



In the News – State

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Seven Days and Counting

State Legislative Session Moves Into the Final Days

New York’s historic 2019 legislative session is quickly coming to a close, with seven days remaining until the scheduled end of session on June 19th. The Legislature is priming for the end of session push, giving two-house approval to 75 measures during the first week of June and bringing the 2019 total to 391. With a five-year average of 650 measures passing each session, the Legislature will be switching into high gear when it returns on Tuesday, June 11th.

New York City rent control laws expire June 15th, putting the nine bills aimed at bolstering tenant protections proposed by the Assembly to the top of the list of issues to be hammered out by both houses. Enacting mobile sports betting, legalizing recreational marijuana, allowing undocumented immigrants to get drivers licenses, eliminating the religious exemption for vaccinations, enacting equal rights for women, strengthening New York’s workplace harassment laws, and expanding the public works definition are also in play.

In 2019, the Democrat controlled legislature has passed “progressive” measures including the reproductive health act, LGBT rights, the Dream Act, the Child Victims Act, gun safety measures and voting reforms. In addition, they have approved congestion pricing for New York City and made the State’s tax cap permanent.

Over the next two weeks, we will see which measures join that list of session accomplishments.



Bills Passed by Both Houses



A163 (Sponsored by M of A Rosenthal L / Senator Sanders) -- Requires the state board of elections to create a system to allow a copy of the candidate and contest information contained on each ballot style submitted by each county board of elections to be accessible to the public via web.

A216 (Sponsored by M of A Paulin / Senator Metzger) -- Relates to the care of animals including requiring regular diurnal light cycles of either natural or artificial light; separate space for pregnant or nursing dogs; a certain level of sanitation of primary enclosures and cages; requires sanitary food receptacles; requires grooming.

A1283 (Sponsored by M of A Hunter / Senator Biaggi) -- Relates to employee human trafficking recognition training and to authorizing the establishment of a standardized human trafficking recognition training program; requires public transportation services to require all employees to undergo a human-trafficking recognition training program established by the division of criminal justice services and the office of temporary and disability assistance in consultation with the department of transportation and the New York state interagency task force on human trafficking.

A1565 (Sponsored by M of A Galef / Senator Carlucci) -- Provides for the inclusion, at a voter's option, of an e-mail address in the voter registration application and record, whereupon notices and other communication required to be sent to the voter by the state board of elections shall be sent by e-mail in addition to postal mail.

A2687 (Sponsored by M of A Thiele / Senator Myrie) -- Relates to ballots for absentee voters.

A2904 (Sponsored by M of A Quart / Senator Harckham) -- Prohibits certain insurance policies from requiring prior authorization for buprenorphine products, methadone and long acting injectable naltrexone for detoxification or maintenance treatment of substance use disorders.

A3939 (Sponsored by M of A Englebright / Senator Skoufis) -- Relates to requiring a particularized and specific justification for denial of access to records under the freedom of information law, exemption from disclosure under the freedom of information law of certain law enforcement related records and to records identifying victims.

A3985 (Sponsored by M of A Weprin / Senator Kaplan) -- Creates the crime of staging a motor vehicle accident.

A6149 (Sponsored by M of A Lupardo / Senator Gaughran) -- Relates to home inspection professional licensing; requires home inspection professionals to pass the National Home Inspector examination.

A7287 (Sponsored by M of A Paulin / Senator Comrie) -- Requires an excavator to notify 911 in the event of an electrical short or the escape of gas or hazardous fluids endangering life where damage has resulted to an underground facility.

A7395 (Sponsored by M of A Weinstein / Senator Liu) -- Relates to notification of rights of victims of domestic violence in criminal and family court proceedings

A7606 (Sponsored by M of A Lavine / Senator Kavanagh) -- Relates to the form of primary ballots by removing the color requirement.

S1471A (Sponsored by Senator Hoylman / M of A Gottfried) -- Requires hospitals to offer plant-based food options to patients upon request.

S1624 (Sponsored by Senator Skoufis / M of A Benedetto) -- Relates to allowing boards of education of every school district to require minors who are five years of age to attend kindergarten.

