



REFORM JEWISH VOICE
OF NEW YORK STATE

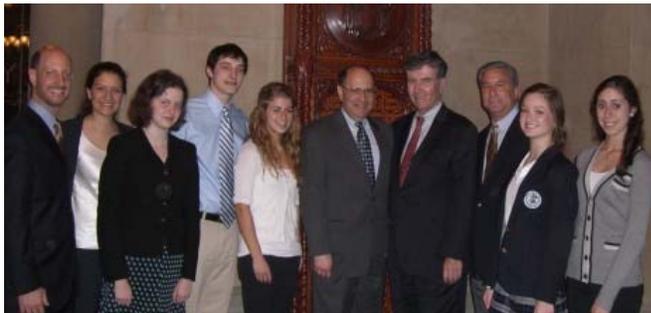
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[Interfaith Groups Advocate for Marriage Equality, Reproductive Health and Independent Redistricting](#)

Progressive religious advocates from Reform Jewish Voice of New York State and Interfaith Impact of New York State took to the State Capital on Monday, May 16th to advocate for three vital social justice issues. In more than fifty legislative meetings, participants highlighted their support of marriage equality, the Reproductive Health Act, and the establishment of an independent redistricting commission. [Read more here.](#)



Left: Senator Neil Breslin with confirmation students and leadership from Beth Emeth Synagogue in Albany.
Right: Secretary to the Governor, Steven Cohen, and his Assistant, Betsey Ball, with RJV Steering Committee members.

RJV Lobbies More than 50 Legislative Offices

Melissa Benson, President, Brooklyn Heights Synagogue, Shares Advocacy Day Highlights

On Monday, May 16th, RJV Steering Committee Member Linda Sosnowitz and I participated in Advocacy Day, traveling to Albany to meet with our State legislators. We also met with Steve Cohen, Secretary to the Governor (and BHS member), who discussed Governor Cuomo's legislative agenda and took our questions. Throughout the day we heard the same thing: calling, emailing, writing and visiting does make a difference. Or as State Senator Dan Squadron (also a BHS member) put it, "in Albany-unlike in Washington-the efforts of a small group of people can have an enormous impact."

Linda Barat, Temple Israel of New Rochelle, Reports to Kulanu LGBT Inclusion Committee

Kulanu Committee members Linda Barat, Murray Massover, Beverly Pollack and Cantor Eric Contzius (on his day off!) traveled to Albany on May 16, 2011 as part of Reform Jewish Voice of New York State's effort to lobby State Senator Suzie Oppenheimer and Assembly Member Amy Paulin for Marriage Equality, Reproductive Choice and the establishment of an Independent Redistricting Commission. In legislative visits, participants discussed their personal experiences as well as the Jewish mandates that led them to support these issues.

[RJV Endorses Moratorium on Hydraulic Fracturing](#)

After months of research, consultations and discussion, RJV has published a position paper in favor of a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing in New York's Marcellus Shale, a means of natural gas extraction employed in deep natural gas well drilling. Among RJV's reasons for supporting a moratorium are:

- Inadequate regulation and safety standards

- Exposure to radioactivity and the release of dangerous chemicals into the environment
 - Threats to our clean water supply
 - [Read more here](#)
-

Save the Date



*Make sure your congregation
is highlighting the importance
of advocacy in our
social justice work.*

*2011 issue theme:
Economic Justice*



www.rjvnys.org

First Evening with a State Senator

On May 25th, an enthusiastic group of constituents of State Senator Daniel Squadron gathered at Brooklyn Heights Synagogue to spend an evening with the senator. This is the first many of these programs that RJV plans to hold in other communities in New York State. Senator Squadron addressed all of the issues RJV highlighted with our legislators in Albany during our recent Advocacy Day: marriage equality, the Reproductive Choice Act, and the establishment of an independent redistricting commission. He also talked about hydraulic fracturing, gun microstamping and campaign finance, important issues for Senator Squadron and RJV. After eloquently answering questions from the audience, the consensus was clear: all who attended were invigorated by this opportunity for dialogue.

[Marriage Equality Campaign Updates](#)

[Faith Leader Press Conference in Albany](#)

On Tuesday, May 3, Rabbi Deborah S. Gordon of Congregation Berith Sholom in Troy, NY represented RJV at a press conference for faith leaders in support of marriage equality. Joining with 11 clergy and representatives from the newly assembled New Yorkers for Marriage Equality Coalition, Rabbi Gordon conveyed the words of RJV Co-chairs Honey Heller and Donald C. Cutler, "Too often we see opponents of marriage equality using faith as their shield. However we believe that faith demands of us that we treat all couples equally. Loving couples, regardless of gender or sexuality, sit in our pews and strengthen our communities. As Reform Jews, we are proud of this welcoming tradition and remain committed to the fight for equality in our state."

[RJV Signs Marriage Equality Pledge](#)

Follow the link above and join RJV and countless New Yorkers and organizations who have pledged their support for

securing the freedom to marry for same-sex couples.

[Visit the Marriage Equality Website for News Updates and Resources on the Struggle for Marriage Equality in New York State.](#)

[Are you Hosting a Social Justice Event in New York?](#)

If so, tell us about it! If you're planning to host an event related to the issues on which RJVNYS advocates, let us know a month in advance and we'll help you publicize it. Please send flyers and other information to Juliana at info@rjvnys.org.

[Call for submissions!](#)

Are individuals in your congregation engaged in an interesting advocacy-related project? Are they lobbying for immigrants' rights? Starting letter writing campaigns? Marching for reproductive choice? Whatever the issue, we want to hear about it and showcase this valuable work in our newsletter! Please email submissions to Juliana at info@rjvnys.org.

You are receiving this email because jschnur@rac.org is registered in our system for Reform Jewish Voice of New York State updates. To stop these, please [unsubscribe](#). Thank you