



This Week in New York

Covering New York State and City Government

A Publication of Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno LLC

May 3, 2019 Edition



As We Go To Press

FERC Approves Williams Pipeline

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) today issued its approval of the Williams pipeline from New Jersey to New York, according to published reports. The 24-mile pipeline, known as the Northeast Supply Enhancement Project, is contracted to supply National Grid customers on Long Island and New York City.

The Northeast Supply Enhancement project still needs state water quality certificate approvals from both New Jersey and New York. The deadline for a decision from New York is May 15 and New Jersey's is June 20.

National Grid asserts that it may be forced to declare a moratorium on new gas service if the pipeline is not approved. The Association for a Better Long Island, the Long Island Builders Institute, New York State Laborers' Union and SEIU 1199 have come out in support. However, the project faces opposition from environmental groups and lawmakers in both New York and New Jersey. Opponents have raised concerns about the emissions impacts of the added gas supply from the pipeline.

FERC Commissioner Cheryl LaFleur concurred with the approval of the project and praised National Grid for providing information about the potential displacement of heating oil because of the project. Meanwhile, Commissioner Richard Glick dissented in part and criticized the lack of consideration of the potential climate impacts of the project. The order can be accessed [here](#):

In the News – State

Governor Cuomo Signs Bill To Ban Offshore Drilling In New York Waters

Governor Andrew Cuomo this week signed legislation (S.2316 (Kaminsky)/A.2572 (Englebright)) to ban offshore drilling in New York State waters. The legislation will bar the state from granting permits for drilling, or oil or gas exploration in offshore areas controlled by the State.

The ban will protect New York's waters and coasts by making it more difficult for oil and gas drilling to occur close to coastal New York, even in waters controlled by the federal government. In addition, the legislation prohibits the leasing of State-owned underwater coastal land that would authorize or facilitate the exploration, development, or production of oil or natural gas.

According to the Governor, he signed the bill in direct response to the Trump administration proposal to open U.S. coastal areas to drilling.

"This bill says no way are you going to drill off the coast of Long Island and New York, because we must lead the way as an alternative to what this federal government is doing," Governor Cuomo said, at a signing ceremony at Jones Beach on Long Island. "Today is about making sure Jones Beach and all of the coastal communities are here for our children and for the next generation. We must make sure we leave this world a better place for them because our job as parents, as citizens, as human beings is to pass it on better than you found it."



In 2017, the federal government proposed a new National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2019-2024, which would open more than 90 percent of the country's offshore waters to oil and gas drilling.

According to the Governor, an exclusion from offshore drilling was granted to Florida shortly after its launch on the grounds that the state relies heavily on tourism as one of the nation's top ocean economies. However, as the number three ocean economy in the nation, New York has not been granted this same exclusion, and stands to lose nearly 320,000 jobs and billions of dollars generated through tourism and fishing industries should the exclusion not be granted.

New York's ocean economy generates \$11 billion in wages and contributes \$23 billion in gross domestic product, according to the Administration. Long Island and the New York Harbor are home to 11.4 million people, with 60 percent of the State's population living along nearly 2,000 miles of tidal coastline.

Additionally, the Governor asserted, the Port of NYNJ—the largest on the Atlantic seaboard—would be devastated by any major spill related to offshore drilling, disrupting operations and impacting the national economy. The Port supports 400,000 indirect jobs and 229,000 direct jobs while generating \$90 billion in combined personal and business income and \$8.5 billion in federal, state, and local taxes.



Public/Private Partnership: Immigrant Services In Consulates And Religious Institutions



Governor Andrew Cuomo this week announced a new program to provide free legal services, immigration clinics, know-your-rights seminars, and other immigrant services at consulates and religious institutions in New York City. The program is sponsored by a partnership between the State Liberty Defense Project (LDP) and the Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights (NMCIR).

According to the Governor, families and individuals often seek refuge and guidance in the safe havens of their churches, mosques, synagogues and Buddhist temples, as well as the New York-based consulates for their native countries. To reach these communities, Governor Cuomo's Liberty Defense Project will join the Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights (NMCIR) to provide services directly at these locations.

NMCIR has provided services to immigrant communities in Northern Manhattan, the Bronx, Westchester County, Brooklyn and Queens. NMCIR serves mostly low-income immigrants and has established relationships with organizations considered to be safe spaces. The joint LDP and NMCIR Safe Haven Program expands on this initiative, providing hard-to-reach populations in New York City with access to legal representation.

New York City is home to more than 100 consulates for countries around the world, providing services to 4.4 million foreign born New Yorkers. These facilities are safe havens for immigrants seeking services, including renewal of passports and documentation to complete an immigration petition. According to the NY State Office for New Americans data, the top ten countries of origin for foreign-born New York State residents are: Dominican Republic, India, Haiti, El Salvador, Columbia, Guyana, China, Jamaica, Mexico and Ecuador.

