

**NEW YORK
STATE
LEGISLATIVE
AGENDA**

2024

Prepared by
Queens Chamber of Commerce



QUEENS DAY IN ALBANY

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO OF QUEENS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



THOMAS GRECH
PRESIDENT & CEO

Thank you for joining us for Queens Day in Albany. Being the voice of our members and the Queens business community is paramount for us at the Chamber, and our yearly visit to the State Capitol stands as one of our pivotal events.

Queens Day in Albany provides a platform for face-to-face meetings with our elected representatives. It's a chance for you to directly express the challenges entrepreneurs and business owners encounter and how policymakers can support your efforts to serve employees, customers, and communities effectively. Additionally, we'll enjoy the opportunity to network and savor exquisite cuisine from top restaurants in the borough at our Taste of Queens event.

Best,
Tom Grech

THE QUEENS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SUPPORTS THE AWARDING OF TWO COMMERCIAL CASINO LICENSES IN QUEENS COUNTY

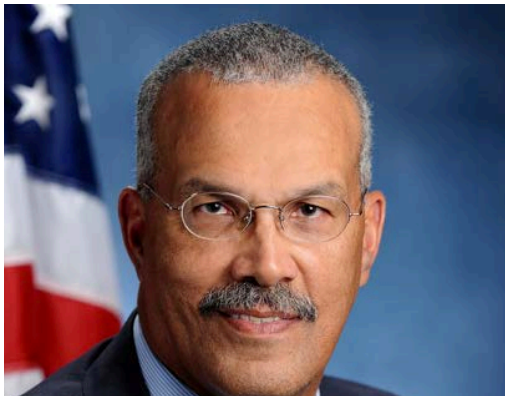
The Queens Chamber of Commerce remains supportive of Resorts World New York City (RWNYC) being awarded one of the coveted three remaining downstate casino licenses. More than 10 years ago, RWNYC made a commitment to its partners throughout the State that they would create good-paying union jobs, have a strong and diverse workforce, generate much needed education revenue, and be an economic engine for the southeast Queens community. A decade later they have kept their promise.

Furthermore, we are supportive of the development of Metropolitan Park, which will see the conversion of 50 acres of Citi Field parking lots into a dynamic sports and entertainment hub showcasing Hard Rock. This \$8 billion venture promises to generate 23,000 jobs, both temporary during construction and permanent thereafter. The project includes the creation of 20 acres of public park space, 5 acres designated for community athletic fields and playgrounds, enhancements to the mass transit station, the addition of a Queens food hall, and the provision of year-round live music and entertainment.

Ranked as the fourth largest city in its own right, boasting attractions like the NY Mets, the US Open, a plethora of museums, and the upcoming NYCFC soccer stadium, Queens holds the potential to emerge as the premier entertainment hub not just within New York City but across the entire US.



**GOVERNOR
KATHY HOCHUL**



**ASSEMBLY MEMBER
JEFFRION L. AUBRY**

BILL NO. A5688- AUTHORIZE THE DISCONTINUANCE OF PARKLAND IN FLUSHING MEADOWS CORONA PARK

Authorizes the alienation of parkland to facilitate a lease with New Green Willets, LLC for the construction, maintenance, operation or use with a gaming facility, and in conjunction with such facility, commercial retail, entertainment, recreational, hotel convention and/or community facility uses.

SENATE BILL S3474A- INCREASES THE INCOME ELIGIBILITY THRESHOLD FOR THE TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The purpose of this bill is to increase income eligibility threshold of the tuition assistance program for dependent students. This will make tuition assistance available to more individuals.



**SENATOR
TOBY ANN STAVISKY**



**ASSEMBLY MEMBER
STACEY PHEFFER AMATO**

BILL NO. A3107- TOLL ELIMINATION ON THE CROSS BAY VETERANS MEMORIAL BRIDGE

An act in relation to prohibiting the imposition and collection of a fare, toll, rental rate, charge or other fee on the Cross Bay Veterans Memorial Bridge. The purpose of the bill is to end the inequitable, unjustified and burdensome toll on the Cross Bay Memorial Bridge; the only tolled intra-Borough bridge in the state. The toll has the impact of dividing communities, artificially creating economic barriers, hampering tourism and keeping the area most impacted by Superstorm Sandy from effecting a full and thorough economic recovery.

BILL NO. A5412- NURSE OF TOMORROW ACT

An act to amend the education law enacting the Nurse of Tomorrow Act for grants to public and not for profit hospitals, skilled nursing facilities and other entities for nurse recruitment, education and retention costs and activities. This legislation seeks to create a Nurse of Tomorrow program, modeled after the NYS Teacher for Tomorrow program, designed to help alleviate the shortage of qualified registered nurses in hospitals and nursing homes. The bill would provide various incentives to encourage nurses to remain in the profession and students to enter the profession.



