



THIS WEEK IN NEW YORK

COVERING NEW YORK & CITY GOVERNMENT

AUGUST 9, 2024 EDITION

“Obstacles don't define us. Rather, it is the unparalleled courage and character of us that defines us as a people. So my confidence in the future is steeped in our glorious past - in the face of adversity, we always persist. We persevere, we prevail.” Governor Kathy Hochul



In the News-New York State

Governor Hochul Signs Election Laws

On the 59th anniversary of the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Governor Kathy Hochul signed seven Election Law changes.

Governor Kathy Hochul this week announced that she had approved seven new laws. The new laws include measures that strengthen access to the ballot – building on the historic *John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act of New York* intended to protect against voter discrimination and disenfranchisement, and seeking to enfranchise new voters and standardize important elements of the electoral process.

Chapter	Bill No.	
214	A3250A	M.A. Epstein -- Relates to allowing pre-registered voters to apply for an absentee or early mail ballot
215	A9409	M.A. Wallace -- Moves the date of the meeting of the electors and the method for the transmission of the certificates of vote
216	A10357	Rules (M.A.Walker) -- Relates to the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act of New York; repealer
217	S5943	Sen. SKOUFIS -- Modifies the order in which candidates appear on the ballot
218	S6130A	Sen. PARKER -- Provides that an attorney licensed to practice law in the state may serve as a poll watcher in any city or county in the state
219	S9763	Sen. MAYER -- Relates to when a referendum is required when a village has provided that village elections shall occur on the same day as the general election
220	S9837	Sen. MYRIE -- Relates to curing ballots

“Our democracy is rooted in the sacrifices of those willing to fight for that idea greater than any one of us, and with this legislation, we are strengthening our efforts to protect it,” Governor Hochul said. “Every New Yorker deserves the opportunity to have their voice heard, and these laws bring the ideals of self-governance closer to reality.” Contact us for the full text and sponsor’s memos!

In the News-New York City



NYC Office of the Mayor

Mayor Adams Announces New Tools To Help New Yorkers Add Accessory Homes

Adams Administration Announces \$4 Million Grant to Support Accessory Dwelling Unit Pilot

Mayor Eric Adams announced multiple new tools to help New York City homeowners create accessory dwelling units (ADUs) that are intended to help them to afford to remain in the communities they call home, and to build generational wealth for families. ADUs are defined as any secondary independent unit on the same property as a primary home, including backyard cottages and basement apartments with separate entrances. The new tools include a one-stop shop portal to remove bureaucratic red tape and new a \$4 million grant funding to support an ADU pilot program.

ADUs are a solution thought by some to create critically-needed housing as the city faces a historic housing affordability and shortage crisis. Some civic leaders view ADU's as an assault on single family home ownership. The announcement comes as the Adams administration aims to address the housing crisis with the "City of Yes for Housing Opportunity" proposal, which aims to produce as many as 108,850 new homes over 15 years, including by legalizing ADUs.

Ironically the following Alert was issued simultaneously by NYC:

"Hazards: Heavy rain of 1-2 inches will cause flooding in the city, including on highways, streets, and underpasses as well as other poor drainage areas and low-lying spots.

Preparedness Actions:

- *If you are in a basement, move to the highest floor possible."*



NYC Council Land Use Committee Approves Bronx Metro-North Stations Rezoning

Will Help Build 7,000 New Homes amidst Housing Shortage

The New York City Council's Committee on Land Use voted to approve the Bronx Metro-North Station Area Study rezoning proposal with modifications to develop new affordable housing and invest in neighborhood infrastructure improvements surrounding new Metro-North train stations slated to be built at Hunts Point, Parkchester/Van Nest, Morris Park, and Co-Op City in the Bronx.

The approval is part of a plan to create approximately 7,000 new units of housing amidst a housing and affordability crisis. The negotiated rezoning package also intends to create up to 500 units for homeownership opportunities. As part of an agreement, the City will invest \$498.5 million for

improvements to the surrounding neighborhoods. The infrastructure investments include nearly \$96.7 million for renovations of local parks and playgrounds, \$11.5 million for upgrades to local schools, street and sewer improvements to address flooding issues, redesign of streets and sidewalks around the new Metro-North stations, and critical repairs and upgrades to the 49th NYPD Precinct.

