



dens. A \$200 ticket can become thousands of dollars before you even know it exists. That's not debt collection: that's extortion. The government should never profit from confusion or delay. This changes with my Fee Relief Act. My bill puts the brakes on runaway interest, ends these unfair fee escalations, and ensures that working families can pay what they owe without being buried by it. It's time we stop letting debt grow faster than people's ability to get back on their feet."

STAVISKY HONORED WITH FRIEND OF UUP AWARD:

United University Professions (UUP), the nation's largest higher education union, has honored state Sen. Toby Ann Stavisky with its Friend of UUP award. Sen. Stavisky, the first woman from Queens County elected to the state Senate and the first woman to chair the Senate Higher Ed Committee, was elected in 1999 and has served ever since.

As Senate Higher Ed Committee Chair, Sen. Stavisky has been a strong supporter of public higher education and SUNY, and she's been a longtime friend of UUP. Under her leadership, she has worked to increase state funding for SUNY, providing the university system with the resources necessary to offer a world-class educational experience to students. She has also increased student access through reforms to the state's Tuition Assistance Program and by keeping tuition reasonable for working families.

"Sen. Stavisky really deserves this Friend of UUP award," said UUP President Fred Kowal. "She's been there for UUP and her hard work has benefitted SUNY, our members, students, and communities across our state. UUP's relationship with state lawmakers matters to this union year-round, not just during budget season. We cultivate good friendships with lawmakers whose ideals and goals match our own, on both sides of the aisle. It's a bonus for us when these friendships are based on years of trust and mutual respect. We are fortunate indeed to have such a friendship with Sen. Toby Ann Stavisky of the 11th Senate District."

"Together we have made great strides, and I'm optimistic about the future, the faculty and support staff are the reason," said Senator Stavisky. "They teach the students, they conduct the research, and they care for the patients in our public teaching hospitals. The strength of New York's future is a result of our public colleges and universities, and I will keep doing my part in Albany to make sure New York lives up to that responsibility."

UUP's nonpartisan award recognizes distinguished service rendered to SUNY by those who strengthen and enlarge the political community devoted to the progressive development of public higher education in New York state. Past winners include state Comptroller Tom DiNapoli and U.S. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer.

ADDABBO DROPS OFF MORE SUPPLIES FOR VETERANS AT VA:

Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. has been conducting a perpetual collection drive, gathering new shirts, socks, underwear, towels and other items for veterans in need. On May 7, 2026, Addabbo staffers Faran Shariff and Carl Moore dropped off the supplies at St. Albans VA, where they were accepted by a representative of the facility.

"As long as there are veterans in need, we will be there to help them," Addabbo said. "I want to thank all of the community members who donated for their tremendous generosity."

Requested items must be NEW: sneakers, slippers, sweatpants, pants, jeans, hoodies, bodywash, washcloths (neutral colors), male t-shirts (5 pack), male socks (crew), male underwear (5 pack), bath towels (neutral colors). Clothing sizes should be medium, large, extra-large or 2XL. Items can be dropped off Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. at Senator Addabbo's District Office at 84-16 Jamaica Avenue in Woodhaven or at his Middle Village Office at 66-85 73rd Place.

LIU HONORS 12 NORTHEAST QUEENS SMALL BUSINESSES:

State Senator John Liu was scheduled to host the annual New York State Empire Awards ceremony on Friday, May 20, recognizing outstanding small businesses across northeast Queens for their leadership, community service, innovation, and economic impact. The Empire Award is the highest honor bestowed by the New York State Senate to businesses and organizations that demonstrate exceptional commitment to customers, employees, and the communities they serve.

This year's honorees represent a diverse array of local entrepreneurs and family-owned businesses spanning Flushing, Bayside, and Fresh Meadows.

Honorees include: Avli The Little Greek Tavern, Eye & I Eyecare, Bell Formal Wear, C2A Campus SAT Prep & Tutoring, Fresh Meadows Pizza, Krave It Pizza & Sandwich Joint, Ludus Jewelry, Champion Martial Arts, Lu Ning Architect, EGLANCE Bookstore, Coffee Factory, and One Station Plaza.

BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT '26 AT PETERS FIELD PARK:

New York State Senator Leroy Comrie, Assemblymember Alicia Hyndman, Assemblymember Clyde Vanel, and NYC Council Deputy Speaker Nantasha Williams will join community members, nonprofit organizations and corporate partners for the "Heart for the Community: Beautification Project '26" on Friday, June 5, 2026, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at Peters Field Park in Jamaica, Liberty Avenue and 183rd Street.

Hosted in partnership with the Showing Hearts Foundation, the beautification initiative will bring together volunteers to help revitalize Peters Field Park through landscaping, flower planting, bench painting and park clean-up efforts aimed at enhancing community pride and preserving public green spaces throughout Southeast Queens.

The event is being supported by community and corporate partners including ASUR Airports, CCA Metro, the New York City and Vicinity District Council of Carpenters and Walmart, whose contributions are helping make this day of service possible.