At the consulates, the Safe Haven Program will include:

- **One-on-one immigration consultations by staff attorneys:** NMCIR's staff attorneys and paralegals will provide scheduled legal consultations and other services on site.
- **Know-Your-Rights and train-the-trainers workshops at the consulates to both their countries' nationals and consulate staff:** NMCIR will provide workshops on how to respond when ICE comes to your home, how to develop a financial and family plan, and how to protect oneself from fraudulent notarios/attorneys.
- **A referral program to NMCIR and other Office for New Americans partners for immigrants seeking free legal assistance and/or representation:** NMCIR will coordinate with and provide training and materials on effectively referring nationals who have immigration-related needs.

The Safe Haven Program will forge partnerships with religious institutions, including churches, mosques, synagogues and Buddhist temples and provide the following services at their institutions:

- **Formal referral programs to legal services:** The Safe Haven Program will coordinate training and materials on how best to refer community members who have immigration-related needs.
- **Day-long immigration screenings clinics:** NMCIR will host immigration screening clinics on site at religious institutions in order to access large numbers of immigrants in need of assistance.
- **Legal representation for religious institutions working to reunite families separated at the border:** Many religious institutions are already active in supporting immigrants' rights and have been at the forefront of helping to reunite families. As these institutions identify families with legal needs, the LDP and NMCIR will provide legal representation.



Bills Passed by Both Houses



A453 (Sponsored by M of A Steck / Senator Skoufis) -- Relates to liability of members for wages due to laborers, servants or employees by domestic and foreign limited liability companies.

A1779 (Sponsored by M of A Peoples-Stokes / Senator Serrano) -- Identifies the criteria the commissioner of environmental conservation should consider in publishing a list of high local environmental impact zones.

A2286 (Sponsored by M of A Hunter / Senator Kaminsky) -- Relates to water saving performance standards.

A2501A (Sponsored by M of A Englebright / Senator Sanders) -- Relates to the reduction of mercury in mercury-added lamps.

S501B (Sponsored by Senator Kaminsky / M of A Englebright) -- Relates to regulation of toxic chemicals in children's products.

S2072 (Sponsored by Senator Carlucci / M of A Englebright) -- Relates to the right to clean air and water and a healthful environment.

S4049A (Sponsored by Senator Parker / M of A Rozic) -- Relates to the performance of a study regarding homeless persons who are veterans in the state of New York.

S5343 (Sponsored by Senator Kaminsky / M of A Englebright) -- Relates to prohibiting the use of chlorpyrifos.



Comptroller DiNapoli Releases Economic Snapshot of Long Island Highlighting Growth and Challenges

Many of Long Island's 2.8 million residents enjoy a high quality of life, marked by low unemployment, low crime rates, strong public schools and infrastructure improvements, but they also contend with high taxes and home prices, and challenging commutes, according to a report on the Island's economy released this week by New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli.

"The number of jobs has reached a record level on Long Island and the region boasts average wages that are the second highest in the state," Comptroller DiNapoli said. "Long Island continues to be a great place to live, work and raise a family but there are challenges."

Long Island added 115,400 jobs between 2009 and 2018, reaching 1.3 million jobs, the Comptroller found. The unemployment rate declined to 3.7 percent in 2018 after having peaked at a post-recession high of 7.5 percent in 2010. Health care, restaurants, business services, construction and retail have driven these job gains.

According to the report, the average annual wage on Long Island in 2017 was \$60,084, second only to New York City. Median household incomes are higher than the state median of \$62,765, too, at \$105,744 for Nassau County and \$92,838 for Suffolk County. Health care is the largest private sector employer on Long Island, accounting for nearly 17 percent of private-sector jobs (193,500). Average wages in this sector (\$64,726) are above the regional average.

Most Long Islanders - 72 percent - own their homes, compared with 48 percent for the state overall. The report noted that the median value of an owner-occupied home in 2017 was \$460,700 in Nassau County and \$379,400 in Suffolk County, much higher than the statewide median of \$293,000. Long Island homeowners pay above-average property taxes: Nassau County's estimated median property tax bill of \$14,872 is well above the state median (\$8,081).

Transportation, especially commuting to and from New York City - which about one-fifth of the workforce does - is a major challenge, the Comptroller noted. The Long Island Rail Road (LIRR), used by 38 percent of those working in New York City, had its worst on-time performance in 18 years in 2017. Delays and cancellations impacted an estimated 9.2 million riders and cost an estimated \$75 million in lost productivity. In 2018, on-time performance declined even further to 90.4 percent, the lowest since 1996.