**ASSEMBLY MEMBER
ALICIA HYNDMAN**

BILL NO. A1143- AMNESTY & FINE DISCOUNT PROGRAM FOR SMALL BUSINESS

The COVID19 pandemic has been devastating to businesses all across New York. Many businesses are struggling to pay fines accrued during the pandemic. Many have gone into default as a result of such fines. This bill establishes a small business fine discount for struggling small businesses.



**ASSEMBLY MEMBER
DAVID I. WEPRIN**



**ASSEMBLY MEMBER
CLYDE VANEL**

**SENATOR
LEROY COMRIE**

BILL NO. A1186 BILL NO. S519- INCREASING FINES FOR TRACTOR-TRAILER PARKING ON RESIDENTIAL STREETS

An act aimed to amend the administrative code of the City of New York and the vehicle and traffic law, in relation to increasing the fine for tractor-trailer combinations that park on residential streets overnight. The purpose of this bill is to reduce overcrowding and parking on residential streets by commercial vehicles.

BILL NO. S5990- SMALL BUSINESS TAX DEFERRED SAVINGS ACCOUNT

Authorizes small business tax deferred savings accounts. This legislation would allow small businesses to deposit profits into a small business tax deferred savings account up to \$5,000 annually. This money may be withdrawn tax free for certain qualifying purposes.



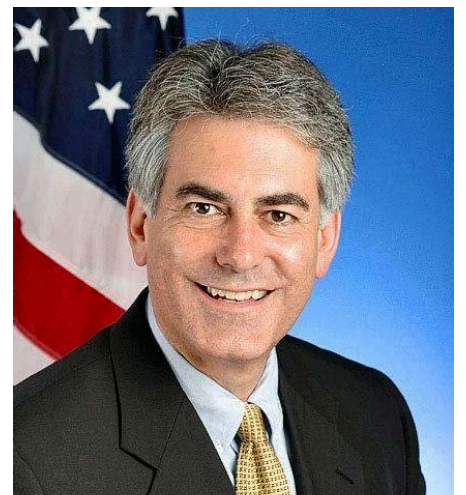
**SENATOR
JAMES SANDERS JR.**

BILL NO. A4503- FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO SMALL BUSINESS

Financial assistance to small business for pollution prevention, control and compliance. The purpose of the bill is to provide financial assistance to small businesses to incentivize pollution prevention measures and in turn provide small businesses with the ability to reduce operation expenditures by adopting these measures.

BILL NO. A6335- SMALL BUSINESS ENERGY LOAN FUND

This bill would create the Small Business Energy Loan Fund to provide zero-to-low interest loans to small businesses in economically distressed areas for energy efficient projects and advanced energy technology.



**ASSEMBLY MEMBER
ALBERT STIRPE**

BILL NO. A6140 AND BILL NO. S1671- SMALL BUSINESS REVOLVING LOAN FUND

The purpose of this bill is to require the small business revolving loan fund from the Empire State Development Corporation to target and market to veteran-owned enterprises and service-disabled veteran-owned enterprises.



**ASSEMBLY MEMBER
VIVIAN E. COOK**



**SENATOR
JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR.**

SENATE BILL S8444: DIRECTS THE DIVISION OF VETERANS' SERVICES TO ESTABLISH A SEARCHABLE DATABASE OF VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESSES

This legislation creates a centralized location for Veteran owned businesses to promote their information to the public. Registering will give enterprises visibility to prospective buyers, including government agencies and private contractors seeking to purchase goods and services.

With a projected number of over 15,000 veteran business owners (VBOs) in New York City alone, New York State's veteran business enterprises represent 5.2% of the nation's veteran-owned businesses. To better support our state's VBOs to thrive in the business industry, this legislation aims to serve this community of business owners through economic recovery and development.



**SENATOR
JESSICA RAMOS**

COMMUNITY MEDIA REINVESTMENT FUND

Establishes a tax on direct broadcast satellite services and video streaming services; establishes the community media reinvestment fund; imposes an excise tax on direct broadcast satellite services or video streaming services; provides monies from the community media reinvestment fund shall be distributed to the state general fund, municipalities and community media organizations.



**ASSEMBLY MEMBER
MICHAEL BENEDETTO**



**SENATOR
JOHN LIU**

SENATE BILL S2581A-ESTABLISHES A TAX ON DIRECT BROADCAST SATELLITE SERVICES AND VIDEO STREAMING SERVICES AND ESTABLISHES THE COMMUNITY MEDIA REINVESTMENT FUND

The legislation will ensure that, as video programming viewership expands and migrates from traditional cable services to satellite and video streaming services, that migration does not result in reduced support for and investment in local video programming responsive to the unique needs and interests of New Yorkers, including public, educational, or governmental access television programming.

ASSEMBLY BILL A3160 & SENATE BILL S2019 - ESTABLISHING THE VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS FUND

Veterans are entitled to certain services. Accessing these services can be difficult, though. Congressional chartered Veterans' service organizations help cut through the red tape and connect veterans with the services that they have earned. By allowing taxpayers to voluntarily contribute to the Veterans Service Organizations Fund, we are providing budget-neutral support to our veterans.



