



March 2015

NEWS From Bill Magnarelli

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129th Assembly District

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Dear Constituent:

In February, I mailed my annual constituent survey to registered voters within the 129th Assembly District. The 129th District consists of 2/3 of the City of Syracuse including Downtown, the Northside, the Westside and the Valley sections, and the Town of Geddes including the Village of Solvay, and the Town of Van Buren including part of the Village of Baldwinsville. The questions that make up the survey are important issues that will be debated and will subsequently be voted on, in this year's legislative session. Also included are questions of primary interest in our local community. Knowing your concerns and priorities helps me to be better informed when I cast votes. During my Community Information Nights, which were scheduled in February and March throughout my district, we discussed the survey directly with participants. I wish to thank the 1594 respondents to our survey for their time in filling it out and giving me additional comments. Here are the results broken down by areas within the 129th Assembly District.

2015 Constituent Survey results

1. Which option for the reconstruction of Route 81 do you favor? Please circle a, b or c:
- a) Rebuild the existing roads as they are.
 - b) Create a surface boulevard through downtown Syracuse, re-route and disburse commuter traffic throughout other parts of the city and also re-route through traffic to by-pass the city entirely.
 - c) Create a surface boulevard for local traffic and construct an underground tunnel for through traffic along the same path as the current roadway.

	A%	B%	C%
Total	50	30	14
Van Buren	52	28	17
Geddes	59	24	11
Syracuse	46	32	15

2. A \$50 million investment for the NYS Fair is being proposed to transform it into a world-class tourist and entertainment center. Do you agree with this proposal?

	Yes%	No %
Total	40	56
Van Buren	38	59
Geddes	46	51
Syracuse	38	57

3. Do you favor the use of \$1.285 billion in state settlement fees to be used on capital projects for the Thruway (so there will be no increase in Thruway tolls) and for rebuilding the Tappan Zee Bridge?

	Yes%	No %
Total	33	63
Van Buren	26	70
Geddes	28	68
Syracuse	37	59

4. New York State has a property tax cap that limits increases to 2% or less. This legislation will expire in 2016. Do you support making this property tax cap permanent?

	Yes %	No %
Total	77	18
Van Buren	80	15
Geddes	79	17
Syracuse	76	19

5. Do you agree with changing state law to treat some 16 and 17 year-olds as juvenile offenders rather than adult criminals?

	Yes %	No%
Total	46	49
Van Buren	43	50
Geddes	46	51
Syracuse	47	48

6. The "New York Dream Act" would allow certain undocumented illegal immigrants to be eligible for state financial aid for higher education. Do you agree with this proposal?

	Yes %	No %
Total	29	69
Van Buren	18	79
Geddes	17	82
Syracuse	35	62

7. Should New York State raise the minimum wage from the current \$8.75 to \$10.50 per hour?

	Yes %	No %
Total	66	31
Van Buren	54	43
Geddes	61	36
Syracuse	71	26

8. Do you agree with the proposal to allow another 100 Charter Schools (from the current 460), and to remove restrictions limiting the number of those schools by regions?

	Yes %	No %
Total	40	52
Van Buren	39	53
Geddes	41	51
Syracuse	40	52

9. Do you agree with the proposal to put chronically failing schools under control of a state-appointed receiver, taking control of the school out of the hands of the local superintendent and school board?

	Yes %	No %
Total	37	58
Van Buren	35	61
Geddes	35	60
Syracuse	37	57



Cecile Center Community Information Night 2015

10. The Governor has proposed an increase of 22%, totaling \$1.1 billion, in State Education funding this year, but only if the Legislature passes and agrees to:

Transfer control of teacher evaluations from local school districts to outside observers and to standardize state tests; and to require all teachers to receive an "effective" or "highly effective" rating for 5 consecutive years before earning tenure

- Do you agree that an increase in state education funding be tied to these conditions this year?

	Yes %	No%
Total	31	65
Van Buren	31	67
Geddes	32	64
Syracuse	31	64

*Percentages do not add to 100% because some respondents did not answer all questions

Butternut Street Corridor Study Presentation and Community Discussion:

On February 24th at the Vinette Towers Community Room, Assemblyman Magnarelli's staff attended the session presented by the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) to update residents of the area and get input on a variety of uses of this residential street. The uses discussed included driving, parking, walking, biking, and transit. The Butternut Street boundaries for this study are between North State Street and Grant Boulevard and the study is to determine whether any improvements can be made within the existing roadway width. Included in the discussion were concepts for altering the Butternut Street/Grant Boulevard intersection.



Top Onondaga Community College (OCC) Students Recognized for Academic Excellence and Service:

Assemblyman Magnarelli attended the statewide presentation in Albany of the USA Today Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society All-New York Academic Team Recognition Ceremony. Also attending the ceremony were all SUNY Community College Presidents, and speakers included SUNY Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher and Dr. Rod A. Risley, Executive Director of Phi Theta Kappa.

