

Assemblyman **William COLTON**

Summer 2011

FIGHTING FOR US AND OUR COMMUNITY

COLTON PUSHES FOR ETHICS REFORM

Fighting to End Corruption in Government

Assemblyman Colton is renewing the push for strong ethics reform in New York State government. He agrees with Governor Cuomo that accountability, transparency, and a restored sense of faith in government must be established in order for New York State to make needed reforms.

“We must aggressively pursue reforms which will expose corrupt public officials and reveal relationships that may have an impact on an elected official’s decision-making. Any public official convicted of violating the public trust deserves the fullest penalties of the law,” Assemblyman Colton stated.

Colton Demands Stronger Ethics Laws

Recent corruption cases involving elected officials have reinforced Assemblyman Colton’s call for stronger ethics laws. He supported legislation in 2010 which created independent oversight commissions for the executive and legislative branch. This law would have empowered the commissions to investigate and actively monitor an elected official’s campaign accounts. The commissions would’ve also been given the authority to act on suspicious activity.



Assemblyman Colton is seen here debating a bill on the floor of the Assembly Chambers. Assemblyman Colton has been fighting for stronger ethics laws in the NYS Assembly since 1997. Colton will continue to push legislative leaders to pass laws that punish corruption and strengthen our democratic system of government.

COLTON FIGHTING FOR INCREASED SCHOOL AID

Assemblyman Colton has been working diligently for years to ensure that NYC schools get their fair share of funding. Assemblyman Colton spoke passionately on the Assembly floor, urging members to view our children as an investment in the future.

“Yes we must make sacrifices, but we must look at the faces that the budget impacts. Is a business-friendly state, a state that fails to provide an adequate, quality education to its children? Is a business-friendly state, a state that fails to give an opportunity to its young people to get a college education? The people in my district ask why, if the state is reducing money to schools, is closing senior centers, and cutting health care programs, why is the state reducing taxes for the wealthiest one percent? There is something wrong with that,” Assemblyman Colton stated.

The final budget included a restoration of \$272 million out of \$1.5 billion in proposed school aid cuts. Assemblyman Colton has called on NYS to use the \$144 million it has secured through the delinquent tax settlement with Lehman Brothers to be used for further restorations in school aid.

Assemblyman Colton believes the state must do more, and he will continue to fight for fairness in education funding.

COLTON MAINTAINS COMMITMENT TO OUR SENIORS

Colton Wins Fight to Keep Senior Centers Open

For the past two years, the governor’s office proposed cuts in funding for NYC senior centers, and for the past two years, Assemblyman Colton has come to the aid of seniors who rely on services provided by these centers.

Assemblyman Colton fought to fully restore \$25 million to the budget to keep these centers open. “Closing these senior centers would have been devastating to our seniors in the community,” said Assemblyman Colton.

Colton Fighting to Restore More Funding to EPIC

Assemblyman Colton is fighting to keep prescription medications more affordable for our seniors. The 2011 Executive Budget attempted to completely dismantle EPIC by cutting \$58.4 million. Assemblyman Colton fought to restore \$22.3 million to EPIC and will be organizing a petition drive to call on the governor to completely restore the program. “EPIC is a model program for the nation and vital in helping seniors afford their prescription drugs. It’s wrong for the state to ask low-income seniors to choose between life-saving medications and a roof over their heads,” said Assemblyman Colton.

COLTON STOPS HARMFUL SCHOOL REZONING PROPOSAL FOR GRAVESEND

Earlier this year, the Department of Education (DOE) wanted to rezone numerous blocks in Gravesend near P.S. 97, located at West 13th Street and Stillwell Avenue. Under the DOE plan, many children from the West streets in Gravesend would need to travel more than thirteen blocks to P.S. 215, located at Avenue S and East 2nd Street.

Assemblyman Colton sent letters to the DOE on behalf of the affected students and their parents. Colton redoubled his efforts by organizing the community to collect hundreds of petitions to stop this harmful rezoning plan. Assemblyman Colton worked closely with Community Education Council 21, highlighting how detrimental the plan would be to academic achievement, neighborhood stability, and property values.

Through the combined efforts of the community, parents, and some courageous CEC members, Assemblyman Colton was successful in forcing the DOE to shelve its flawed plan. Assemblyman Colton believes the success is a testament to the power the community has when it works together for a good cause. His office will continue to make sure the neighborhood has a voice in City Hall and in Albany.



Assemblyman Colton is seen here accepting an award from Community Education Council 21 for his unwavering support throughout the rezoning fight and in recognition of his efforts to do what is right for the children and their parents.

COLTON LENDS A HAND AND HIS VOICE DURING BLIZZARD 2010



Assemblyman Colton made sure that Brooklyn would not be forgotten during the December 2010 blizzard. Pictured above is the 1700 block of West 7th street, which Assemblyman Colton personally patrolled in the aftermath of the storm. Clean-up efforts began soon after Colton channeled the public outrage to the media.

Assemblyman Colton did not need three days to determine that NYC needed to declare a State of Emergency during and after the brutal blizzard of 2010. He immediately called upon then-Governor Paterson to declare such an emergency. Such a declaration would have mobilized State emergency personnel to assist in local cleanup efforts.

