

## Assemblyman

# Jeffrey Dinowitz

### Reports to the People of the 81<sup>st</sup> Assembly District

FALL 2014

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*Serving the communities of Kingsbridge, Kingsbridge Heights, Marble Hill, Norwood, Riverdale, Van Cortlandt Village, Wakefield and Woodlawn*

Dear Constituent:

As we approach 2015, I look at our community with increasing optimism. We know that the economy continues to improve and crime continues to go down. Locally many things are taking place that make me believe our best times are ahead.

Just a few examples include the new Broadway Plaza Mall recently opened at West 230th Street and Broadway. The new stores of this mall replaced an underutilized and ugly parking lot. Riverdale Crossing at Broadway and West 237th Street will be opening soon. The investments at these two sites are tremendous votes of confidence in our community and will create hundreds of jobs, in addition to many new stores. In addition, plans for the Kingsbridge National Ice Center are moving along. The Kingsbridge Armory will provide good living wage jobs, and benefit not just Kingsbridge Heights, but the Bronx and beyond.

There are a number of other development projects in the district, including a concentration of homeless shelters in Wakefield, plans for an oversized residential building on Broadway, and Montefiore's proposed facility on Riverdale Avenue, whose plans have not been finalized. I will continue to work with local residents and community leaders along with the community boards and our other elected officials to address and resolve the challenges we face with these developments.

The upcoming legislative session is one that I hope will be productive and I know will be interesting. While we accomplished a lot in the past two years, there are still many unresolved issues: these include passing the 10-point Women's Equality Act, enacting the Dream Act, further increasing the minimum wage, and tackling campaign finance reform.

If you have any constituent matters that I can be helpful with, please come to my district office (or call, write, fax or email). My superb staff members are all experts at cutting through government red tape and getting the job done.

A Happy Thanksgiving to All!

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Dinowitz  
Assemblyman

## Assemblyman Dinowitz Brings Help Point Intercoms to the Bronx



*Thanks to nearly \$1 million allocated by Assemblyman Dinowitz to the MTA, four subway stations in the 81st Assembly District now have state-of-the-art, interactive Help Point Intercoms. These intercoms allow subway riders to connect with emergency responders during emergency situations or MTA transit personnel for everyday travel information, and will help make our stations safer during all hours of the day.*

This fall, I was joined by MTA officials to celebrate the official opening of Help Point Intercoms in four subway stations in my district that I funded with a \$950,000 capital allocation to the MTA. These interactive intercoms feature a green button, which subway riders can push to speak with MTA personnel for travel information, as well as a red button, which connects riders to professionals during emergency situations. These devices make our subway stations safer and more accessible, serving as both information portals and as highly-visible safeguards and deterrents against crime. Help Point Intercoms have been installed at the West 231st Street, West 238th Street, and Van Cortlandt Park/West 242nd Street stations on the 1 Line and the Wakefield/East 241st Street station on the 2 Line.



*Assemblyman Dinowitz is joined by several colleagues from the New York State Caucus of Environmental Legislators, including Michelle Schimel, Bryan Kavanagh, and Danny O'Donnell, at the People's Climate March, which brought out hundreds of thousands of people.*

## North Central Bronx Hospital Labor and Delivery Unit Re-Opens

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on October 9, 2014 to celebrate the reopening of the North Central Bronx Hospital's labor and delivery unit. The services of this unit were suspended back in August 2013 due to a lack of senior physicians. Unfortunately, this decision included no community input and created long wait times and overcrowded rooms at Jacobi Medical Center, as well as other nearby hospitals. After the shutdown, I rallied with community groups, hospital workers and other elected officials outside the Jacobi Medical Center to protest the closing. In November 2013, the North Central Bronx Hospital announced that it would re-open the labor and delivery unit. The unit's return is welcome news to mothers and children, the North Central Bronx staff, and the entire community.