Briefs

Attorney General James Secures \$1.5 Million from Digital Marketing Company for Misleading New Yorkers Seeking Mental Health Care

4K Apps Tricked New Yorkers Trying to Reach Mental Health Care and Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities

New York Attorney General Letitia James today secured \$1.5 million from a digital marketing company, 4K Apps, Inc. (4K Apps), for operating a network of deceptive websites that misled tens of thousands of New Yorkers seeking mental health services, substance abuse treatment, and senior living facilities. 4K Apps is a digital marketing company hired by companies to drive customers to their website to buy their product or service. The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) found that 4K Apps ran dozens of websites with directories of health care facilities throughout the state and listed phone numbers that led people to call 4K Apps' clients instead of the health care facilities listed on the websites. As a result of today's settlement, 4K Apps will pay \$1.5 million and update all its websites to accurately reflect who consumers are calling.

Mayor Adams, Norman Siegel Celebrate Street Homeless Advocacy Project Success

New York City Mayor Eric Adams and veteran civil rights advocate and former executive director of the New York Civil Liberties Union Norman Siegel today celebrated major milestones for the Street Homelessness Advocacy Project (SHAP) as the program marks two years since it began operating. SHAP is a volunteer outreach initiative that aims to build relationships and provide direct support to those experiencing homelessness. SHAP's primary purpose is to train volunteers, including those with lived experience, to advocate for and offer services to unhoused New Yorkers. Between year one and year two of the program, the SHAP team increased the percentage of homeless New Yorkers they are assisting in moving voluntarily off the streets and into some form of supportive programming from an approximate 33 percent success rate to almost 50 percent.

NYC Council responds to Mayor Adams Nomination of Randy Mastro to Serve as New York City's Corporation Counsel

New York City Mayor Eric Adams this week nominated Randy Mastro as the city's next corporation counsel. Mastro previously served as deputy mayor for operations and City Hall chief of staff

from 1994 to 1998, as well as a federal prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York.

The Council, through a press spokesperson stated "As the top attorney for New York City, the Corporation Counsel has the special responsibility of representing all of City government, which includes its agencies and all elected officials. The person in this role must have the faith of all city officials and the talented attorneys in the Law Department. Voters overwhelmingly decided to give the City Council the authority of advice-and-consent for Corporation Counsel in 2019, a proposal that emerged from decades of concerns regarding incidents where the City's top attorney appeared to prioritize the interests of the mayor over those of the City overall. The Council takes this important duty seriously, and once a nomination is formally received at a Stated Meeting, will perform its charter-mandated responsibility to consider the nominee within 30 days. As part of a transparent public process, a forthcoming hearing will be scheduled that allows for thorough examination, public comment, and due consideration."

The Mayor has released statements supporting the nomination from several individuals including City Hall Chief Counsel Lisa Zornberg, David Paterson, former New York State Governor, Bill Thompson, former New York City Comptroller, Betsy Gotbaum, former New York City public advocate and executive director, Citizens Union, Mark Green, New York City's first ever public advocate, Victor A. Kovner, former New York City Corporation Counsel under Mayor David N. Dinkins, Zachary Carter, former New York City Corporation Counsel under Mayor Bill DeBlasio, Michael D. Hess, former New York City Corporation Counsel under Mayor Giuliani, Michael Cardozo, former New York City Corporation Counsel under Mayor Michael Bloomberg and president, New York City Bar Association, Fernando Ferrer ND Ruben Diaz Jr., former Bronx Borough Presidents, Deborah C. Wright, former commissioner, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, Richard Weinberg, former general counsel, City Council; chief counsel to Speaker Peter Vallone; New York State Supreme Court Justice and several others.

Eric Katz Departs as Counsel to the NYS Senate

We wish Eric a continued interesting career as he moves on from the Senate. His message to his friends on leaving:

"I write to inform you that today is my final day in the New York State Senate. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve our Senate Democratic Conference for the past twelve years, including the last three years as Chief Counsel to the Majority.

We have worked over the past six years in the Majority on historic legislation, striving to move our state forward while representing constituencies who range across so many different issue areas and interests. I have cherished working with Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, our Senators, staff, colleagues in government, and outside stakeholders to find common ground and common-sense solutions for the many problems brought to our doors. While our work was challenging at times, I couldn't imagine a better way to spend the last twelve years, and will fondly remember and appreciate my time in government.

While additional news will be announced soon about my transition and the leadership of the Office of Majority Counsel and Program, until that time, if you have any questions for the office, please e-mail Carli McCoy, Director of Administration, who can help connect you to our team.

Thank you for your support, understanding, and camaraderie over the years and I look forward to seeing you in some capacity on the other side!"

Coming Up

New York State: No events Scheduled

New York City

Thursday, August 15th

New York City Council Meetings: Council Chambers and Committee room City Hall, 11a.m.
Committee on General Welfare, Committee on Finance, Committee on Education
New York City Council Stated Meeting: Council Chambers, City Hall 1:30 p.m.

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