



Dear neighbor,

Since my last update, I have been in Albany and around the district working on issues affecting our community. Here are a few updates.



The Budget

Last week marked one month since the budget was due. These prolonged and contentious negotiations have come down to several major sticking points:

Immigration:

We have won the support of the Governor on the MELT Act, my bill to unmask ICE. I have long fought to protect our immigrant New Yorkers by passing the New York for All Act and remain committed to having it included in the budget package.

The Climate Law:

I strongly oppose efforts to weaken New York's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) by rolling back the nation-leading emissions reduction targets that our state set in 2019. The CLCPA incentivizes New York to expand renewable energy, which is essential to protecting our environment and lowering energy costs for New Yorkers. While we are not yet on track to meet its goals, the answer is stronger action, not scaling back. The goals set by the CLCPA grow more important every year, and I am committed to defending and fully implementing this law. Alongside this, I support major climate investments and legislation to cut emissions, improve transparency, protect public health, and ensure affordability for New Yorkers.

Taxes:

I have long said that the wealthiest among us should pay their fair share. This budget is poised to make great strides by including a Pied-à-Terre Tax on second homes in NYC worth over \$5 million. If the ultra-wealthy are going to use New York as another place to park their money, then they must acknowledge the benefit our state is providing them by contributing.

SEQRA:

I also strongly support reforming the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) to get more affordable homes built as quickly as possible across the state. I am confident that we can strike a balance between reforms that will not put our environment in danger, and while making necessary updates to allow the development of housing that is critical to lowering rents in New York City.

While the budget is meant to be about dollars and cents, the Governor has used her structural power imbalance to insert policy. These delays are a testament to the leadership of the legislature in delivering for our constituents and defending the legislative wins of previous years. As we near an agreement, I will keep you updated.

Legislative Advocacy

Freedom to Read:

When books are banned, students lose access to perspectives that help them understand the world. The Freedom to Read Act ([A9537A](#)) makes clear that in New York, access to knowledge will not be decided by fear or pressure, but by fairness, transparency, and a commitment to intellectual freedom. I am fighting hard to pass my Freedom to Read Act again this year and have the Governor finally sign it.



Assemblymember.Simone.Calling.for.the.Passage.of.the.Freedom.to.Read.Act.with.Author.
Jacqueline.Woodson

Stop Super Speeders:

Thank you to Families for Safe Streets for meeting with me to discuss protecting our community against super speeders! The Stop Super Speeders Act ([A2299D](#)) uses smart tech to ensure that drivers with dozens of speeding tickets drive at safe speeds. Let's end reckless driving!



Assemblymember.Simone.Standing.with.Members.of.Families.for.Safe.Streets.in.Support.of.The.
Stop.Super.Speeders.Act



Penn Station Transparency and Accountability

I stood alongside Congressmen Jerry Nadler, other local elected leaders, residents of Block 780, Transportation Alternatives, and Reinvent Albany inside Penn Station to demand transparency and

accountability in its long-overdue redevelopment. While we all agree the station must be rebuilt, I made clear that New Yorkers cannot be cut out of decisions about costs, design, or developer selection.

No Backroom Deals

Right now, there are serious concerns about a lack of public input, unclear costs that could fall on taxpayers, and the sidelining of the MTA in the process. We called for a fully open process that protects riders, respects public investment, and ensures the community has a real voice in the future of this critical transit hub.

You can watch my full remarks by clicking [HERE](#).

Help CB5 Parks Survey

CB5 Parks & Public Spaces Task Force is conducting a [SURVEY](#) on their local parks. The data will help the Parks Committee better support our Parks and Public Spaces community partners.



“Former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo is right that Penn Station is a disgrace ([“Trump is on the Right Track on Renewing Penn Station,”](#) op-ed, April 23). What he omits is his own role in keeping it that way.” My op-ed, recently published in the **Wall Street Journal**, was a rebuttal to the former Governor and a discussion of the potential that could be unlocked by updating the **Penn Station General Project Plan (GPP)**. Trump taking over what should be a New York project shows that previous leadership has failed to generate affordable housing, increase jobs, and solidify the surrounding neighborhood as a live-work-play neighborhood. The effect COVID had on development was unprecedented, but that shouldn’t be the excuse any longer. The Governor has the chance to amend the GPP today. Read more about my feature [HERE](#).



Andrew Cuomo Helped Create Today's Penn Station Disgrace

The area remains hostage to his failed General Project Plan

WSJ OPINION

Former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo is right that Penn Station is a disgrace ("Trump Is on the Right Track on Renewing Penn Station," op-ed, April 23). What he omits is his own role in keeping it that way.

The reason Penn redevelopment stalled isn't just bureaucratic inertia or federal indifference. It's primarily that Mr. Cuomo's plan for the surrounding neighborhood collapsed under its own weight. His financing model to redevelop the station depended on a wave of luxury office buildings in the neighborhood generating the revenue to fund renovation. That bet failed. Post-Covid office demand evaporated, the towers were never built, no one came up with a new plan, and the revenue never materialized.



The HOST Act Success

Thank you to everyone who has supported this act to prepare for the World Cup. Because of your excitement, Governor Hochul has heard our desire for preparedness and has revealed new permits ahead of the global event.



We're expecting over a million visitors, and small businesses will have a rare economic opportunity to thrive. My bill ([A10339](#)) would have allowed municipalities statewide to create entertainment

zones that expanded outdoor service, extend alcohol sale hours, and remove the limits on the permit application process for existing licensees.



That is why I am excited to see our Governor putting forward a plan that accomplishes those same objectives!





Spring marks the arrival of outdoor movement based activities where the community can come together and raise money for NYC based initiatives.

- The annual **AIDS Walk** is on May 17th. [REGISTER](#) and promote increased access to vital health services.
- The **High Line** has also started offering their annual **free exercise classes**. [THIS](#) is an amazing opportunity to enjoy the wonderful weather and meet other locals.
- We didn't forget the kids! **Chelsea Green Park** is also hosting a **block party** on May 16th. Find out more on their [SOCIALS](#).



There are always free or affordable resources in the district to assist you:

- **The Hudson Guild** offers a range of services, from childcare to adult programs. They also provide mental health services. Find out more [HERE](#).
- If you are facing food insecurity, the Holy Apostle Soup Kitchen offers both pantry and hot food [OPTIONS](#). Please consider volunteering if you are able!
- ICE is still terrorizing immigrant families in New York. If you have any questions, utilize [THESE](#) free legal services.



Thank you so much for reading our Community Update! I hope that the resources and information about our work was valuable to you. As always, my office and I are here to serve you, so if you need any assistance, such as with a state agency, unemployment benefits, or housing issues. Please email us at simonet@nyassembly.gov or call us at 212-807-7900.

In service,
Tony

Keep up with me on social media*