*Local elected officials, including Assemblyman Dinowitz, celebrated the successful battle to bring back the prenatal care unit at North Central Bronx Hospital. Pictured are Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj, Council Member Ritchie Torres, Assemblyman Dinowitz, Council Member Andrew Cohen, Sr. Vice President of North Bronx Health Network William Walsh, and Council Member Andy King.*

## Broadway Plaza Commercial Center Opens for Business

This fall, I was excited to welcome a new addition to the commercial corridor along Broadway in Kingsbridge. Broadway Plaza, located on West 230th Street and Broadway, has officially opened, bringing Sports Authority, TJ Maxx, Aldi's Supermarket, and other stores to the Northwest Bronx. Over a decade ago, when the space was a scarcely-utilized, city-owned parking lot, I was the first to advocate for a commercial center that would create jobs and serve the needs of our growing community. I am pleased that local elected officials and community members came together to support this project, which will benefit neighboring communities for many years to come.

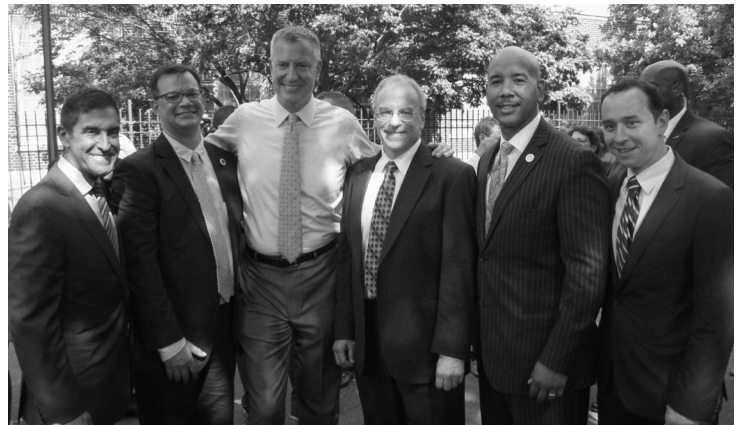


*Elected officials and community leaders attended the Broadway Plaza ribbon cutting, which represents a new beginning for the property on West 230th Street and Broadway. Over a decade ago, when the space was a scarcely-utilized parking lot, Assemblyman Dinowitz was the first to advocate for a commercial center that would create jobs and serve the needs of our community.*

## DOT Installs Dinowitz-Requested Speed Humps on Irwin Avenue

I am pleased to announce that the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) has installed two speed humps on Irwin Avenue between West 234th Street and West 238th Street. The request for speed humps on this residential corridor of Irwin Avenue was made by my office back in 2012.

The DOT agreed to install traffic-calming measures on Irwin Avenue, between West 234th Street and West 238th Street, in April 2014, and I am very pleased to see that the installation took place so quickly. The installation of speed humps on Irwin Avenue between West 234th and West 236th Streets and between West 236th and West 238th Streets is important for traffic and pedestrian safety, especially the children and senior citizens that reside within the area.



*Assemblyman Dinowitz stood with Mayor Bill de Blasio, Senator Jeffrey D. Klein, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., Council Member Andrew Cohen, Community Board 8 Chair Dan Padernacht, DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, NYPD officers, and community advocates in front of P.S. 95 in Van Cortlandt Village to announce the installation of 140 speed enforcement cameras across the city. These cameras, part of the Vision Zero initiative, will help prevent dangerous traffic conditions near our schools.*

## Assemblyman Dinowitz Lights Up Spuyten Duyvil

For many years, at least seven apartment buildings in Spuyten Duyvil experienced blackouts several times a year even in the best weather, however the widespread loss of power due to Hurricane Sandy highlighted this longstanding problem. All of these buildings lost power as a result of the storm, but for the thousand-plus residents of these buildings, losing power, hot water, and heat was nothing new. After I met with Con Ed in October of last year, they agreed to make the much needed improvements to the power grid, and this year have finally delivered. Though Con Ed did not move the power lines underground, they split the Riverdale loop in half and added an additional power supply, located on Johnson Avenue and Kappock Street. This measure should not only cut down on the amount of power outages, but also ensure that the power outages that do occur are much shorter in duration.

