



ROBERT SCHROEDER

Assemblyman

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Winter 2012

The 215th Legislative Session Begins

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Welcome to my first newsletter of the New Year. There were two big changes to mark the start of my second term: a new legislative map for District 39, which is now comprised of 23 towns in Bergen and Passaic Counties; and the addition of a new member to our district legislative team, Assemblywoman Holly Schepisi, who joins Senator Gerry Cardinale and myself as your state representatives, following the retirement of Assemblywoman Charlotte Vandervalk.

For the 215th Legislative Session, I will continue to serve as a member of the Assembly Homeland Security & State Preparedness Committee and the Unemployment Insurance Task Force. In addition to these assignments, I'll be joining the Assembly Labor Committee and the New Jersey Fire Safety Commission. I look forward to drawing upon my experience as a business owner, military contractor, and more than 30 years of service as a Volunteer Firefighter to make positive contributions as a member of these committees. I am also pleased to serve as a Deputy Whip for the Republican Caucus.

Some issues I'll be focusing on this session:

FLOODING On January 18, my legislation calling for the creation of a Bi-State River Commission was signed into law by Governor Christie. Comprised of representatives from New York and New Jersey, the Commission will work to coordinate management and flood prevention of the waterways that run between Rockland and Bergen Counties. I will continue to work closely with representatives from Bergen, Passaic & Rockland Counties, the NJDEP, United Water and local residents to effectively address the chronic flooding issues in District 39.

PUBLIC SAFETY I'll continue my efforts to protect service animals from dog attacks (Dusty's Law,) repeal the Kyleigh's Law GDL decals, and push for an amendment to expand Joan's Law, mandating life in prison with no parole for those who commit murder during the course of a sex crime where the victim is under the age of 18 (current law covers victims under the age of 14). I also look forward to the re-opening of Pascack Valley Hospital at HUMC North, and working for stricter solar panel safeguards to protect firefighters.

PROPERTY TAX RELIEF Public schools in District 39 are not receiving their fair share of school aid from the state. I'll advocate for a more equitable funding formula to bring that money back to our local districts and provide relief for overburdened taxpayers.

It is a pleasure to serve the residents of District 39. Thank you for placing your confidence in me for another term in the Assembly.

News Via Email

To receive issues of this newsletter electronically, contact us via email at AsmSchroeder@njleg.org and we will add you to our subscriber list. We respect your privacy: our lists are not shared, and you may unsubscribe at any time. Thank you for helping us save on printing and postage!

**Assemblyman
Robert Schroeder**
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Legislative District 39 Towns: Bloomingdale, Closter, Demarest, Dumont, Emerson, Harrington Park, Haworth, Hillsdale, Mahwah, Montvale, Norwood, Oakland, Old Tappan, Park Ridge, Ramsey, Ringwood, River Vale, Saddle River, Upper Saddle River, Wanaque, Township of Washington, Westwood, Woodcliff Lake

NO TAXPAYER FUNDS WERE USED TO PRODUCE THIS NEWSLETTER

Legislative Update

January 10th marked the start of the 215th Legislative Session. I am proud to continue my service as your state representative, and draft legislation that will benefit residents of the 39th district and all of New Jersey. Here is an update on some of the initiatives I've been working on:

- **A-3659** requires the Department of Child and Family Services to develop and adopt a Statewide youth suicide plan. **STATUS: Signed into law by Governor Christie**
- **A-2440** establishes a Bi-State River Commission to coordinate flood management and flood prevention between Bergen (NJ) and Rockland (NY) Counties. **STATUS: Signed into law by Governor Christie**
- **S-2541 "Schultz's Law"** enhances the penalty for killing a police dog or a dog engaged in search and rescue with a fine up to \$15,000

and mandatory sentence of imprisonment of 5 years with possibility for parole. **STATUS: Signed into law by Governor Christie**

- **A-4008** Requires the Department of Education to include cheerleaders in the student-athlete head injury safety program. **STATUS: Signed into law by Governor Christie**
- **A-4052** appropriates \$84 million from the "Garden State Green Acres Preservation Trust Fund" for local government open space acquisition and park developments projects. **STATUS: Signed into law by Governor Christie**
- **A-261** Repeals the Kyleigh's Law decal requirement; requires MVC to provide detailed information about the GDL program to parents; imposes penalties on parents when teen driver fails to comply with GDL laws. **STATUS: Pending**

- **A-265** allows certain sole proprietors to join a small employer health benefits purchasing alliance. This will allow certain organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce to enroll in group health benefits for its members. **STATUS: Pending**

- **A-267** would require the DEP and owners of reservoirs to implement certain flood control measures, and authorizes the OEM to order the lowering of the reservoirs. **STATUS: Pending**



Stay in Touch

Questions or Comments? There are several options for constituents to keep in touch:

- Call my office at (201) 391-3673, Monday thru Friday from 9am to 5pm. To leave a message, press 1-0 and the # sign.
- Follow me on Twitter: @SchroederNJ
- Read my blog (www.robertschroeder.com/wordpress)
- Email me at AsmSchroeder@njleg.org

Notary Applications

If you reside or work in District 39, our legislative office would be happy to process your Notary Application/Renewal.

