



# This Week in New York

Covering New York State and City Government

A Publication of Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno LLC

August 6, 2021 Edition



*“Every record has been destroyed or falsified, every book rewritten, every picture has been repainted, every statue and street building has been renamed, every date has been altered. And the process is continuing day by day and minute by minute. History has stopped. Nothing exists except an endless present in which the Party is always right.”*  
-George Orwell, 1984-

## In the News – New York State



### NYS Attorney General-Appointed Independent Investigators Release Report on Harassment Allegations Involving Governor Cuomo

The independent investigators appointed by New York Attorney General Letitia James this week released their [report](#) into the multiple allegations of sexual harassment by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo.

The investigation was conducted after the Executive Chamber made a referral, pursuant to New York Executive Law Section 63(8) on March 1, 2021, for Attorney General James to select independent lawyers to investigate “allegations of and circumstances surrounding sexual harassment claims made against the governor.”

Attorney General James selected Joon Kim and Anne Clark to lead the investigation. Kim is a former acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York. Clark is a Partner at the Vladeck, Raskin & Clark Law Firm.



### Chapters of the Laws of 2021

**Chapter 325 -- Sponsored by M of A Magnarelli/Senator Kennedy** -- Permits signs, placards, or other displays to provide notice that school bus photo violation monitoring systems are in use.

**Chapter 337 -- Sponsored by M of A Joyner/Senator Gounardes** -- Relates to increasing certain special accidental death benefits.

**Chapter 339 -- Sponsored by Senator Mayer/M of A Benedetto** -- Relates to allowing the administration of certain prescribed medications by trained unlicensed school personnel.

**Chapter 394 -- Sponsored by Senator Parker/M of A Cahill** -- Relates to utility membership dues used for lobbying activities.

**Chapter 348 -- Sponsored by Senator Bailey/M of A Pichardo** -- Relates to the publication of information regarding waivers of compliance with state contract provisions concerning minority and women-owned business enterprise participation requirements.

**Chapter 386 -- Sponsored by Senator Gounardes/M of A Abbate** -- Relates to the reduction in provisional appointment by the New York city department of citywide administrative services.

**Chapter 387 -- Sponsored by Senator Ramos/M of A Zinerman** -- Authorizes the service of notice by electronic communication.

## *In the News – City*



### **City Releases Plan to Sustain the BQE**

Mayor Bill de Blasio and Department of Transportation (DOT) Commissioner Hank Gutman this week released a “comprehensive plan” to extend the life of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway (BQE) cantilever for at least another 20 years. The four-part plan focuses on preserving the structure; executing immediate and ongoing maintenance; expanding monitoring and enforcement; and developing a “long-term, community-based vision” for the entire corridor.

The plan features four key elements:

#### **Preserving the Structure**

DOT has identified new ways to provide at least two more decades of life on the BQE from Sands Street to Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn. These methods include:

- **Monitoring and managing traffic:** The City will install “weigh-in-motion” technology to automatically fine overweight trucks.
- **Stopping water infiltration:** Preservation methods to mitigate the intrusion of water into the structure by addressing the joints, improving drainage, and reintroducing waterproofing.

- Shifting lane markings: Starting on August 30, DOT will shift lane markings on the BQE along a half-mile segment (approximately from Atlantic Ave to the Brooklyn Bridge) from three lanes in each direction to two. This will reduce weight along a critical segment of the structure.

### **Immediate and Ongoing Maintenance**

DOT will complete its ongoing concrete and rebar repairs on the Hicks Street retaining wall this year. Work on two deck spans showing faster signs of deterioration will begin next year.

### **Expanding Monitoring**

The City has installed sensors along the BQE to continuously monitor the structure's health. These sensors will provide a real time picture of how the structure is behaving under traffic.

### **Developing a Long-Term Vision**

The City will engage affected communities from Staten Island to Queens, including businesses and the freight industry. According to the Mayor, by working with freight and distribution companies, the City can make shifts from truck to water or rail movement of goods to diminish congestion and better air quality.



