broad areas of concern that I believe the Legislature should hold firm on:

- **Education Funding:** There should be no cuts in education funding! The Governor's Executive Budget included \$35.3 billion in total for school aid, an increase of \$825 million from FY 24, but she proposed reworking the Foundation Aid formula for how funds are distributed, with schools that have lost population potentially seeing a drop in funding. Any change in this formula should be done in a careful and deliberate way that meets the needs of schools, not as a cost-cutting exercise.

the Executive Budget proposal including \$35.5 billion in State funding for Medicaid. This is an increase overall from the current year, but the Governor announced the need to reduce spending in certain areas including long-term care for the elderly.

- **The Migrant and Asylum Seeker Crisis:** The City and State should share the costs associated with the migrant and asylum seeker crisis. The Governor proposes increasing funding to address the migrant and asylum seeker crisis by \$2.4 billion, \$500 million over the current year's allocation, which is helpful but how these funds are spent will require ongoing oversight and review.
- **Housing Initiatives:** It is necessary to put in place policies that incentivize production, but that also have strong labor standards and are not tax dollar giveaways to developers that simply pad their profits. Production programs should also be coupled with more robust tenant protections throughout the State.
- **Arts Funding:** Arts funding should be increased. I support doubling the New York State Council on the Arts operating grants and capital funding from the approximately \$100 million proposed by the Governor to \$200 million.



Assemblymember Carroll presenting a \$40,000 check to P.S. 154 Principal Leila Rached and P.S. 154 PTA President Jimmy Schementi to support their structured literacy programming.

- **Healthcare funding:** There should be no cuts in Medicaid funding! Medicaid expenditures and education funding make up the two largest items in the State's budget with



Assemblymember Carroll speaking at the Brooklyn Museum's opening celebration of their new Toby Devan Lewis Education Center.

Service Events at My District Office (416 7th Avenue)

One on One Appointments with NYC Department of Buildings and NYC Department of Finance

Thursday, March 7th • 11am-3pm • By Appointment Only

Meet with NYC Department of Buildings about:

- General zoning and DOB questions
- Resolving open DOB and OATH violations
- Resolving Stop Work Orders
- Questions on Permits
- Questions on Construction Projects in the Neighborhood
- Sign up by clicking the QR code here:



DOB staff in Assemblymember Carroll's District Office directly assisting constituents at an event in January.

Meet with NYC Department of Finance about:

- Lowering Your Property Taxes
- Benefit Programs for Home, Condo, and Co-op Owners, Including Eligibility and How to Apply
- Your Annual Notice of Property value (NOPV)
- How to Submit Questions to the Department of Finance
- Sign up by clicking the QR Code here:



MTA MetroCard Van



Services Include:

- Get help with a Reduced-Fare application
- Transfer MetroCard balances (Full fare and Reduced-Fare)
- Exchange a damaged Reduced-Fare MetroCard for a temporary replacement
- Report a lost/stolen Reduced-Fare MetroCard
- Ask our team about any MetroCard-related issues
- Ask about the OMNY Program

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SAVE THE DATE!

Assemblymember Carroll's

Annual
Spring
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2024

- **Sunday, April 21st**
- **10am - 2pm**
- **Park Circle in Prospect Park**
(Entrance to Prospect Park near the intersection of Prospect Park Southwest and Parkside Avenue)
- **Electronic Recycling • Paper Shredding
Textile Recycling • Kids' Stop 'N' Swap
and much more!**

• Click the QR Code here to RSVP for Electronic Recycling:

