



# Helen Rosenthal

Council Member, 6th District



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Dear Neighbors,

Spring is around the corner, and the weather is finally getting warmer. In the office we said goodbye to the incomparable Ahmed Tigani, formerly my Legislative Director and, before that, my Campaign Manager. Ahmed's moving on to work in the Land Use division of Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer's Office, and my team is joined by a new Legislative Director, Sarah Mallory.

## DISTRICT NEWS

### Riverside South Affordable Housing

The community made its position loud and clear last week, [objecting to the City's decision](#) to allow a change in use at Riverside South — moving 55 affordable housing units off-site. NY State Senator Adriano Espaillat, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, and I [asked the Administration to postpone their decision](#) to give everyone more time to explore other options to keep the affordable housing on-site. They've agreed to do so — and they will present this information at the [Community Board 7 March 18th Land Use meeting](#).

### Submit Your Questions for City Agencies

My town hall will be on **Monday, April 27**, and I want to hear your questions for city agencies. The most popular questions will be covered in the first half of the town hall, and the second half of the night will be an open mic Q&A. Over a dozen agencies have already RSVP'd, including the Department of Transportation, the Department of Education, the Department of Sanitation, and the MTA. See the full list of agencies that will attend and submit your questions [here](#).

### Forum on Co-op / Condo Conversions

Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal, and I are holding a "Know Your Rights" forum on co-op and condo conversions on **Thursday, April 2, 6pm-8pm** at B'nai Jeshurun (257 West 88th Street, between Broadway and West End Avenue). Learn about your rights and responsibilities as a co-op / condo owner or shareholder, your rights and responsibilities as a renter, the role of your Board and management company, and legal issues pertaining to co-ops and condos. [See the flyer and RSVP](#).

### **Voting for Participatory Budgeting**

Save the date: Voting Week for Participatory Budgeting is **April 13 - April 19**. My office will hold project expos all over the district, and you'll be able to vote there, in my district office, or at our pop-up voting locations. Stay tuned!

### **District 3 CEC Candidate Forum**

Public schools parents in school district 3: meet the candidates to join the 2015-2017 term of CEC3 at the CEC Candidate Forum on **Wednesday, March 25, 6:30pm-9pm** at Joan of Arc on 154 West 93rd Street (between Columbus and Amsterdam). [See the flyer](#).

### **Fines for E-Waste as of April 1**

A new electronic waste (e-waste) law went into effect on January 1, 2015 that prohibits discarding various electronic items in the trash, including computers, televisions, and monitors. (See a full list [here](#).) To help give New Yorkers time to adjust to the new law, the Department of Sanitation instituted a 3-month grace period with no fines. However, **starting April 1 disposing of certain electronics in the trash will result in a \$100 fine**. PC Richards, Staples, Best Buy, and other electronics stores offer free take-back programs; see a partial list [here](#).

### **Survey from Achieve NYC**

Every year the Department of Education (DOE) releases Achieve NYC, a guide to NYC public schools. Help the DOE improve the guide by completing a [short, confidential survey](#).

## **CITY HALL**

### **Opting Out of Standardized Tests: Hearing on Thursday**

This **Thursday, March 19 at 1pm** the Council Education Committee will hold a hearing on a few bills, including the bill that Council Member Daniel Dromm and I introduced to amend the DOE Parents' Bill of Rights ([Res. 577-2015](#)). Our bill calls on the DOE to include information about parents' right to opt out of high stakes testing and to distribute the Parents' Bill of Rights to all public school parents at the start of every school year. You can hear the story of one sixth-grader who opted out of standardized testing in a [story in the Columbia Spectator](#), and you can see the details of the hearing [here](#). (The hearing will also cover a bill against raising the cap on charter schools and a bill against the Governor's proposal to put struggling schools in a State receivership, which I'm talking about in the photo below).



### **Citizen Enforcement of Idling Vehicles**

In New York City it is illegal to idle your vehicle for more than 3 minutes on most streets and more than 1 minute in a school zone, but the law is rarely enforced. Many of you have expressed your frustration with idling vehicles to my office, and my staff has spent several dozen hours trying to get the City's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to enforce the law — without much success. Council Member Donovan Richards and I introduced a bill last week to allow for citizen enforcement of idling vehicles ([Int. 717-2015](#)). Our bill would require DEP to create and monitor an online portal where anyone could upload video of idling vehicles, and it would allow DEP to use that video as evidence to issue a summons and for the uploader to receive up to 50% of the fine collected by the City. You can learn more about the bill in press coverage from the [New York Times](#), [Reuters](#), [New York Post](#), [New York Daily News](#), [CBS 2 News \(Mar. 9\)](#), [CBS 2 News \(Mar. 10\)](#), [NBC News](#), [ABC News](#), [NY1](#), [New York Observer](#), [Gothamist](#), [EcoWatch](#), and the [West Side Rag](#)





### **Worker Cooperatives: Vote, Fair, & Mayoral Signing**

Worker cooperatives are a business model wherein every employee owns an equal share of the business and plays an equal role in the decision making. New York City has about 23 worker co-ops in various sectors — bakeries, child care, cleaning services, web design, and more — and these businesses provide better hours, higher wages, and more job security than other small businesses. On February 26 the Council passed my third bill: [Int. 423-2014](#) will require the City to report on the number of city contracts awarded to worker cooperatives and the number of worker cooperatives that received assistance from the NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS). The Council had a worker cooperative fair in early March (see photos, below), and the Mayor will sign the bill into law this Wednesday. You can learn more from a story in [Labor Press](#) and from my [press release](#).





## Extending Rent Stabilization

I was proud to co-prime sponsor a bill ([Int. 685-2015](#)) along with Council Members Jumaane Williams and Corey Johnson to extend rent stabilization in New York City. Most people don't know that rent regulation must be renewed every three years, and it is due for renewal in June 2015. Now that the City has passed the bill, it's up to Albany to continue recognize the ongoing housing crisis and extend rent regulation in the City.

Warmly,

Helen



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