## **City Council Releases Pay Equity Report**

The City Council this week released a report on pay disparities within the New York City municipal workforce, analyzing data which shows the median salary for men is \$21,600 higher than for women.

In addition, the Council found racial gaps, with the median salary for a white employee at \$27,800 higher than a Black employee's salary and \$22,200 higher than the pay for a Hispanic/Latino employee.

According to the Council, the findings show these inequities persist primarily in the form of occupational segregation, which is the over- or under-representation of certain demographic groups in certain occupations and contributes to pay gaps across the City's workforce.

Specifically, white men tend to hold higher ranking and therefore higher paying positions, while women and people of color are often siloed in lower paying positions, according to the Council's analysis. The full report from the Council's Data Operations Unit can be found [here](#).

According to a model that accounts for job titles and other employee qualifications, Black women make 1.9% less than white men, the report found.

The report is the result of the City's Pay Equity Law, or Local Law 18, which requires the city to provide the Council access to pay data based on race, ethnicity, gender, and other protected classes among employees of the City of New York in all agencies headed by a mayoral appointee. The Council's Data Operations Unit analyzed employee information from 2018 provided by the de Blasio Administration to understand any existing pay disparities related to these protected categories.

In response to the findings, the Council made the following recommendations to improve pay equity and help end occupational segregation in City agencies:

- Update Local Law 18 to require additional data that will improve the Council's ability to analyze the data in future reports.
- Require agencies to collect and report on the gender and race of civil service exam. applicants and acceptance and graduation statistics from agency training programs.
- Require analysis of job postings and recruitment material for biases.
- Expand the existing law that requires the DOE and DCAS to make high school students. aware of civil service opportunities.
- Require agencies to perform outreach to local communities regarding civil service opportunities.
- Require agencies to perform internal pay equity analyses and adjust salaries as necessary to achieve pay equity.
- Conduct comparable worth analyses of jobs primarily held by women/non-white workers.
- Conduct interagency analyses for majority women/non-white agencies.

## *Briefs*

### **MTA Taps Craig Cipriano as Interim President of NYC Transit**

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) has named MTA Bus Company and Senior Vice President of New York City Transit's (NYCT) Department of Buses Craig Cipriano to be interim President of NYCT.

"The pandemic revealed how important it is to have continuity and seasoned leaders at the MTA managing the daily challenges of our system," said Acting MTA Chairman and CEO Janno Lieber.

Cipriano is a native of Brooklyn and has worked in all five boroughs of the bus system during his 30-year career in public transit. He began his career at Coney Island Yard in the Subways Division before moving to car equipment department and transferring to the Buses Division after completing the MTA's Future Managers Program.

### **Governor Cuomo Announces MTA and NY Port Authority Employees Will be Required to be Vaccinated for COVID-19 or be Tested Weekly Starting Labor Day**

Governor Andrew Cuomo this week announced that MTA and Port Authority employees working in New York facilities will be required to be vaccinated for COVID-19 or be tested weekly starting Labor Day.

Employee-only vaccination sites that previously closed as usage dropped will be reopened while those that remained open will continue to operate. Nine new vaccination sites will open in locations with a high concentration of state employees.

“We strongly believe everyone should get vaccinated,” Transport Workers Union Local 100 President Tony Utano wrote in a statement. “It’s the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones. Anyone who has concerns, should ask their doctor for advice. We will continue to urge members to get the shot and will work with the MTA to ensure testing options are widely available at work sites.”

## **NY Launches Excelsior Pass Plus to Support Return of Tourism & Business Travel**

New York State has launched the Excelsior Pass Plus to expand travel and commerce opportunities for New Yorkers. The Excelsior Pass platform is now compatible with the SMART Health Cards Framework, already in use in states such as California, Louisiana, and Hawaii.

Excelsior Pass Plus was developed in partnership with VCI, a voluntary coalition of 570 public and private organizations—including The Mayo Clinic, MITRE, Boston Children's Hospital, Microsoft, and The Commons Project Foundation—that lead the development and implementation of the open-source [SMART Health Cards Framework](#).