**ASSEMBLY MEMBER
JENIFER RAJKUMAR**



**SENATOR
JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR.**

ASSEMBLY BILL A911- AUTHORIZES A TAX EXEMPTION AND A TAX ABATEMENT FOR ALTERATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO MULTIPLE DWELLINGS FOR PURPOSES OF PRESERVING HABITABILITY IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING

An act to amend the real property tax law, in relation to authorizing a tax exemption and a tax abatement for alterations and improvements to multiple dwellings for purposes of preserving habitability in affordable housing.



**ASSEMBLY MEMBER
EDWARD C. BRAUNSTEIN**

ASSEMBLY BILL A549 AND SENATE BILL S6703- PROVIDES FOR LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

This bill would provide much needed legal relief for military families and active military personnel. While service members and their families have access to military legal assistance to advice and assistance, many have to pay for and obtain their own counsel.

This bill would help by creating a pro bono legal program that can connect qualified attorneys with service members and their families. This program would provide assistance to those who have served our country, as well as their families. By ensuring pro bono legal representation to military personnel and their families, New York State can continue to give back to our brave veterans and service families.



**ASSEMBLY MEMBER
CATALINA CRUZ**



**ASSEMBLY MEMBER
JESSICA GONZÁLEZ-ROJAS**

ASSEMBLY BILL A5100A & SENATE BILL S5499A – RAISING THE LOBBYING REQUIREMENT THRESHOLD TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN ADVOCACY WORK.

Fewer than 3% of nonprofits engage in legislative advocacy because of negative associations with the terms "advocacy" and "lobbying", or because of consulting registration and reporting requirements. The Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government (CELIG) requires organization that expects to spend more than \$5,000 in a year doing legislative advocacy to: register as a lobbyist; familiarize themselves with the CELIG's regulations; file a minimum of 6 reports each year; and risk paying late filing fees ranging from \$75 to \$2,000 per filing, which is burdensome. This legislation will reduce some of that burden and expand the ability for the nonprofit sector to advocate for New York's most vulnerable communities.

LETTER RE: BUDGET BILL A8803

PART JJ OF THE TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ARTICLE VII BUDGET

The Chamber joins the major representatives of business interests in New York State expressing our grave concerns regarding the proposed amendments to the state's consumer protection law found in Part JJ of the Transportation and Economic Development Article VII Budget Legislation. We believe the passage of this bill risks serious unintended consequences that could harm the very businesses and residents it seeks to assist.

The inclusion of "unfair" and "abusive" practices in the general business law, coupled with the nearly 2000% increase in statutory damages and the mandate for courts to award attorney's fees threatens to dramatically increase extortionate litigation. New Yorkers already face the highest risk of litigation and the highest litigation costs. This proposal will make the Empire State even more litigious, burdening companies with increased risk of catastrophic liability.

While the bill purports to offer remedies to small businesses, local firms already have a vast body of contract law to protect against misrepresentations and unfair practices. The potential for excessive damages and increased litigation costs will not only harm these businesses but lead to higher prices for consumers. This is particularly concerning for small businesses that operate on narrow margins and are still recovering from the economic impact of the pandemic.

Furthermore, the bill supersedes the discretion of the Office of Attorney General, transferring significant power to private lawyers who stand to benefit financially from increased filings and windfall payouts. Rather than unleashing a torrent of speculative lawsuits, we propose a more targeted approach that focuses on genuinely harmful practices without opening the floodgates to opportunistic litigation. This could include refining the definitions of "unfair" and "abusive".

JOINT BIDDING LAW SUNSET

The State Legislature has previously authorized joint bidding in the Coordinated Construction Act for Lower Manhattan in 2004. In 2010, the use of joint bidding was authorized in contracts for public works relating to the Third Water Tunnel in Manhattan. In 2014, the legislature authorized joint bidding throughout the city. This legislation would simply extend the current sunset to 2034. This is appropriate and good public policy. The joint bidding experience since 2004 has been extremely successful by reducing street construction time, lessening the adverse impact on local businesses and residents and establishing more reasonable prices for private interference work.

It is critical that street work throughout New York City be completed as quickly and efficiently as possible so as to minimize the negative impact on residents, businesses and the city's economy and to ensure the City's infrastructure is adequately reinforced before the next catastrophic weather event. Joint bidding is necessary to expedite the municipal work associated with any construction project in a fair and safe manner without increasing costs.

CLEAN ENERGY

The Chamber promotes the use of clean, renewable technologies and energy efficiency in New York, in order to increase energy diversity and security, boost economic development, improve public health, and reduce air pollution. This means accelerated investment and construction in all clean energy market segments, including grid-connected renewables, energy storage, building efficiency, distributed renewables, and transportation electrification.