The local honorees were Alena Cerro, an intern in OCC's External Relations and Marketing & Media departments and a 2013 graduate of Liverpool High School; and Greg Freitag, a Hospitality Management major at OCC and a 1977 graduate of Olympia High School in Greece, NY.

Alena Cerro is vice president of public relations for OCC's Alpha Sigma Zeta chapter. She also serves as an Honors



Program Student Ambassador and Committee Student Representative. Cerro has earned President's List status each semester on campus, received numerous scholarships and awards and participated in service learning projects.

Greg Freitag maintained a 4.0 GPA while volunteering for campus events, working several jobs and raising seven children. Freitag works full time on the overnight shift as a Plant Utilities Engineer at SUNY Upstate Medical University. He also works in the hospitality industry at the Courtyard by Marriott in Armory Square where he has been named employee of the month. In 2014 Freitag medaled in the Empire State Games Track & Field competition. This summer he will be one of 12,000 participants in the National Senior Games in Minneapolis.

Geddes Town Hall Security and Emergency Equipment

Assemblyman Magnarelli secured a grant for capital expenditures at the Town of Geddes Town Hall and administrative offices.

- \$20,000 for automated external defibrillators and associated law enforcement equipment for the Geddes Police Department.
- \$39,000 for security cameras mounted in the Town Hall Court Room and near all entrances to the building.
- A security monitoring system along with an access control system using key fobs on all interior and exterior doors.

Once the installation was completed, Supervisor Manny Falcone took a Magnarelli staff member for a tour of the new security equipment.



OOPS!!!

(We thought this was worth repeating from a Post Standard article written by Marnie Eisenstadt)

For much of 2014, the Syracuse area reported a loss of about 1,700 jobs, and they were consistently in educational services. But no one could say where they were coming from. There were no large layoffs. There were no staff cuts. And there were no mass retirements. (The Syracuse region includes Onondaga, Oswego and Madison counties.)

It turns out Syracuse's job losses, which persisted even as the rest of the state's job picture began to brighten, **were a data problem**. When economists revised the data as they usually do at the end of every year, they found that the area **actually gained jobs**, according to Karen Knapik-Scalzo, of the state Department of Labor in Syracuse. She said private educational services employment saw an increase of 1,100 jobs from January 2014 to January 2015.

And news continued to be good for January. Overall, the Syracuse region added 2,400 private sector jobs in January 2015 when compared with January 2014. Binghamton was the only region that lost jobs even after the data adjustments. The state as a whole gained jobs at a rate of 2% over the course of the year, according to the data.

Teen Driver Education program's "Don't Drive Your Life Away"

On March 18th, Assemblyman Magnarelli's staff attended the launching of the radio broadcasting of the Teen Driver Education program featuring teens educating other teens through entertaining, humorous and witty facts, interviews and on location reports. The program is made possible by the sponsorship of State Farm, the Gifford Foundation and the Golub Foundation. The new first of its kind Teen Driver Safety Program will be headquartered in Syracuse and produced at Time Warner studios to be aired nationally. Also on hand for the celebration was Frederick Zimmerman, Director of the American-International Highway Safety Driver Education Institute, as well as some of their Board of Directors, and also members of the Onondaga County Traffic Safety Advisory Board.



Historic Ethics Reforms for Albany

Unfortunately, Albany has seen numerous arrests and indictments involving lawmakers in both houses of the Legislature and also the Executive Branch. Most recently was the indictment of Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver.

At the time of his resignation as the Speaker of the Assembly, Assemblyman Magnarelli stated that, "I believe we have a real opportunity to enact real ethics reform and I will work to bring a package of reforms to state government that will help restore confidence and trust in our elected officials."

Upon assuming the leadership of the Assembly, Speaker Carl Heastie assured the voters of this state, "that by whatever means necessary, we will do everything in our power to regain their trust and to bring true reform and accountability into these halls."

On 3/18/15, an historic agreement reached by the Assembly Majority and the Governor took a monumental step toward fulfilling that promise. The five essential points cover: New Disclosure Requirements; Pension Forfeiture; Per Diem Reform; Prohibition of Personal Use of Campaign Funds; and Campaign Finance Disclosure Requirements. (for details go to www.assembly.state.ny.us/Press/20150318a/)

The next steps that will make these ethics reforms a reality is agreement by the New York State Senate to the same reform package. Then the reforms will be included in the 2015-16 budget proposal, which will hopefully be voted on by or before April 1st.

Assemblyman Magnarelli said, "Our residents rightfully expect a government that is honest and beyond reproach, and that their elected representatives are living up to the highest ethical standards, It is time to stop talking about ethics reforms and make it happen."