Initial calls for help fell on deaf ears as unplowed streets left cars, buses, trains, and emergency vehicles stranded for days. Colton took to the streets and airwaves to demand help for Brooklyn residents who were struggling to recover from the storm.

Colton got a hold of 1010 WINS radio and FOX News television reporters to broadcast the aftermath of the storm and the city's negligent response in Bensonhurst and Gravesend. Through live media, Colton reminded NYC leaders that Brooklyn residents pay taxes too and he publicized a list of streets that his office compiled via calls to his office.

Soon after Colton aired these grievances, the mayor's office contacted Colton's office to ask him for any streets that were unplowed. As a result of Colton's coordination between media outlets and the mayor's office, the Department of Sanitation moved swiftly to clean the unplowed streets.

COLTON DEMANDS PARKING PLAN FOR CROPSEY AVENUE, FIGHTS UNFAIR PARKING TICKETS

Assemblyman Colton sent letters to the commissioners of three city agencies (DOT, DEP, and the NYPD) demanding that a parking plan be developed immediately along and around the Cropsey Avenue construction sites near Waterview and Contello Towers. The DEP has been doing sewer work along Cropsey Avenue for some time, resulting in the elimination of numerous parking spaces on the northbound side of Cropsey Avenue, as well as some from intersecting streets.

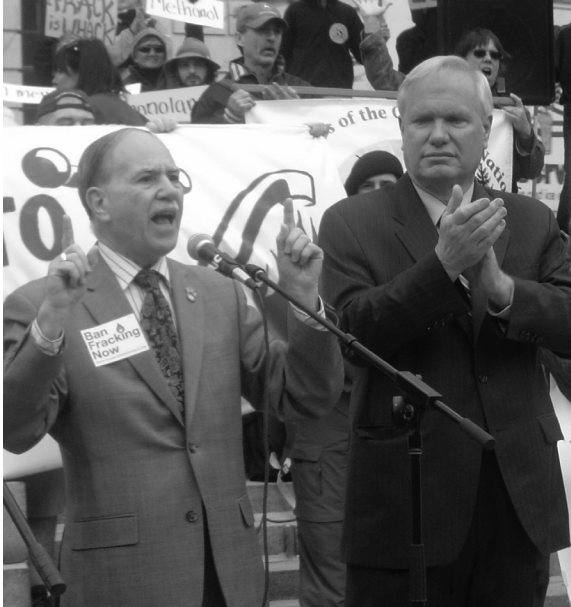
The parking shortage was further exacerbated in the aftermath of the December 2010 blizzard when cars were stuck in the middle of Cropsey Avenue due to unplowed streets. To allow city trucks and emergency vehicles to pass, city residents were urged to park alongside the middle islands of Cropsey Avenue, between 27th Avenue and Bay 43rd Street. After the storm's eventual cleanup, city officials never bothered to put up any signage along these middle islands indicating whether

residents could continue to park there.

That is why Assemblyman Colton was outraged to learn that traffic agents suddenly began ticketing motorists who parked along the middle islands with \$115 fines. He pointed out that workers at the site routinely park along these middle islands because it does not inhibit traffic. In his letter to agency heads, Colton insisted that these fines be immediately dismissed and urged all three departments to form a task force that will be responsible for developing a parking plan that would accommodate the affected residents during the construction period.

As a result, Assemblyman Colton received a letter from NYPD Commissioner Kelly stating that summons were issued against the contractor for posting illegal no parking signs on Cropsey Avenue between Bay 43 and Bay 44 Street. Colton will continue to fight for expanded parking.

COLTON PROTECTS SAFE AND AFFORDABLE DRINKING WATER



Assemblyman Colton is seen here speaking at a rally on May 2nd, calling for New York State to ban hydraulic fracturing. Hundreds of concerned citizens gathered in front of the Capitol Building in Albany to raise their voices in opposition to this type of natural gas drilling, which has caused water contamination in other states.

Introduces Ban on Controversial Hydraulic Fracturing

Recent reports coming out of the National Academy of Sciences and Cornell University confirm that hydraulic fracture drilling has caused water contamination. In fact, Pennsylvania has experienced multiple instances of documented water contamination resulting from leaking waste pits and outright dumping of waste into waterways.

These findings prompted Assemblyman Colton to introduce a bill with Senator Avella to ban the issuance of permits for natural gas drilling using the controversial technique. Assemblyman Colton has also sponsored legislation to impose a moratorium on the issuance of new permits for hydraulic fracture drilling until we can be assured our water and environment will not be threatened.

Colton: New Yorkers Cannot Afford More Water Rate Hikes

The effect of natural gas drilling on future NYC water rates also troubles Assemblyman Colton. Our water quality allows NYC to receive a filtration waiver from the federal government. The Department of Environmental Protection has warned that drilling in and around the watershed could lead to a revocation of the waiver. If this were to happen, it would cost \$10-20 billion to build a water filtration plant at a cost of \$100 million a year to operate.

“New York City ratepayers cannot afford another hike in their water bills to build a filtration plant. Water rate increases are far too high and we must protect our water to avoid any further increases,” Assemblyman Colton said.

