



NEWS

April/May 2015

From Bill Magnarelli

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129th Assembly District

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PUSH BACK TEACHER EVALUATION DEADLINE

“The passage of the 2015-16 state budget was the 5th consecutive on time budget holding spending growth to less than 2 percent. This budget also puts families first by restoring much-needed funding for our schools with a \$1.6 billion increase in education aid over last year, for a total of \$23 billion. The budget plan also funds numerous economic development projects to create more jobs.

However, what overshadowed good news for New Yorkers was the issue of Common Core testing and teacher evaluations. I have said many times, and continue to stress, that our schools and students have to be our top priority. We must do everything we can to ensure they are getting the quality education they deserve. However, the negotiation process that comes along with passing a state budget unfortunately makes it impossible for us to just strip out what we disagree with.

The governor made an extreme proposal, and we worked to find a compromise. We fought tooth and nail and were able to achieve important concessions.

The executive’s initial proposal was an unrealistic teacher evaluation plan that amounted to what many felt was an attack on teachers. The Assembly Majority worked around the clock to negotiate changes to the original plan and blunt some of the provisions. While districts will still be responsible for conducting their own evaluations, the Assembly Majority fought and won language allowing the Board of Regents – a panel of education experts – to provide parameters for these evaluations. This agreement will help ensure that students are learning and that teachers aren’t just teaching to the test.

That is why I am pleased to announce my strong support for the Board of Regents’ directive to the state education department to push back the deadline for school districts to fully submit new teacher evaluation plans to September 2016 instead of November 2015 of this year – ensuring that schools won’t have to worry about having their state funding put in jeopardy this year. Once again, I maintain that making sure local schools have the funding they need to continue providing a quality education to students has been and remains a top priority, and school children shouldn’t have to suffer any consequences resulting from a deadline being missed.

This is exactly why the Assembly Majority fought so hard during budget negotiations to put the teacher evaluation system into the hands of the Board of Regents. We made sure the budget language was crafted to give the Board of Regents significant flexibility in coming up with a new teacher evaluation system. The Assembly Majority also made sure that dedicated education experts, who actually understand what goes on in the classroom, were elected to the Board of Regents. We’re seeing the results of those decisions today.

The Board of Regents will work to find a way to administratively extend the deadline for school districts to approve new teacher evaluation plans to September 1, 2016. The Regents have that authority and I wholeheartedly support the decision to push the deadline back.

Under the original plan in the budget, the June 30, 2015 deadline would remain for the Regents to adopt regulations to decide issues such as how much weight to give state-based tests under the new evaluation system, but that giving districts more time to implement the new system would help them to design fair, effective teacher evaluations. This date is also being reviewed by the Regents and may be postponed.

The Legislature elects a Board of Regents for a reason: to ensure that qualified education experts are directing the education system in our state – not – politics. Extending the deadline will relieve some of the unnecessary pressure to rush through new teacher evaluation plans. The Assembly Majority continues to stand with teachers to fight unfair attacks against them and will keep working to make our schools the best they can be.”

Bill Magnarelli

On April 30th, the Friends of the Butternut Community Police Center (BCPC) held its 4th Annual Gala at Attilio’s Restaurant. BCPC honored Assemblyman Bill Magnarelli as their 2015 Northside Hero. Police Officer Kenn Burdick, Director of BCPC introduced the Assemblyman and presented the plaque inscribed with the words: “for his life-long work on improving the quality of life for residents on the Northside of the City”. In acknowledging the Assemblyman’s devotion to the Northside, Officer Burdick said, “Many elected officials forget their communities once they are elected, but I see Assemblyman Magnarelli at almost every event during the weekdays and weekends throughout the year. This award is well-deserved.”



Assemblyman Magnarelli took part in the ceremonial groundbreaking for Salina Crossings, a \$14.8 million mixed-use development that will include 6,000 square feet of retail space and 49 housing units for low income households.

The project is a result of collaboration between the Housing Visions Consultants, Inc., New York State Homes, Community Renewal (HCR) and other state and local partner.