S2842 (Sponsored by Senator Kaplan / M of A Schimming) -- Authorizes state agencies to publish and transmit certain rule making notices by electronic means

S3971B (Sponsored by Senator Savino / M of A Vanel) -- Creates a temporary state commission to study and investigate how to regulate artificial intelligence, robotics and automation; and repeals such commission.

S4030A (Sponsored by Senator Ramos / M of A Crespo) -- Requires car wash workers in Nassau, Suffolk, and Westchester counties and in a city with a population of one million or more to be paid the minimum wage without allowance for gratuities.

S4292 (Sponsored by Senator Comrie / M of A Wallace) -- Sets limits on severance packages equal to three months salary for public at-will employees not subject to a collective bargaining agreement or union contract.

S4488A (Sponsored by Senator Gounardes / M of A Abbate) -- Relates to the rate of interest used in the actuarial valuation of certain liabilities

S4903 (Sponsored by Senator Ranzenhofer / M of A Schimming) -- Removes references to section 1801 of the surrogate's court procedure act, which was repealed in 1994.

S5024A (Sponsored by Senator Parker / M of A Kim) -- Enacts the New York State Reuniting Families Act; relates to foster care and parents in immigration detention or removal proceedings.

S5532B (Sponsored by Senator Gianaris / M of A Rosenthal L) -- Relates to the prohibition of declawing of cats; makes such violation punishable by a civil penalty not to exceed \$1,000.

S5685 (Sponsored by Senator Brooks / M of A Jean-Pierre) -- Enacts Brianna's Law; requires that operators of mechanically propelled vessels complete a boating safety course.

In the News – City



Hate Crimes Surge in NYC

*City Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes to
Open this Sumer*

The number of hate crimes in New York City jumped by 64 percent this year, according to New York Police Department (NYPD) statistics. The NYPD recorded 184 hate crimes through June 2, an increase from 112 in 2018. Officials indicated that 60 percent of the incidents were anti-Semitic hate crimes

Of the 184 incidents, 110 targeted Jews, an increase from 58 in 2018. There were 18 attacks motivated by the victim's sexual orientation (up from 15 in 2018) and 18 targeting victims who are black, up from 14, according to the NYPD. Eleven hate crimes targeted white individuals, up from three in 2018.

To date, the NYPD has arrested 75 people in connection with the crimes.

The surge in hate crimes came during a period when overall crime in New York City decreased by 6 percent.

This week Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that the Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes (OPHC) will open this summer and be housed in the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice. The opening will occur months ahead of the November effective date established by the City Council law that originally created the office.

The new office will coordinate responses to hate crimes across City agencies, including the NYPD, City Commission on Human Rights, Department of Education, Department of Probation, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs and District Attorney's Offices. OPHC will also support NYPD training, launch support programs for victims, improve coordination on hate crime reporting and work with affected groups to make sure victims come forward.

Briefs

Governor Cuomo Calls Neo-Nazis What They Are: Domestic Terrorists *Announces Solidarity Trip to Israel*

Citing a 57-percent increase in anti-Semitic attacks reported across the country and an 83 percent spike in New York, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced plans to make a “solidarity trip” to Israel following the close of the legislative session on June 19th.

“There is a pervasive, growing attitude of intolerance and hate in this country,” Governor Cuomo explained. “I refer to it as the American cancer. It is a cancer because what cancer does is one cell in the body politic attacks other cells. That is what we are doing. Anti-Muslim, anti-Jewish, anti-African American, anti-LGBTQ - it is a cancer in the body politic of America, and it has to be stopped.”

Comptroller DiNapoli Releases Climate Action Plan *Will Target Companies that Fail to Meet Investment Standards*

New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli this week released a Climate Action Plan to protect and invest the assets of the \$210 billion New York State Common Retirement Fund (Fund). The plan lays out a path for the Fund to further address climate risk in its portfolio.

Subject to fiduciary analysis, the Fund may divest from companies that fail to meet minimum standards. As a first step standards will be developed for thermal coal, followed by other major industries or sectors that present climate risk to the Fund.

Comptroller DiNapoli will double, from \$10 billion to \$20 billion over the next decade, the Fund’s commitment to its Sustainable Investment–Climate Solutions Program. The Fund will also hire dedicated staff to identify sustainable investment opportunities including climate solutions.