## Reminder: The Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) Program Has Expanded

The Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) program offers eligible seniors an exemption from future rent increases. If you qualify, your rent amount will be frozen and the City of New York will give to your landlord a property tax credit equal to the amount of your increase. The New York State Legislature has expanded the SCRIE income eligibility from \$29,000 to \$50,000. If you would like more information or would like help with filing an initial SCRIE application, please feel free to call or stop by my office. To be eligible you must be at least 62 years of age, your income must not exceed \$50,000, and your annual rent must be greater than one third of your annual income.

# Legislative News

## New Legislation to Protect Consumer Reviews

In the coming weeks I will be introducing new legislation for the upcoming legislative session that will protect the rights of consumers to review products and services. While most businesses recognize that public comments and reviews are quickly becoming an essential part of how consumers make purchasing decisions in the 21st century, some seek to repress the voices of their customers through restrictive, little-discussed provisions in contracts that may not be obvious or fully understood by the consumer. The ability to express honest opinions about goods and services, both good and bad, empowers consumers and encourages businesses to create the best possible product. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Assembly to protect this vital right of consumers.

## Legislation to Ban Discriminatory Credit Checks in Hiring and Employment Decisions

As Chair of the Assembly Committee on Consumer Affairs and Protection, I authored the Credit Privacy in Employment Act, which would prevent employers from using personal credit histories in hiring and employment decisions. In a time of rising student debt and deceitful practices by credit card companies, a person's credit score may not reflect his or her past job performance or qualifications, but it can currently be used to reject otherwise qualified applicants for a job. More often than not, women, students, and people of color are adversely affected by these credit checks. My bill, which has passed in the Assembly in previous years but has not yet passed in the Senate, would end this discriminatory practice. I intend to reintroduce this legislation at the beginning of the next legislative session and work with the governor and the Senate to ensure that New Yorkers applying for jobs are considered for them on their merits alone.



*Assemblyman Dinowitz, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. and New York City Council Members Costa Constantinides, Andrew Cohen, Vanessa Gibson, Ritchie Torres, Andy King, and Helen Rosenthal endorsed legislation to establish a public registry of persons in New York City who have been convicted of gun-related criminal offenses. A similar bill was introduced in the Assembly by Assemblyman Carl Heastie, to establish a similar gun offender registry across New York State. The registry would provide our communities with information on potentially dangerous people in their neighborhood and help discourage repeat gun-related offenses.*

## Assemblyman Dinowitz Brings Flu Vaccines to Hundreds

This fall I, along with Congressman Eliot Engel, State Senator Jeffrey D. Klein, Council Member Andrew Cohen, Montefiore Medical Center, New York Presbyterian Ambulatory Care Network, the Visiting Nurse Service of New York, and Walgreens Pharmacy, sponsor free flu shot events. The flu and pneumonia account for 2,200 to 3,000 deaths a year in New York City, and I was pleased to provide this important service to hundreds of community residents.

## Improvements Made to the Riverdale Senior Services Garden and Terrace

In September, Riverdale Senior Services opened their newly renovated garden and terrace, which was funded by \$175,000 in state funds that I had allocated in previous years. The project includes new raised garden beds, new steps, new doors, an awning, a seating area, fencing, and a handicap-accessible lift. I was proud to secure funding for these improvements to Riverdale Senior Services, an organization that contributes positively to the community in innumerable ways. The beautiful new garden and terrace, named for Julia Blumenthal, a founding member of Riverdale Senior Services, is a place where seniors can stay active, spend time with friends, and enjoy the breathtaking view of the Bronx and Manhattan.

*Assemblyman Dinowitz congratulated former New York City Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly and Manhattan College on the dedication of the school's new Raymond W. Kelly '63 Student Commons building. Commissioner Kelly has been a dedicated public servant his entire life, not only for this great city, but for our country as well. Manhattan College could not have chosen a more fitting name to bestow on its new Student Commons building. Assemblyman Dinowitz is pictured with State Senator Jeffrey D. Klein, Governor Andrew Cuomo, and Raymond W. Kelly.*



## 25 is the New Speed Limit

Beginning November 7th, 2014, the speed limit on ALL NEW YORK CITY STREETS was reduced to 25 mph unless otherwise posted. The reduced speed limit is an integral part of Mayor de Blasio's comprehensive Vision Zero Action Plan, and will be enforced by the NYPD. On average, a New Yorker is killed or seriously injured every two hours in a traffic crash. Moreover, a pedestrian struck by a vehicle traveling at 25 mph is half as likely to die as a pedestrian who is struck by a 30 mph vehicle. Reducing the speed limit in New York will make our streets safer not just for pedestrians, but motorists as well.