Forms are available at: www.state.nj.us/treasury/revenue/dcr/pdforms/notapp.pdf. Complete the form, enclose a \$25.00 check payable to the State Treasurer and mail to:

Assemblyman Robert Schroeder
123 Broadway, 2nd Floor
Woodcliff Lake, NJ 07677

You will receive a confirmation letter from our office after the application has been certified and mailed to the State Treasurer. Please allow 4 weeks for the processing of your application.

In Appreciation: Assemblywoman Charlotte Vandervalk



This year, Assemblywoman Charlotte Vandervalk retired after serving the people of New Jersey for over 30 years.

A caring and dedicated public servant, Charlotte has long been a valued and active member of our community, advocating for women and children, victims' rights, and health benefits and services for residents who need them most.

Assemblywoman Vandervalk's contributions to our state will have a lasting, meaningful impact for generations to come. I thank her for her friendship and guidance over the years, and for her outstanding public service to our constituents.

While the State House will not be the same without her, I know that Charlotte has much to look forward to as she enters this next phase of her life. I wish Charlotte Vandervalk much happiness and continued success in the years ahead.

Remembering Assembly Minority Leader Alex DeCroce

On January 9th, just minutes after the conclusion of our final Voting Session of the 214th Legislature, my friend and colleague, Assemblyman Alex DeCroce (District 26) died suddenly at the Statehouse in Trenton. His passing was devastating to all of us who knew and worked closely with Alex, on both sides of the aisle. Alex DeCroce was a dedicated public servant, respected statesman and gifted leader who served the State of New Jersey with honor and distinction.

Victims' rights is a cause that Alex and I both felt strongly about. Assemblyman DeCroce was the driving force behind the drafting and passage of the Crime Victims' Bill of Rights in New Jersey. Last session, I was honored to co-sponsor a bill with Alex that would expand this important legislation. Our bill will be reintroduced for this session, and I will be advocating for it to be renamed the "Alex DeCroce Crime Victims' Bill of Rights" in Alex's memory.

I pledge to continue advocating for crime victims, and will strive to do so with the same level of passion, commitment and dedication that Alex demonstrated throughout his life. Alex DeCroce's legacy of public service will have a lasting impact on New Jersey for many years to come. He will be greatly missed.



Alex DeCroce 1936-2012

For more information, photos and updates visit www.robertschroeder.com

Teen Driver Safety: Decals Aren't Saving Lives

The previous edition of my newsletter focused on the results of my online survey of New Jersey residents on the revised Graduated Driver License laws. The results were clear: an overwhelming majority of our respondents—more than 80%—said that repealing the Kyleigh's Law decal requirement was "Very Important" to them, even though many of those same respondents supported the stricter passenger restrictions and earlier curfew.

I have received thousands of emails, letters and phone calls on this issue from concerned parents and teens in our state who want to repeal the decal law, and support my ongoing efforts to do so. Many expressed frustration over the lack of public discussion on this issue: several decal repeal bills still await hearing in committee almost two years after they were first introduced. Decal advocates have claimed for years that the program would make our teens safer, and when teen fatalities dropped in 2010, proponents lauded the success of the decals as the reason for the decrease.

But the latest accident statistics for 2011 tell a very different story: accident fatalities among teens increased sharply in 2011—despite the decal law. It's difficult to pinpoint why this increase in teen deaths has occurred, but one thing is clear: the decals do not save lives. In fact, I believe that the widespread non-compliance by parents and teens protesting the decals, and the frustration they feel over this ill-conceived requirement, may have led to an unintended backlash against the entire GDL program, undermining the original intent of the revisions implemented in 2010. **We must work to enact effective laws that encourage compliance, not defiance. The decals need to go.**

I recently voted against a measure that called for increased practice hours for teen drivers and mandatory orientation for their parents. While I do believe that increased education and parental involvement are the keys to increasing teen driver safety, I agree with the Governor's assessment that we were given insufficient time to review the potential consequences of the proposed changes. There were many unanswered questions, including whether or not parents would have to pay to attend the mandatory orientation seminars, and how much they would cost. Teen Driver Safety is an important issue, but we must enact reforms that effect real change, without putting teens in harm's way or causing unintended consequences.



When I visit schools in District 39, repealing Kyleigh's Law is always the #1 topic that teens want to discuss.

Internship Opportunities

We have Spring and Summer internships available for college students with an interest in state government and political affairs. These are unpaid, part-time opportunities for students who reside in District 39 to learn more about the legislative process and take an active role in public service.

To apply, send a resume and cover letter to: INTERNSHIPS, Assemblyman Bob Schroeder, 123 Broadway, 2nd Flr., Woodcliff Lake, NJ 07677. Email submissions to AsmSchroeder@njleg.org.

School Presentations

I always welcome the opportunity to speak with students about the role that legislators serve in state government. Last year, I spoke to students from several elementary schools, middle schools and high schools across District 39. Educators who would like to schedule an in-school presentation for their students are encouraged to contact my legislative office at 201-391-3673 to set up an appointment.

Coming Up In Trenton



February 16: Voting Session

February 21: Budget Address

March 15: Voting Session

Tune in to Voting Sessions and Committee hearings live:

www.njleg.state.nj.us/media/live_audio.asp