New Yorkers will be able to display their Excelsior Pass Plus at hundreds of businesses and locations that require proof of vaccination, as well as when traveling to entities where SMART Health Cards are accepted.

## **NYC Requiring All Newly Hired Employees Be Vaccinated**

Effective immediately New York City will only hire vaccinated municipal workers, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced Monday.

“Effective immediately, every single new person hired by the city of New York, before they report to work, they must provide proof of vaccination,” Mayor de Blasio said. “Every new employee must provide proof of vaccination, or they cannot start their new job.”

In addition, Dr. Dave A. Chokshi, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, issued “a strong recommendation” that all New Yorkers, “regardless of vaccination status, wear a mask in public, indoor settings.”

## **Mayor de Blasio Appoints Margaret Nelson Acting NYC Parks Commissioner**

Mayor Bill de Blasio this week appointed Margaret Nelson as Acting Commissioner of NYC Parks. Nelson, currently Parks’ Deputy Commissioner for Urban Park Services and Public Programs, began her career at Parks in 2014.

Nelson was most recently appointed Deputy Commissioner for Urban Park Services and Public Programs in May 2019 where she oversaw operations and staff from 36 citywide Recreation Centers, the Urban Park Rangers, and the Parks Enforcement Patrol units. In addition to her most recent role, Acting Commissioner Nelson previously served as Commissioner Mitchell Silver’s Chief of Staff.

She earned her Master's degree in Public Administration from The Wagner School of Public Service at New York University and a Bachelor's degree from Duke University.

## **CDC Announces New Eviction Ban**

The Biden administration on Tuesday announced a new federal eviction ban to replace the one that expired over the weekend. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s new ban will apply to "counties experiencing substantial and high levels of community transmission levels" of Covid-19 and will last until October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

According to the CDC, the new ban would give state and local programs additional time to distribute rent relief and to increase vaccination rates. The CDC has released an Eviction Protection Declaration [form](#) which tenants should complete and provide to their landlords.

## **AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka Dies**

Richard Trumka, long-time president of the AFL-CIO, passed away Thursday. He was 72.

"The labor movement, the AFL-CIO and the nation lost a legend today," the AFL-CIO said in a statement. "Rich Trumka devoted his life to working people, from his early days as president of the United Mine Workers of America to his unparalleled leadership as the voice of America's labor movement."

Trumka had been AFL-CIO president since 2009, after serving as secretary-treasurer for 14 years. The federation represents 12.5 million members. President Joe Biden called Trumka "a close friend" who was "more than the head of AFL-CIO."

"The working people of America have lost a fierce warrior at a time when we needed him most," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said after announcing Trumka's death on the chamber's floor.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said, in a statement, "Richard's leadership transcended a single movement, as he fought with principle and persistence to defend the dignity of every person."

# ***Coming Up***

## ***New York State***

***Monday, August 9<sup>th</sup>***

***To Review Elections Administration and Voting Rights in New York State***

Senate Committee on Elections

Westchester County Center, 198 Central Avenue, White Plains, 10 a.m.

***The Provision of Electric Service on Long Island***

Assembly Standing Committee on Energy

Brookhaven Town Hall, 1 Independence Hill, Farmingville, 10:30 a.m.

***Tuesday, August 10<sup>th</sup>***

***Emergency Rental Assistance Program***

Assembly Standing Committees on Housing, Social Services, & Ways & Means

Assembly Hearing Room, 250 Broadway, Room 1923, 19<sup>th</sup> Floor, 10 a.m.

***New York City***

***Wednesday, August 11<sup>th</sup>***

***Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises***, Council Chambers – City Hall, 10:30 a.m.

***Committee on Land Use***, Council Chambers – City Hall, 11 a.m.

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**“We believe in the ideas of family, mutuality,  
the sharing of benefits and burdens  
for the good of all, feeling one another’s pain,  
sharing one another’s blessing  
recognizing that at the heart of the matter  
we are bound to each other.”  
-Mario M. Cuomo-**

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