The climate action plan will also:

- Continue engagement with portfolio companies to encourage and support climate risk management, strategic planning and reporting;
- Refine external manager evaluation to better assess the climate-related strategies of the Fund’s managers; and
- Encourage index providers to integrate climate risks and opportunities into their index construction.

Health Insurers Request 8.4% Average Rate Hike

New York health insurers are seeking an average increase of 8.4% among the 12 companies selling Affordable Care Act plans to individuals for 2020.

UnitedHealthcare requested the highest premium increase, 27.1%. Fidelis Care, with the greatest market share, requested a 6.8% price increase. EmblemHealth's HIP requested 13.5%, Empire BlueCross BlueShield's HealthPlus requested 2.4%, MetroPlus requested 8.6%, and Oscar requested 15.4%. Healthfirst, which operates two plans in the marketplace, requested increases of 6% and 10%, respectively.

Last year, companies requested a 24% hike in response to actions at the federal level. The State cut those proposals, making the weighted average increase in premiums 8.6% for 2019.

Port Authority to Move Forward With Newark AirTrain, Terminal B replacement

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey will move forward with the AirTrain and Terminal B replacement project, according to published reports. Final approval of the projects are required by the Authority's Board members.

If approved by the board, the Authority expects to start planning and engineering work for the AirTrain later this year, with construction slated to start within 12 months to 18 months, with full completion in 2025. The AirTrain project, which is estimated to cost \$2.05 billion, will be funded from airline revenue, rental car fees, future-period passenger facility charges and farebox revenue.

The Port Authority's current \$32 billion capital plan includes just \$300 million to support repairs to the AirTrain and includes no funding for Terminal B.

DEC Asks Public to Report Moose Sightings

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is asking the public to report moose sightings and observations. DEC and its research partners use these public sightings as indices of moose distribution and abundance in New York. Observations can be reported using the [online form](#). According to DEC, there have been three moose-motor vehicle collisions in the past two weeks.

In 2018, a total of 220 moose observations were reported to DEC, an increase from the 163 reports in 2017. According to DEC, the sighting increase is likely due to an increase in public awareness and assistance with reporting moose sightings. Most moose sightings occur within the Adirondacks, but neighboring states Connecticut and Massachusetts also have moose populations, resulting in observations in the southeast portion of New York

DEC Accepting Applications for Volunteer Fire Assistance Grants

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is accepting applications for federally funded Volunteer Fire Assistance grants. The deadline for applications is June 28, 2019.

The Volunteer Fire Assistance grant program is funded by the U.S. Forest Service and administered by DEC Forest Rangers. If awarded, fire departments will receive 50/50 matching funds up to the amount of \$1,500. Last year, the program provided \$1,500 grants to 357 fire departments. For 2019, DEC received a federal appropriation of \$541,923.

Expenses directly related to fire suppression efforts are eligible for funding, including the purchase of portable pumps, portable backpack pumps, hand tools, hoses, light-weight fireproof clothing (Nomex), hard hats, turnout gear, portable radios, generators, and dry hydrants. Expenditures not directly related to firefighting, such as search and rescue equipment, acquisition of land, construction of buildings and facilities, major apparatus purchases, and maintenance items are not eligible for funding.

Eligible fire departments include those that serve a single town with a population under 10,000; those that serve multiple communities, one of which is a rural town of less than 10,000 residents; and fire departments in towns with a population of 10,000 that meet specific requirements.

For [additional information about the grant program](#) or to [view the application \(PDF\)](#).

More Than 50,000 New Yorkers Now Enrolled in Fair Fares Program

Mayor de Blasio and City Council Speaker Johnson this week announced that more than 50,000 New Yorkers have enrolled in the City's Fair Fares program, the City's half-priced MetroCard program for low-income New Yorkers.

Following the launch of the online platform in April, which introduced the option to sign up for Fair Fares through the City's Access HRA application, participation increased dramatically. More than 70 percent of current enrollees opted-in digitally, including through the mobile and web applications.

Starting this fall, the City will expand the program to eligible New Yorkers in NYCHA, enrolled students at CUNY and veterans at or below 100 percent of poverty line. In January 2020, the City plans to launch an open enrollment process for all eligible New Yorkers at or below the Federal Poverty line who don't have discounted transportation from the MTA or the City.

