

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER

KEITH POWERS



November 2018

Dear Neighbor,

As a community, we are still grappling with the meaning and impact of last month's violent attacks in our district. A fight broke out outside a political club after the leader of an extreme group, the Proud Boys, was invited into the community to speak and protestors demonstrated opposition. The incident commanded headlines, and led to serious questions of safety and justice. I strongly condemned violence in all forms after the attack and will continue to work with the NYPD to ensure we all live in a safe community. Our political institutions have a responsibility to ensure that we do not invite hate speech or incite violence in our neighborhood. I was deeply disappointed in the decision to invite a speaker with a long history of hate speech but know we are much better than his words and actions. New York City has no place for hate, and it never will.

Our community was not the only one impacted by hatred and discrimination in recent weeks. The Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, suffered from unimaginable violence last month, as a gunman took the lives of innocent worshippers. In light of these tragic events, New York did what New York does best: they came together. Across the City, communities stood in solidarity with Pittsburgh. In times like these, the bad often brings out our best.

There is still a will to focus on the good. I am pleased to share that last week, my bill to allow candidates to use campaign funds for childcare passed in the City Council, with 26 sponsors and support from groups like Planned Parenthood and the National Organization for Women (NOW). I am hopeful this legislation will drive civic participation and help more people, especially women, run for office.

Lastly, I look forward to seeing you at upcoming events in the neighborhood, and remind you that my office is a resource to help get things done and answer questions, whether it involves the L train shutdown, a housing issue, or a policy suggestion.

Please reach out to my office with any issues or assistance that you need.

See you in the neighborhood,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Keith".

Keith

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

L Train Shutdown Updates

Last week, the MTA announced the start date for the L train shutdown: April 27, 2019. Beginning on April 27, the L train will shut down for 15 months while construction takes place to repair the Canarsie Tunnel. When construction is done, the First Avenue station will receive a new entrance on Avenue A complete with wheelchair accessibility and increased power to the station to accommodate more trains per hour.

As residents on 14th Street in Stuyvesant Town can attest, the construction has caused numerous issues in the neighborhood. To address those issues, I hosted a walkthrough with NYC Transit President Andy Byford and elected officials along 14th Street to help make recommendations to improve the existing quality of life. These issues included air quality, construction hours, removal of hazardous materials, impact on small businesses, and maintaining building integrity.

I am happy to announce that in response to our concerns, the MTA has agreed to perform ongoing air quality monitoring during the construction. I had raised this issue alongside my fellow elected officials in recent months. As part of the agreement, the MTA has installed air quality monitors on 14th Street that will be made publicly available. This will allow residents to gather a better understanding of any impact to the air quality adjacent to the construction site.

Additionally, the MTA will be removing the construction barriers that limit access to the businesses on the south side of 14th Street. This will allow residents to have better access to businesses and make life easier for these establishments during construction.



With NYC Transit President Byford, Council Member Powers leads a walkthrough of 14th Street and surrounding areas.

In addition to these improvements, there has been progress in the following areas:

- New lighting was installed between First Avenue and Avenue A to address safety issues with the lack of light.
- Lighting switched from diesel power to electric power to address noise and environmental concerns.
- The MTA is evaluating the construction hours between First Avenue and Avenue A as the project progresses. My office has asked them to consider reducing the nighttime hours to provide better quality of life for the neighbors.
- The MTA also provided an update on the removal of hazardous materials: all materials will be contained inside of the tunnel and removed via rail (rather than being exposed on 14th Street).

Finally, I have expressed my concern with the loss of parking spots surrounding Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village during the construction phase. I have heard from my neighbors that some individuals received tickets on 20th Street due to changes in parking. Last week, I did a walkthrough of the neighborhood with the Department of Transportation to look at the possibility of restoring parking spaces, reconfiguring existing parking to add more space, and to re-evaluate signage. If you believe that you unfairly received a ticket, please e-mail my office at kpowers@council.nyc.gov.

What's New: Participatory Budgeting

I went all over the district from Carnegie Hill to Carnegie Hall, and from Stuyvesant Town to Midtown to collect more than 400 Participatory Budgeting ideas from constituents. The next phase of the process involves narrowing all of those ideas down into ballot proposals with dedicated volunteers called delegates. While there are over 400 ideas to sort through, around 12 will make the ballot that we will all vote on in the spring. Over two dozen residents of the district have volunteered to be our first Participatory Budgeting delegates who will help develop those ideas into ballot proposals. I will keep you informed of the process. Please email me at kpowers@council.nyc.gov if you would like to be involved.