Assemblyman Bill Magnarelli said, “Transforming the former Otisca site is, indeed, cause for celebration. Providing affordable, quality and safe housing is exactly what this Northside neighborhood needs. Along with the housing component, this new mixed-use complex continues the re-development of this section of the Northside. I applaud the work of Housing Visions and NYS Homes and Community Renewal for investing much needed resources for the betterment of our neighborhood families.”



On April 16th, Assemblyman Magnarelli was proud to join the annual Operation Safe Stop Campaign. The Onondaga County Traffic Safety Advisory Board, along with the new York State Association for Pupil Transportation, and state, county, and local law enforcement agencies announced that Operation Safe Stop would be conducted county-wide. During “Safe Stop”, police officers are on board school buses and in marked and unmarked patrol units on selected bus routes that have a history of illegal passing complaints. Last year alone, law enforcement issued 1,352 tickets for passing a stopped school bus, and an additional 1,732 tickets for other moving violations state-wide. These statistics prove that there are drivers who break the law and are negligent around school buses or in school zones.



ASSEMBLYMAN BILL MAGNARELLI WOULD LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT THE 2014 SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD: presented to Mike Orso, President of Nick Orso’s Body Shop, by STOP DWI NY, MADD NY, NYS Governors Traffic Safety Council, NYS Police, NYS Division of Justice Services.

Mike Orso is the president of Nick Orso’s Body Shop in Syracuse. Mr. Orso is very active in improving social awareness for STOP-DWI, Zero Tolerance programs, distracted driving and New York move-over law efforts. Over the years, he has promoted DWI awareness by speaking to various audiences, on his radio talk show “The Nick Orso Show”, on billboards and on TV advertisements. Mr. Orso has increased public awareness of both drunk driving and underage drinking. As a board member of the Onondaga County Traffic Safety Council, he has spent countless hours educating the public and young drivers on safe driving. Mr. Orso has also donated vehicles to the Syracuse Fire Department for use in rescue training. Congratulations to Mike! (Mr. Orso was presented the award at the NYS Police Chief’s Association awards banquet at Drumlins on April 27th.)

On April 25th, Assemblyman Magnarelli’s staff attended the opening day ceremonies of the Valley Little League and the Southside American Little League. The Assemblyman has been proud to personally attend these opening ceremonies for 20 consecutive years. However, this year he could not and made sure that his staff was there.



PEDIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH CARE

“ I am proud to partner with US Congressman John Katko (NY-24) to strengthen pediatric mental health care services. In making the announcement last week of this Federal and State partnership, Congressman Katko and I seek to increase awareness and provide greater access to care by creating a task force to address gaps in pediatric mental health care in Central New York.

Central New York currently lacks a sufficiently integrated system for child and adolescent mental health inpatient and outpatient services. Commercial insurance companies typically require out-of-network approval for admission to Hutchings Psychiatric Center, the only local inpatient facility equipped to handle adolescent mental healthcare in Central New York. This forces some local families to travel to treatment centers in Auburn, Utica, Saratoga, or even outside of New York State to receive adequate care.

Families in Central New York should not be forced to send their child hours away to get the proper mental health care. These families are already in crisis, and the lack of local treatment options only compounds their stress. I hope that beginning this dialogue with Federal, State and local stakeholders will lead to better youth mental health treatment options in the region. Working together is the only way that we will be able to find solutions for this problem.

The Task Force will be comprised of local mental health and substance use disorder treatment providers, leaders from the Syracuse affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), grassroots health care organizations and advocates, Central New York hospitals, and local government officials. The six-month Task Force will meet biweekly and present a report of its findings, including suggestions for providing greater access to families and patients who seek ongoing treatment.

Congressman Katko said, “I am proud to partner with Assemblyman Magnarelli and our many local service providers and advocates to start this conversation. Because of discontinuities and other gaps in the care system, young people in our area do not always receive the best available care. In order to treat and build better lives for the hundreds of Central New York families whose lives are impacted by mental illness and substance abuse, we need real and early intervention solutions in our psychiatric care centers, in our schools, and in our community.”