LIU BILL TO PREVENT UNWANTED LAST-MINUTE CRCs:

State Senator John Liu today announced that his legislation, the ERIC Act (Election-Related Requirements for Initiating Charter

Commissions Act), has been incorporated into state budget legislation as part of the Public Protection and General Governance (PPGG) budget bill, expected to pass today.

The measure seeks to protect voter intent and prevent political sabotage by outgoing mayors by creating new requirements for the establishment of Charter Revision Commissions (CRC) around the time of general elections and approval procedures by new administrations.

Under current state law, the NYC mayor has the ability to unilaterally create a Charter Revision Commission at any time through the end of the term of office. Once formed, CRCs can operate for years and create ballot questions that can lead to permanent changes in city governance. The legislation requires that any CRC created within a window of 60 days before a municipal general election up to January 1st of the following year to be confirmed within the first 180 days of the following year by the mayor in office. The provision is deemed to have been effective on November 4, 2025.

This bill was drafted in response to the creation of a Charter Revision Commission by the former mayor on December 31, 2025, his last day in office, creating conflict with the incoming mayor and therefore the will of the voters. Senator John Liu stated, "Charter Revision Commissions have enormous consequences for New Yorkers and should never be implemented without just cause and due consideration, nor should they be used by outgoing executives as a means to undermine political rivals. Passing this legislation into law is necessary to give duly-elected mayors the ability to retain or annul 11th-hour commissions mustered by outgoing mayors."

MENG ADVANCES MEASURE FOR TARIFF REFUNDS:

U.S. Rep. Grace Meng's (D-NY) bipartisan provision to help small business owners access tariff refunds unanimously passed the House Appropriations Committee as part of the Fiscal Year 2027 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Meng, who serves as the top Democrat on the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, introduced an amendment to direct the Department of Commerce to conduct outreach and provide technical assistance to U.S. small businesses that may be entitled to refunds. In February, after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against President Trump's use of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) to impose tariffs, the Administration announced a process to refund tariffs paid by American importers. The Trump Administration owes American businesses an estimated \$166 billion plus interest. But because of the complexity of the application process, only around 15 percent of applications have been accepted by the government. Untold numbers of businesses have not even applied. Rep. Meng's amendment would direct the Department of Commerce to provide badly needed assistance to small businesses that may be eligible for refunds.

Speaking before the Appropriations Committee, the Congresswoman said, "In my district in Queens, New York, I have heard from numerous small business owners trying to navigate the IEEPA tariff refund process. And I know I'm not alone. Small businesses typi-

cally don't have lawyers on retainer or dedicated compliance teams like large corporations do... So far, about a third of applicants have been denied their refunds due to technical errors when filing a claim. Most of the small business owners I have spoken to in my district tell me that they don't even know if they are eligible—or where they would file a claim. American small business owners work long days, nights, and weekends. It's often a struggle from one invoice to the next. They do not have the time or resources to navigate customs or trade law... Small businesses already turn to Commerce on trade and tariff issues, and we should ensure that Commerce is engaging with them to address the tariff-related challenges they are facing right now. The Department has the resources, avenues, and expertise to help our small businesses. Why wouldn't we use them?"

On April 2, 2025, "Liberation Day," President Trump announced sweeping tariffs, launching a trade war against almost every country across the globe. Since then, tariff costs have tripled for small-business importers and American families, who have already paid an estimated \$1,700 more due to the illegal tariffs. In February, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that President Trump lacks the authority under the IEEPA to impose sweeping tariffs. Then, in April, the Administration launched the Consolidated Administration and Processing of Entries (CAPE) to manage IEEPA tariff refunds.

Congresswoman Meng is a senior member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee, which is responsible for funding the federal government's agencies, programs and activities. She serves as Ranking Member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, which oversees funding for the Department of Commerce.

GILLIBRAND ANNOUNCES CRACKDOWN ON PREDICTION MARKET INSIDER TRADING:

U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), a member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, announced that several of her provisions were included in the Senate committee-passed version of the Intelligence Authorization Act (IAA) for Fiscal Year 2027. The bill, which passed out of the Intelligence Committee on a 14-3 bipartisan vote, now heads to the Senate floor for consideration.

"While there is much more work to be done to rein in President Trump's out-of-control FBI and ODNI leadership, I am pleased that this year's intelligence bill moves the ball forward on certain key issues that concern New Yorkers and families across the country," said Senator Gillibrand. "In particular, I was proud to include measures to target international terrorist groups and scammers who prey on our country's most vulnerable, as well as a provision to prohibit Intelligence Community employees with security clearances from using insider knowledge to profit from prediction markets. I urge these measures' inclusion in the final bill and will continue to fight for proper oversight of our country's intelligence agencies."

Specifically, Gillibrand was able to include the following priorities in the committee-passed FY2027 Senate IAA:

Prediction market insider trading: Prohibits Intelligence Community employees and