Fair Pay Campaign Rally with Governor Cuomo

Governor Cuomo brought his #Fight4FairPay Campaign to Syracuse with a rally held at the Town of Geddes Community and Youth Center in Solvay, NY. Getting the program underway was Solvay Mayor Ron Benedetti. The packed house of labor and community leaders were brought to their feet by a rousing and passionate address by Ann Marie Taliercio, Unite-Here, Local 150 AFL-CIO before introducing the Governor. The Governor stated, "that will be a hard act to follow", before he gave his appeal to New Yorkers that raising the minimum wage to \$10.50 per hour statewide and \$11.50 for New York City will help the state's economy. Governor Cuomo said, "The sweetest and healthiest success is one that enables everyone to do well together – that is what community is all about. As our economy recovers and our businesses add new jobs, we need to ensure our entire workforce has the opportunity to be part of the economic recovery and new momentum we are seeing in all corners of the State."

Assemblyman Magnarelli agrees that a reasonable minimum wage can help improve the standard of living for workers, reduce poverty, encourage fair and more efficient business practices, and ensure that the most vulnerable members of the workforce can contribute to the economy. The Assemblyman's staff was present at the rally.



On March 4th, Governor Cuomo came to the Solvay Geddes Community Youth Center for a Fair Pay Rally, promoting his legislation to increase the minimum wage. The packed house was on their feet with a motivational and passionate message delivered by Ann Marie Taliercio, President of CNY Area Labor Federation. The Governor followed her and commented that, "that will be a hard act to follow".

New York State Assembly Passes Paid Family Leave Act

On March 17th, the Assembly passed the Paid Family Leave Act (A.3870), that will enable all workers to maintain employment and still receive some income while on leave to care for an elderly relative, manage an unexpected medical emergency, or bond with a newborn or adopted child.

Currently, the Federal Family Medical Leave Act provides for up to 12 weeks of *unpaid* leave to care for a sick relative. However, most employees cannot afford to take unpaid leave from work and only a portion of the workforce is covered under this policy. With people living longer and requiring care in their later years, and assisted living and nursing home options growing fewer and more expensive, options for hard working families are limited. Medical bills and other expenses continue to grow while people are out of work caring for their relatives, despite the lack of income. Allowing employees to earn a portion of their salary during family leave would strengthen the workforce and promote financial stability.

The Assembly bill would give new parents (birth or adoptive) or people who need to take care of an ill relative 12 weeks of *paid* leave. The law would use the temporary disability system to pay for family leave. It would provide 12 paid weeks and increase that payment to a maximum of \$545. **Who pays for it?** Workers pay through an additional payroll deduction of 45 cents per week. Neither the state nor the employer would pay more under the Assembly bill. It is not tied to the state budget.



Assemblyman Magnarelli Announces Collegiate Scholarships

Assemblyman William Magnarelli (D-Syracuse, Geddes, Van Buren) announced today that the New York Conference of Italian-American State Legislators is now accepting [applications](#) for four \$2,500 scholarships to be awarded in June at its Annual Conference Weekend. Scholarship winners must be present to receive their awards.

"Given the high costs of college, every opportunity must be made by local students and their working families to meet their required expenses with scholarships as well as with student loans, available financial aid, and personal contributions," said Magnarelli.

This year the Italian-American State Legislators Conference will be awarding four \$2,500 scholarships to four current or future college students from New York State. Eligibility will be based upon the student's grade point average, interest in pursuing a higher education, involvement in the local community as well as individual financial need.

"Our conference is very proud of our role in promoting higher education and assisting students in reaching their academic goals and full potential for future success in the global marketplace," Magnarelli continued. "This year's recipients will be invited to Albany to receive their scholarship awards in June."

Area students may request an application by contacting Assemblyman Magnarelli's office at magnarw@assembly.state.ny.us or (315)428-9651.



The Vera House Foundation White Ribbon Campaign:

On March 16th, Assemblyman Magnarelli's staff attended the annual White Ribbon Breakfast proceeds of which benefit the work of Vera House in Outreach & Advocacy, Crisis Services, Education and Prevention programs and Emergency Shelter services to help victims of domestic abuse, and sexual violence. This year's event co-chairs were Tom Magnarelli and Jeffrey VanBuren.

Save the Date:

Blood Drive

With Solvay Fire Department

Thurs., June 4 Noon - 6 p.m.

At Solvay-Geddes Community Youth Center

1010 Woods Road, Solvay, New York 13209



CNY VOLUNTEER FAIR



**Tuesday, Sept. 22
at DestinyUSA**

Non-profit organizations seeking volunteers to help operate their organization.

For more information on any of these events, email abdellad@assembly.state.ny.us

**Saturday, Nov. 7
At NYS Fairgrounds
Parade at Noon**

Expo 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

www.cnyveteransparade.org



About New York State Assemblyman William B. Magnarelli

Assemblyman William Magnarelli represents the 129th Assembly District, which includes the Northside, Westside, Eastwood and Valley areas of the City of Syracuse, as well as the towns of Geddes and Van Buren. He first won election in 1998 for an open Assembly seat and was reelected in 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014. During his previous six terms in office, Assemblyman Magnarelli has focused his efforts on bringing more jobs to Central New York, lowering taxes, providing our children a better education at every level, improving our healthcare and keeping our families safe. For more information, contact Assemblyman Magnarelli's District Office at (315) 428-9651 or visit <http://www.assembly.state.ny.us/magnarelli>.