Suffolk County has experienced one of the highest rates of heroin-related overdose fatalities in New York, particularly recently, according to Comptroller DiNapoli. Nassau and Suffolk Counties created a Joint Heroin Task Force drawing on the resources of both counties' police departments to combat this crisis.

Long Island had one of the lowest crime rates of any large metropolitan area in the nation in 2017. However, there are areas where crime is a serious problem, stemming particularly from gang-related activity, the report found.

In the News – City



Bill de Blasio
Mayor

Mayor de Blasio Announces Full Implementation of Free Phone Calls for People in Custody

Mayor Bill de Blasio announced this week that the City is now providing free phone calls for people in custody after fully implementing Intro. 741-A. The implementation of Intro. 741-A makes New York City the first major city to grant free phone calls for people in custody.

Prior to the passage of Intro. 741-A, people in custody were charged 50 cents for the first minute and five cents for additional minutes for telephone calls. Now, the Department of Correction will cover the costs made to friends and loved ones, allowing people to stay connected without having to utilize funding in their commissary account. More than 25,000 calls are made daily from City jails.

People in general population will be able to make calls totaling 21 minutes every three hours to anywhere in the United States, including U.S. territories. The limit on single calls is 15 minutes. An internal digital clock in the phones tracks the duration of calls. Individuals in punitive segregation will be allowed a single, daily call for up to 15 minutes.

People in custody in other restrictive housing follow the same rules as those in general population. The guidelines apply equally to pre-trial and sentenced individuals. The DOC is installing additional phone lines in housing areas across its facilities to sufficiently deal with the anticipated increase of calls.

The DOC was already providing free calls to those in custody on a limited basis with detainees receiving three calls a week and sentenced individuals getting two a week. Calling 311, Legal Aid and confidential informant lines were also free.

The City will continue to partner with the same private contractor, Securus Technologies on this initiative. Family and friends who previously set up an account with Securus will have their money returned to them by Securus upon request. The free calls will be permitted during all lock-out periods and will be allowed at any reasonable time as determined by the Captain responsible for the housing areas if they are emergency in nature.

Mayor de Blasio Appoints Louise Carroll as Commissioner of the Department of Housing Preservation and Development

Mayor Bill de Blasio this week announced Louise Carroll will serve as the next Commissioner of the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). Carroll is currently the General Counsel of the Housing Development Corporation. She formerly served at HPD from 2006 to 2018, most recently as Associate Commissioner for Housing Incentives.

Before her tenure at HPD, Carroll served as an Associate Counsel at the New York City Conflicts of Interest Board and as a transactions attorney for the New York City Administration for Children's Services.

Carroll holds a J.D. from Tulane Law School, an M.B.A. from the University of Leicester, England, and a B.Sc. from the University of Wales at Aberystwyth. She lives in Manhattan with her husband and their seven-year-old son.

Acting HPD Commissioner Eric Enderlin will return to his position as President of the Housing Development Corporation.

De Blasio Administration Announces Alcohol Advertising Ban on City Property

Mayor Bill de Blasio this week announced an Executive Order banning all alcohol advertising on City property. Under the order, alcohol advertisements will be banned from City property, including bus shelters, newsstands, phone booths, Wi-Fi LinkNYC kiosks, and recycling kiosks.

The order will take effect immediately, meaning any future contracts or contract renewals must exclude alcohol from the advertisements. Existing ads in these spaces will be allowed to remain until their contract terms end. In addition, venues currently permitted to sell alcohol, such as restaurants, stadiums, and concerts halls, are exempt from the ban.

About 3 percent of city-owned advertising space is dedicated to alcohol ads. The ban could lead to a loss of \$3 million in yearly advertising fees.

Eighteen months ago the Metropolitan Transportation Authority banned alcohol advertisements on New York City buses, in subway cars and in stations.

Briefs

Board of Elections Approves Early Voting Regulations

The State Board of Elections this week unanimously approved a package of regulations to implement that Early Voting system that will begin in New York this fall. The regulations were adopted on an emergency basis, providing the opportunity for changes as necessary, with final adoption slated for later this year.

Legislation enacted in January (Chapter 6 of the Laws of 2019) established guidelines for the system. For example, the bill laid out that early voting sites need to be open for at least eight hours each weekday and five hours on weekends, and each county needs to have a minimum of between one and seven locations, depending on their population.

The regulations adopted this week clarify that the mandatory numbers are minimums and that counties "may designate more early voting sites" or "expand the hours" as deemed necessary. The regulations also include a mandate for counties to deploy additional machines and workers by the start of the next day if the lines at early voting sites ever exceed half an hour.