Council Member Powers hosts constituents for the first delegate meeting of Participatory Budgeting season.

Streetlights in Tudor City

Earlier this year, residents of Tudor City made me aware of several streetlights that were not functioning in the area. The lights along the stairs on the south side of 42nd Street leading to Tudor Grove Playground and the lights within the playground itself had gone dim. Last month, my office coordinated efforts between the Parks Department, ConEdison, and the Department of Transportation to get the lights working brightly again. A few residents have noted that the stairs themselves can use some repair as well, of which we will continue to work with the city on getting them fixed, as well as focus on other important quality-of-life issues.



Council Member Powers celebrates the life and legacy of Daily News reporter Jimmy Breslin at a street renaming ceremony.



Together with Speaker Johnson and East Side elected officials, Council Member Powers denounces violence on the Upper East Side.



Council Member Powers tours Hunter College Schools Campus, sitting in on a lesson.

Childcare Bill Passed by the Council

On October 31, the City Council passed Intro 899-A, a bill I sponsored with Majority Leader Laurie Cumbo, which allows candidates to use campaign funds to cover certain childcare costs. This legislation follows a landmark, unanimous ruling from the Federal Election Commission (FEC) to allow Congressional candidate Liuba Grechen Shirley to use campaign funds for childcare expenses. With this bill, that ruling will now apply to all city elections, benefiting primary caregivers interested in running for office. In order to be eligible, candidates must show that the childcare expenses would not exist but for the campaign. The bill was supported by Planned Parenthood NYC, She Will Rise, 21 in '21, and NOW NYC--as well as Comptroller Scott Stringer. My hope is that this bill will eliminate some of the barriers that hold people, especially women, back from running for office, allowing for more equal gender representation across New York City.

Combating an Increase in Property Taxes

Together with Council Member Torres, I have introduced legislation to mitigate the impact of the Trump tax bill, which has limited the ability of taxpayers to deduct state and local taxes (SALT) from their federal taxable income. Specifically, these bills would create a credit for real property taxes, equal to 95% of the amount contributed. This would allow New Yorkers to contribute to the charitable gifts reserve fund, and then use this credit as a deduction from their federal taxable income. The federal tax bill capped that deductible amount to \$10,000, hurting states like New York that have higher property taxes. New York City government relies on local taxes to function, and New Yorkers have always been able to write off local taxes from their federal taxable income. The Trump tax bill would create an unfair and unprecedented tax burden for New York. These two bills would allow New Yorkers to continue deducting their property taxes from their federal taxable income, protecting us from the Trump Administration's new policy.

Criminal Justice: Eliminating Bail Fees

I introduced a bill with Council Member Rory Lancman to eliminate credit card fees on all bail payments. Currently when a family member or loved one goes to make a bail payment online, they are charged a 2.49% fee. And when they receive their money back at the end of the case, the 2.49% fee is not included. The situation is even worse if someone makes the payment at a jail facility, where the fee rises to 8%. The bill also allows bail payments to be made via direct deposit and electronic check. Fees on bail create unnecessary financial hardship on justice-involved individuals and their loved ones, simply because they may not have cash on-hand.

Closing the Landlord Loophole

I am a sponsor of new legislation, Intro. 1171, which would close the "Kushner Loophole" concerning false statements given by landlords to the Department of Buildings (DOB) for the purpose of pushing out rent-stabilized tenants. With 10,000 false applications in the past two years, the City must start cracking down on illegally falsified applications. Intro. 1171 would require DOB to cross-reference applications with tax records to validate the accuracy of housing permit applications. If there were any inconsistencies, the landlord's entire portfolio of buildings would be subject to an audit by the city. The bill also requires that DOB reports any false applications to the City Council, the State, and the District Attorneys and Attorney General for potential criminal prosecution. This important step to hold bad actors accountable.

Charter Revision Commission: Ballot Proposals

As a part of the “DemocracyNYC” initiative announced in January, the Mayor’s office created a Charter Revision Commission to amend the New York City Charter. This was an effort to focus on campaign finance reform, increase participation in elections, and strengthen civic engagement across the City. As a result of meetings and public input, the Mayoral Charter Revision Commission voted to put three questions on the ballot for November. The proposals include changes to our campaign finance system, a new civic engagement commission, and new Community Board standards. You can read more about the proposals that will be on the backside of your ballot on Tuesday, November 6, at flipyourballot.nyc. Make sure you slip your ballot on November 6, regardless of your position on the issues.