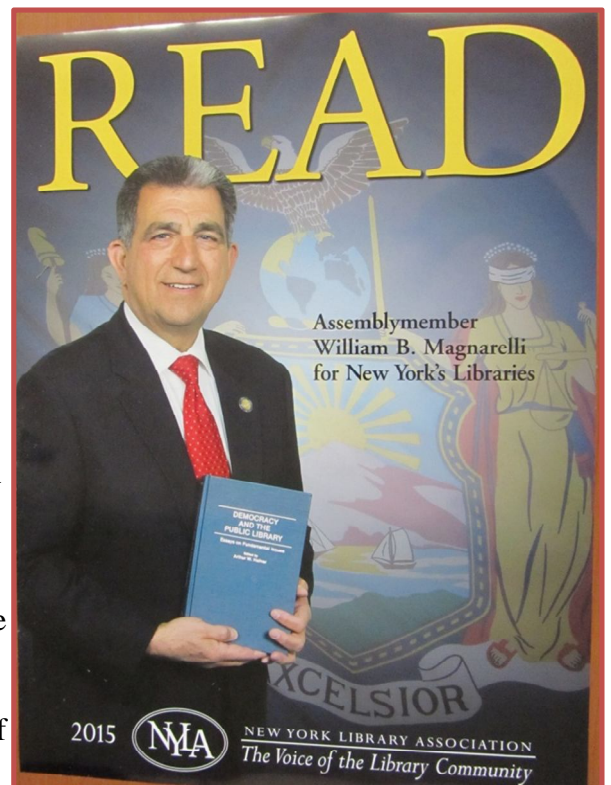
I have always believed that when government works together for the good of the people they serve, workable solutions are the outcome. I'm happy to partner with Congressman Katko on this serious issue to accomplish just that.”



Pictured above with Assemblyman Magnarelli are Max Ruckdeschel of the Syracuse City School Board; Dave Kirby of the Syracuse Teachers Association; Joan Brown of STA; Katie Sojewitz, a parent, and Rebecca Jackson of the Parent Teachers Association.

Asssemblyman Magnarelli meets with representatives of the Syracuse Teachers Association and Syracuse City School District Board of Education, along with a former City School District teacher and current parent representative to discuss issues affecting education in the current state budget FY2015-16.

Asssemblyman Magnarelli is showing his support for the New York Library Association and is also lending his voice to promoting reading during the summer. The association was the first statewide organization of librarians in the United States. NYLA has always been devoted to the promotion of the library interests of the entire state. It has to its credit contributed to a notable system of modern libraries throughout the state.



On April 16th, Assemblyman Bill Magnarelli joined with County Executive Joanie Mahoney, Senator David Valesky and others to celebrate the Opening Day of Chiefs baseball in Syracuse. Along with 8,869 fans in attendance, under blue skies with a gorgeous 67 degrees, they watched the Syracuse Chiefs beat the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Railriders 10 to 2.



Attorney General Eric Schneiderman and state and local elected officials along with housing, community and law enforcement officials announced the Abandoned Property Neighborhood Relief Act.

Fighting the Scourge of Zombie Properties

Attorney General Eric Schneiderman took a trip to Syracuse on Friday, April 24th to announce that his Abandoned Property Neighborhood Relief Act has been expanded and reintroduced in the New York State legislature. The modified bill includes several new key provisions to expedite the foreclosure process for properties that are confirmed to be vacant and direct penalties for noncompliance to a fund to aid local enforcement of the law. The AG stated, "New York will never be able to fully recover from the devastation of the financial crisis until we seriously reckon with the crisis of zombies." Assemblyman Magnarelli's staff attended the press conference to show his support for state legislation to alleviate the burden that these blighted properties impose on New York's towns and cities.

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.

Saturday, Nov. 7
At NYS Fairgrounds
Parade at Noon

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

www.cnyveteransparade.org



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

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>.