



RJV January 2009 Newsletter

RJV Advocacy Day in Albany- Monday, March 30, 2009

Reform Jewish Voice of New York State (RJVNYS) urges you to join us on Monday, March 30, 2009 for RJVNYS Advocacy Day in Albany. There we will meet with state legislators on issues critical to Reform Jews, including universal health care coverage, marriage equality for same sex couples and the Reproductive Health and Privacy Protection Act. Join concerned congregants from Reform synagogues around the state to inform legislators about the Reform Jewish perspective and values on these and other important public policy issues.

Program highlights include:

- A briefing on our legislative agenda and the political landscape
- Visits with NYS Senators and Assembly Members—Teams will be led by experienced advocates
- Tips and tools to make the most of your legislative meetings
- Training on building and maintaining strong working relationships with legislators and their staff
- Breakfast and lunch

RJV Special Legislative Briefing – Sunday, March 29, 2009

The Sunday afternoon program will feature a discussion of the RJVNYS legislative agenda, training on effective legislative advocacy and dinner.

To register or for additional information, go to www.rjvnys.org or contact Barbara Pollard, Director, at 212- 650-4272 or bpollard@urj.org.

Winter 2009 RJVNYS Advocacy Activities

During the winter of 2009, RJVNYS advocacy efforts will focus on budget-related issues such as protecting the most vulnerable citizens through increasing the basic welfare grant and increasing funding for food and housing programs, Rockefeller Drug Law Reform and the Bigger Better Bottle Bill.

Governor Paterson's proposed budget projects a \$15.4 billion gap between revenues and expenditures for state fiscal years 2008-09 and 2009-10. He is calling for significant funding cuts to most programs and services as well as tax and fee

increases. Join with RJV to present Reform Jewish values and perspectives on issues that affect all New Yorkers.

Join us in this advocacy effort. For additional information go to www.rjvnys.org or contact Barbara Pollard, Director, at 212-650-4272 or bpollard@urj.org.

RJV Reception with State Senator Liz Krueger

Reform Jewish Voice of New York State (RJV) held a reception on Thursday, December 4, 2008 and featured State Senator Liz Krueger. Fifty people came to the home of Honey Heller, RJV Co-Chair, for this stimulating conversation about RJV and the importance of educating and advocating for social justice issues.

State Senator Liz Krueger gave a fascinating talk on the state of affairs in the Governor's office and the legislative agenda. She enthusiastically reported that Democrats will take control of the state Senate for the first time since 1965 and have elected the first African-American senator to lead the chamber. She voiced her concerns about the impact of the proposed cuts in education, health care and social services. In recognizing the seriousness of the budget crisis, Krueger reviewed steps to address the deficit by reducing the state expenditures and by enhancing revenues through progressive tax policy.



Members of the RJV Steering Committee with State Senator Liz Krueger (center)



State Senator Liz Krueger speaking to RJV members

She emphasized that we must protect the most vulnerable New Yorkers and that basic safety net programs must receive adequate funding. Also, we should consider re-evaluating both income taxes and business taxes to pledge equity and fairness in the tax structure. Krueger said that we must aggressively pursue federal assistance that would bring more dollars that would support state programs.

Senator Krueger indicated that there are several ways the state could increase revenue including passage of the Bigger Better Bottle Bill and allowing the sale of

wine in supermarkets. She also voiced her support for affordable housing, marriage equality and the need to create more jobs and modernize the infrastructure to jumpstart the economy.

Senator Krueger voiced her hope that New York State could lead the country in a model of government for the 21st century.

WATCH YOUR EMAIL!

As we grow, RJV is working to bring Reform Jewish values to New York State's policy makers. At the same time we want to be sure that we're doing our job in keeping you well informed. You will receive a brief survey in the next two weeks that will help us plan for the future. It should take only a few moments to complete and we look forward to your comments.