The speed limits on NYC highways will remain the same, and some larger streets, which have been designed to accommodate faster speeds, will remain at 30 mph. If you have any questions regarding the reduced speed limit, or Vision Zero, visit [nyc.gov/visionzero](http://nyc.gov/visionzero).



*Assemblyman Dinowitz is pictured at a meeting of the Woodlawn Heights Taxpayers and Community Association meeting at the St. Barnabas High School cafeteria, discussing neighborhood issues.*

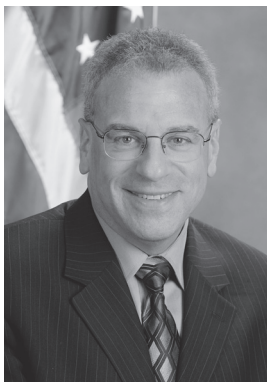
## Henry Hudson Parkway Improvement Update

After making a site visit to the Henry Hudson Parkway earlier this summer, I wrote a letter to the New York State Department of Transportation requesting that they investigate a dangerous road condition on the Parkway between West 231st and West 235th Streets and asked that they make immediate repairs. The retaining walls were in dire need of repair, with gaping holes and loose gravel that posed hazardous risks to the thousands of motorists who drive along the Henry Hudson Parkway each day. I am thrilled to announce that the NYS DOT has repaired the deteriorating retaining walls leading up to the 232nd Street overpass! I applaud the NYS DOT for acting on this matter quickly.

Despite the need for recent repairs, according to the NYS DOT, the retaining walls are structurally sound, and will undergo a more extensive reconstruction within the next several years.



*After raising concerns about the deteriorating retaining wall bordering the Henry Hudson Parkway at the 232nd Street exit, the NYS Department of Transportation has responded to the request by Assemblyman Dinowitz and has made significant repairs.*



## Assemblyman **Jeffrey Dinowitz**

Reports to the People of the  
81<sup>st</sup> Assembly District

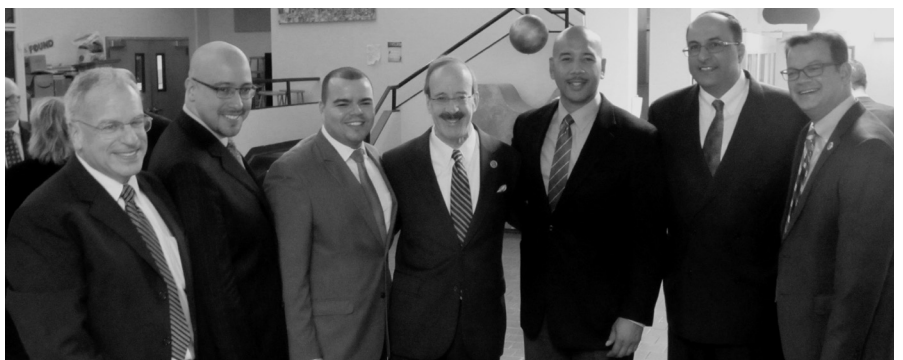
**FALL 2014**

## **Free Notary Service**

My office provides **free notary service** during regular office hours.

**10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Monday through Friday**

Please bring two forms of identification, at least one with your photo and signature, if you would like your signature notarized.



*Assemblyman Dinowitz attended a ceremony hosted by Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. jointly honoring the Jewish Holiday of Sukkot and Hispanic Heritage Month. He was joined by – from left – State Senator Gustavo Rivera, Assemblyman Marcos Crespo, Congressman Eliot Engel, Borough President Diaz, the Consul General of Israel in New York Ido Aharoni, and Council Member Andrew Cohen.*