A local board will be able to tally the votes from the early voting machines at 8 p.m. on Election Day, if it "adopts procedures to prevent the public release of any election results prior the close of polls."

State Senate Plans Sports Wagering Hearing

The future of sports wagering in New York, including on mobile platforms, will be the focus of a state Senate hearing on May 8 in Albany. The inquiry comes during the public comment period for draft regulations from the state Gaming Commission that would govern sports gambling in New York, where it will be limited to casinos with live-table games. Cuomo administration contends a constitutional amendment would be needed to expand sports wagering to other venues and online, according to published reports.

Lyft Loses Court Challenge to NYC's Driver Minimum Wage

State Supreme Court Judge Andrea Masley this week dismissed a petition from Lyft seeking a permanent injunction of the city's new \$17.22 minimum wage, which applies to drivers for transportation network companies. New York City's new driver minimum wage went into effect this year.

In its suit, Lyft asserted that the minimum wage formula gave a competitive advantage to Uber. However, Judge Masley rejected the argument that the formula, which includes a utilization rate, automatically solidifies Uber's dominance in the New York market. She cited the case of Via, which has a higher utilization rate than even Uber, but is a smaller market player.

"Lyft's fear of Uber domination based on a better [utilization rate] is factually incorrect," Judge Masley wrote, according to published reports. "Indeed, it is possible for a smaller company to beat Uber in the [utilization rate category], using a different business model focused exclusively on shared rides."

Melissa A. Browne as Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Special Projects and Community Events

Mayor de Blasio this week appointed Melissa A. Browne as the new Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Special Projects and Community Events (MOSPCE). Browne is coming to the role from Gracie Mansion, where she oversaw events, managed staff, worked with the Conservancy on making tours and exhibits more open to all New Yorkers.

Coming Up

New York State

The Legislature is in session from Monday May 6th to Wednesday May 8th

Wednesday May 8th

Sports betting with a mobile component in New York State

Senate Standing Committee on Racing, Gaming and Wagering

Van Buren Hearing Room A, Legislative Office Building, 2nd Floor, Albany, 11 a.m.

Thursday May 9th

Rental Housing & Tenant Protection

Assembly Standing Committee on Housing

Hamilton Hearing Room B, Legislative Office Building, 2nd Floor, Albany, 9:30 a.m.

Friday May 10th

Rental Housing & Tenant Protection

Assembly Standing Committee on Housing

Legislative Chambers, Monroe County Office Building, 39 West Main Street, Rochester, 11 a.m.

Specialized High Schools

Assembly Standing Committee on Education

Assembly Hearing Room, 250 Broadway, Room 1923, 19th Floor, New York, 10 a.m.

New York City

Monday May 6th

Committee on Finance, Council Chambers – City Hall, 10 a.m.
Executive Budget Hearing – Testifying Agencies:
Office of Management & Budget; Department of Design & Construction

Subcommittee on Capital Budget, Council Chambers – City Hall, 10 a.m.
Executive Budget Hearing – Testifying Agencies:
Office of Management & Budget; Department of Design & Construction

Tuesday May 7th

Committee on Immigrations, Committee Room – 250 Broadway, 16th Floor, 10 a.m.

Committee on Finance, Council Chambers – City Hall, 11 a.m.
Executive Budget Hearing – Testifying Agencies:
Economic Development Corporation; Department for the Aging; NYCHA

Committee on Aging, Council Chambers – City Hall, 11 a.m.

Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises, Committee Room – City Hall, 11 a.m.

Committee on Public Housing, Council Chambers – City Hall, 1p.m.

Wednesday May 8th

Committee on Rules, Privileges and Elections, Council Chambers – City Hall, 11:15 a.m.

City Council Stated Meeting, Council Chambers – City Hall, 1:30 p.m.

Thursday May 9th

Committee on Finance, Council Chambers – City Hall, 11 a.m.
Executive Budget Hearing – Testifying Agencies:
Fire Department Bureau of Emergency Medical Services; Department of Correction; Health + Hospitals; Department of Environmental Protection

Committee on Criminal Justice, Council Chambers – City Hall, 11 a.m.

Committee on Hospitals, Council Chambers – City Hall, 12 p.m.

Committee on Environmental Protection, Council Chambers – City Hall, 1 p.m.

Charter Revision Commission 2019, Council Chambers – City Hall, 6 p.m.

Friday May 10th

Committee on Finance, Council Chambers – City Hall, 10 a.m.

Executive Budget Hearing – Testifying Agencies:

MTA NYC Transit; Taxi & Limousine Commission; Department of Transportation

Committee on Transportation, Council Chambers – City Hall, 10 a.m.

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