IN THE NEWS

Daily News, November 1

[New York City Council passes bill to allow candidates to use campaign donations to pay for childcare](#)

“We have I think a great responsibility in this city to make sure that anybody that wants to run for office has the opportunity to do so,” Councilman Keith Powers (D-Manhattan), who sponsored the bill, said.

Our Town, October 22

[The Breslinization of East 42nd Street](#)

“His long legacy as a journalist is that he told the stories of those who seldom have their stories told,” said City Council Member Keith Powers, who sponsored legislation this summer at the request of the Breslin family co-naming the street, his first such bill since taking office in January.

Manhattan Express, October 18

[Bill Aiding Child Caregiver Election Hopefuls Nears Vote](#)

“I think one of the points of real consideration here is the fact that we’re going to have so many new people wanting to run for office,” Powers said. “We’re trying to not make that [childcare costs] a factor in terms of your decision.”

NBC, October 14

[New York police arrest first two suspects in Proud Boys street brawl](#)

New York City Councilman Keith Powers, who represents the district where the fighting occurred, said the arrest of Young was a “positive step in the aftermath of the unacceptable violence.”

SAVE THE DATES

Events Hosted by Council Member Powers | RSVP at kpowers@council.nyc.gov

[Should We Bail on Bail?: A Forum with Council Member Keith Powers, Assembly Member Dan Quart, and Judge Jonathan Lippman](#)

As Chair of the Criminal Justice Committee, I will lead a discussion on the current status of bail and room for reform in New York, both the city and state. The event will be informative, with a general overview of bail law in New York followed by a dynamic panel discussion with my colleagues in the criminal justice sector.

Thursday, November 8, 2018
PS198M The Straus School, 1700 3rd Avenue
6:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.

Council Member Keith Powers and the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities: Making Your Business Accessible

Businesses in District 4 are invited to this outreach event put on by my office and the Mayor's Office of People with Disabilities to learn about how to become fully accessible in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and avoid potential violations. After a brief presentation, businesses will have the opportunity to ask one-on-one questions of the Mayor's Office in an Accessibility Clinic, and are encouraged to bring photos, drawings, and information about their businesses with specific questions.

Monday, November 19, 2018
Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis High School Auditorium
120 W 46th Street
4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.

Reminder: Sound the Alarm, Save A Life. Every day, seven people die in home fires, most in homes that lack working smoke alarms. The American Red Cross and Council Member Powers want to remind you there are resources available to combat these statistics. [Learn more here](#) and [make an appointment for an alarm today](#).

Community Events

Election Day

Tuesday, November 6, 2018, 6:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M., Across New York City
Find your poll site: <https://nyc.pollsitelocator.com/search>

Flu Vaccines for Adults at Mount Sinai, Co-Sponsored with State Senator Liz Krueger

Thursday, November 8, 2018 10:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M., Lenox Hill Neighborhood House Senior Center at St. Peter's Church, 619 Lexington Avenue
RSVP: gresham@nysenate.gov | 212-490-9535

Community Board 5 Full Meeting

Thursday November 8, 2018, 6:00 P.M.
30 West 16th Street, Second Floor Library

Community Board 8 Full Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 14, 2018, 6:30 P.M.
310 East 67th Street (New York Blood Center Auditorium)

Community Board 6 Full Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 14, 2018, 7:00 P.M.
433 1st Avenue (NYU College of Dentistry), Room 210

NYC Health + Hospitals

Health Insurance 101 Workshop

Thursday, November 15, 2018, 3:00 PM - 6:30 PM, NYC

Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan, 6th Floor Auditorium, 1901 1st Avenue

Register by November 8 at: <https://metropolitanhealth101.eventbrite.com> or call 212-788-3450

Create Your Own Art Inspired by Faith Ringgold at the Asser Levy Playground

Friday, November 16, 2018, 6:00 P.M. - 7:30 P.M., 392 Asser Levy Place
RSVP: 212-360-1430

Drag Queen Story Hour at the New York Society Library
Saturday, November 17, 2018, 3:00 P.M. 53 East 79th Street, Members Room
Open to public, registration required, \$10 per child 212-288-6900 x234

Muslim Volunteers for New York Thanksgiving Food Drive
November 1-10, 2018 | [Donate online](#)

MAPP: Thrive and Dine, Power Dinner for Small Business Builders
Monthly, [Details here](#)

New York Public Library Money and Finance Programs: nypl.org/moneymatters
Various dates and time, Midtown Manhattan and across New York City

Military Mondays Free Legal Clinic, First Monday of Each Month (except holidays)
1:00 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. Manhattan VA Hospital, 1st Floor Atrium | 423 E 23rd Street