De Blasio Administration Seizing 46 Ice Cream Trucks Involved in Shell Company Scam to Dodge \$4.5 Million in Traffic Violations

The de Blasio Administration this week began seizing 46 ice cream trucks from operators who consistently violated traffic safety laws and evaded nearly \$4.5 million in fines since 2009. The owners amassed the debt through a scheme, creating dozens of “shell” companies to avoid enforcement efforts by the Department of Finance. Between 2009 and 2017, a small group of individuals operated companies that accrued 22,000 summonses for violations, including running red lights, parking near fire hydrants, and blocking pedestrian crosswalks, according to the City’s complaint.

The City’s lawsuit targets the worst offenders—those with more than \$10,000 in judgments or unpaid fines. The order also requires the truck’s owners to pay the City damages and prevents them from transferring the ownership of the vehicles that have outstanding parking summonses.

Subway Speeds Increase at 90 locations

NYC Transit has increased speed limits at 90 locations across the subways since December as a part of its "Save Safe Seconds" program.

Those updates include permitting south bound N and Q trains to run up to 28 mph just north of Times Square and removing the speed limit entirely south of that station. Speed limits were also recently removed on Manhattan-bound No. 2 and 5 trains between President St. and Franklin Ave., Manhattan bound N trains between Stillwell Ave .and 86th St. in Brooklyn and southbound No. 4 and 5 trains leaving Borough Hall.

According to NYC Transit, the speed changes will be most noticeable to riders on the Lexington line, or No. 4, 5 and 6 trains, and the Broadway line, or N, Q, R and W trains.

Deanne B. Criswell Appointed Commissioner of NYC Emergency Management

Mayor Bill de Blasio announced this week that Deanne B. Criswell will serve as Commissioner of the New York City Emergency Management Department. She will become the first woman to lead NYC Emergency Management in the City’s history beginning July 1st.

Ms. Criswell brings over 25 years of experience in federal, military and local government response to complex incidents and disasters, including six years at FEMA, to the department. She is also a retired member of the Colorado Air National Guard, where she served 21 years as both a firefighter and Deputy Fire Chief.

Ms. Criswell is a graduate of Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado with a Bachelor of Science degree in Technology Education and Training (2003) and holds a Master of Public Administration (2006) from the University of Colorado, Denver and a Master of Arts in Security Studies (2011) from the Naval Postgraduate School, Center for Homeland Defense and Security.

City Council Launch Interactive Map of Parks in NYC

The City Council has launched an interactive map of public parks in New York City. The new interactive map offers detailed information on all of the 1,700 parks in the city, including amenities, funding information, and programming at each spot.

This interactive and visual tool details the 2,856 playgrounds, 557 basketball courts, 546 handball courts, 95 pools, 34 running tracks, 69 barbecue areas, 112 food concessions, and 136 dog runs and leash areas. And it also gives New Yorkers information on how much their neighborhood parks receive for maintenance, both in public and private funds. Additionally, the data includes upcoming events taking place at each location within the next 14 days.

Find additional information at <https://council.nyc.gov/data/parks-in-nyc/>.

Coming Up

New York State

The Legislature is in session from Tuesday June 11th to Friday June 14th

New York City

Tuesday June 11th

Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises, Committee Room – City Hall, 10 a.m.

Committee on Housing and Buildings, Council Chambers – City Hall, 10 a.m.

Committee on Land Use, Committee Room – City Hall, 11 a.m.

Wednesday June 12th

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

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

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

Committee on Immigration, Committee Room – 250 Broadway, 14th Floor, 1 p.m.

Committee on Economic Development, Brooklyn Navy Yard, 2 p.m.

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

Thursday June 13th

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

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120 Broadway, 28th Floor
New York, New York 10271
Telephone (212) 652-3890
Facsimile (212) 652-3891

111 Washington Avenue, St. 401
Albany, New York 12210
Telephone (518) 449-3320
Facsimile (518) 449-5812

25 Hyatt Street, St. 202
Staten Island, New York 10301
Telephone (718) 943-1050
Facsimile (718) 943-1051