



# NEWS January 2021

## From Bill Magnarelli

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129<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

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### Moving Ahead in Uncertain Times

The 2021 Legislative year will be like no other. As we learned in 2020, we must be prepared for the unexpected. We will continue to address the needs of NY State as best we can in these unusual circumstances.

- As we approach the legislative session, combatting the pandemic remains our top priority. COVID-19 vaccinations are becoming available. For more on eligibility and general vaccine information, visit <https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/>. As the number of people getting vaccinated increases, the economy will reopen safely.
- Improving infrastructure across Upstate NY and the rest of the state is another priority. The state will continue to identify “shovel ready” bridge and road projects. Additional funding for these projects will be evaluated as, hopefully, more Federal funding becomes available.
- As part of improving transportation and infrastructure across Upstate New York, I’d like to see improvements to ensure Amtrak trains provide reliable on-time service. To begin to make this happen, a study of the issue is needed, as is discussion with other elected officials in the Northeast.
- In addition to our cities mass transit operations, the state needs to look at improving rural public transportation. I am re-introducing legislation (A8107) to empower the “Interagency Coordination Committee on Rural Transportation” to study the issue.
- Last year, there was a movement to create a pilot program using speed cameras in work-zones on the Thruway and interstates to stop speeding. I intend to push for enacting this to create a safer environment for those working to maintain and improve roadways.
- Governor Cuomo discussed in his state of the state, efforts are being made to make high-speed broadband available to all areas of the state. This is an important step in allowing all residents of the state access to the internet from their homes.
- I am sponsoring a bill being drafted entitled “Tenant Dignity & Safe Housing Act” (A. 354) with the help of Legal Services of Central New York. The purpose is to give tenants the ability to bring court actions against bad landlords, without fear of retaliation, by streamlining the process in local courts. Local codes departments would also be notified of violations in the process.
- The Pandemic exposed the need for safe, affordable childcare. My office is looking at ways to find greater access to quality childcare.

As session progresses and new legislative issues become apparent, I will keep you informed through these newsletters and my social media accounts. Please feel free to contact my office at (315) 428-9651 or [magnarelliw@nyassembly.gov](mailto:magnarelliw@nyassembly.gov) with any questions or concerns. Also follow my social media accounts: [facebook.com/william.magnarelli](https://www.facebook.com/william.magnarelli), Twitter [@BillMagnarelli](https://twitter.com/BillMagnarelli), Instagram [@assemblymanmagnarelli](https://www.instagram.com/assemblymanmagnarelli)

In the meantime, keep an eye out for my constituent survey in the mail or find it online. Your response to these questions helps me understand how the community responds to important issues.

*William B. Magnarelli*

## More than 200 Gallons of Hand Sanitizer Handed Out

COVID-19 created many unusual situations for businesses, individuals and non-profits alike. As the community battled the pandemic, my office tried to help in as many ways as possible. In addition to handling thousands of calls from constituents with questions about unemployment benefits, we took on the tactical task of distributing more than 200 gallon jugs and 3,000 small (2 ounce) spray bottles of the "New York State Clean" hand sanitizer. "New York State Clean" hand sanitizer is a 75% alcohol hand sanitizer manufactured by the state during the pandemic. Providing this necessity to non-profits allows them to focus their time and resources on other necessities. Below is a list of non-profits the office distributed hand sanitizer to. If a local non-profit would like "New York State Clean" hand sanitizer to be delivered to them, please contact the office at (315) 428-9651.



**West Area Athletic Club**

- Basilica of Sacred Heart Food Pantry
- Blessed Sacrament Food Pantry
- Saint Lucy's Food Pantry
- Catholic Charities of Syracuse
- Tyrol Club of Solvay
- Clear Path for Veterans
- Syracuse Polish Home
- The Samaritan Center
- Most Holy Rosary
- Ray Rinaldi's GYM-West Area Athletic Club
- Gethsemane Church
- Solvay-Geddes Community Center
- Victory Temple Fellowship Church



**Samaritan Center**



**Clear Path For Veterans**

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## Legislation Signed into Law to Stop Abuses of the §485-a Property Tax Exemption Program

Governor Cuomo signed important legislation designed to put an end to commercial developers abusing a property tax exemption program. The legislation sponsored by Assemblyman Magnarelli was introduced after seeing major violations take place in Syracuse.

The intent of §485-a of the Real Property Tax Law is to incentivize the redevelopment of older buildings by allowing municipalities to offer a 12-year exemption on property taxes to developers who renovate these buildings to include commercial and residential space. The program was abused by developers who completed the projects with minimal or no commercial uses, buildings that are nearly totally demolished and rebuilt, and projects built on vacant lots. The resulting property tax exemptions are costing participating localities millions of dollars each year and placing a heavier burden on other property taxpayers.

"The abuses under this program are egregious," Assemblyman Magnarelli said, "§485-a exemptions should not be going to projects where the only commercial uses in the building are vending machines or storage units, or where the developer essentially demolishes the underlying structure for new construction. Local governments and assessors say the current law does not give them the authority to deny these applications. This newly enacted legislation gives them that authority and will return the §485-a program to this purpose. This program was created to help our downtowns redevelop old buildings into useful mixed-use structures."

This legislation will reform the §485-a program in the following ways:

- Limit the types of commercial purposes and uses that can qualify for the exemption and require them to be publicly accessible.
- Require at least 40% of a building be used for residential purposes and at least 15% of the building be used for commercial purposes exclusive of below-grade floor areas.
- Require the portion of the building used for commercial purposes to be currently used as such or in good faith contemplated.
- Require an annual certification to the assessor attesting that the property complies with the eligibility requirements.
- Require a revocation of benefits if the property is non-compliant; and impose penalties if a material misstatement is made on an application.

The newly enacted legislation took effect on January 1, 2021.

### About New York State Assemblyman William B. Magnarelli

Assemblyman William Magnarelli represents the 129<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, which includes the Northside, Westside, Eastwood Valley and Downtown areas of the City of Syracuse, Syracuse University area, Outer Comstock, as well as the towns of Geddes and Van Buren. He first won election in 1998 for an open Assembly seat and has been reelected since then. During his terms in office, Assemblyman Magnarelli has focused his efforts on bringing more jobs to Central New York, lowering taxes, providing our children a better education at every level, improving our healthcare and keeping our families safe. For more information, contact Assemblyman Magnarelli's District Office at (315) 428-9651 or visit <http://www.assembly.state.ny.us/magnarelli>.