COLTON FOUGHT ELECTRIC POWER RATE HIKE

On January 28th, 2011, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) proposed a 12% electric rate increase for households and 14% for businesses, scheduled to take effect May 28th. Assemblyman Colton immediately acted by sending a letter to FERC, strongly opposing the rate hike. In the letter Colton wrote, “The hikes will be acutely felt among our families and businesses as we experience an extended peak demand for electricity. We will do all in our power to make sure it doesn’t come to fruition.”

Assemblyman Colton acted with other officials to stop these rate hikes by supporting legislation to remove the excuse used to justify the hikes. The effort was victorious as FERC announced on May 19th that they were rescinding the rate hike order.

FERC sent a reply letter to Assemblyman Colton confirming that the rate hike would not go into effect.

COLTON HELPING OUR COMMUNITY

Fights for Resident’s Property Tax Abatement

Assemblyman Colton’s office is always available to help constituents with any problem, large or small. In one case, a constituent bought a home with promises of tax abatement. Three years later, no tax abatement was received.

The constituent turned to Assemblyman Colton for help with this matter. Assemblyman Colton’s office contacted the appropriate city agency and discovered the problem. After resolving the misunderstanding, Colton’s office succeeded in getting the tax abatement approved.

Investigates Quentin Road Trash Complaints

As soon as Assemblyman Colton’s office learned of trash piling up along Quentin Road near West 8th Street, a letter was sent to the Department of Sanitation demanding a thorough cleanup of the area. The DOS dispatched a crew to remove trash from the affected location and reported the cleanup to Assemblyman Colton.

In anticipation of the trash reappearing, Colton secured an assurance from the DOS that the Quentin Road location would be designated for routine observation and further attention.

Gets Avenue T Street Light Fixed

After receiving complaints in April that street lights along Avenue T from West 6th to West 11th Streets were not working, Assemblyman Colton’s office immediately sent a letter to the Department of Transportation alerting them to this dangerous development. At Colton’s urging, the DOT dispatched a work crew to repair the broken lights.

Please contact the Assemblyman’s Office for outages or unsafe road conditions you discover. The Assemblyman’s Office will work to resolve such concerns.

*Assemblyman Colton’s
Community Office is
here to assist you!
155 Kings Highway
(718) 236-1598*

COLTON STANDS UP FOR THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pens Editorial Supporting the Pledge in Our Schools

After a report that city schools were failing to routinely recite the pledge, Assemblyman Colton wrote an editorial supporting the practice in our schools. As a former teacher, Colton was tasked with leading his students in the pledge and explaining the history of the flag.

“Our flag is a symbol which unites a diverse population under common principles and values. Reciting the pledge helps our youth understand the sacrifices of those that founded this country and those that continue to defend its existence,” said Assemblyman Colton.

Pledge Honors Past, Present, and Future Veterans

What disappointed Assemblyman Colton the most about schools failing to recite the pledge is it’s occurring while our brave men and women are overseas protecting our freedoms here at home.

“We live in a time in which the protection of our very values and freedoms are defended by brave men and women who volunteer to make the ultimate sacrifice; risking their life and limb to defend our great nation. These brave men and women, and those who served in the past, carry with them an American spirit that inspires us all to do everything we can to help protect and preserve the values, freedoms, and traditions which make America great,” Assemblyman Colton stated.



Assemblyman Colton is seen here delivering a flag to a classroom in P.S. 121.



Assemblyman Colton is seen here with community leaders Ann Marie Walsh and Norma Mirenda, attending a recent Most Precious Blood Flea Market. Assemblyman Colton dropped by to talk with constituents and to show support for one of Most Precious Blood’s numerous efforts to help improve the quality of life for those in the community, including youth in the neighborhood.

MetroCard Mobile Sales Outreach

MetroCard Mobile Sales Staff will assist those who are eligible:

Seniors 65+

Senior citizens 65 years of age and older can apply for an MTA Reduced-Fare MetroCard and can receive a temporary card the same day. Proper proof of age, such as a Medicare Card, is required.

Seniors with Disabilities

People with qualifying disabilities with a Medicare card and a valid photo I.D., such as a driver’s license, can apply for a Reduced-Fare MetroCard and receive a temporary card the same day.

People with Disabilities

People with qualifying disabilities without a Medicare card can also apply. No temporary card will be issued and the applicant must first meet all qualifying criteria. Please note that the application processing may take up to 8 weeks.

Dates:

Friday, June 24 Friday, July 29
Friday, August 26 Friday, Sept. 23

Time: 10 a.m. – 12 Noon

Location:

Assemblyman Colton’s Community Office
155 Kings Highway (between West 12th and West 13th Streets)
Brooklyn, NY 11223-1026 • (718) 236-1598



ASSEMBLYMAN COLTON’S COMMUNITY OFFICE SERVING YOU

155 Kings Highway (Between West 12th and West 13th Street) • **718-236-1598**
Email: coltonw@assembly.state.ny.us

Monday–Wednesday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Thursday..... Noon to 8 p.m.
Friday..... 10 a.m. to Noon