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THIS WEEK IN NEW YORK

COVERING NEW YORK & CITY GOVERNMENT

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“No Man can be a good citizen unless he has a wage more than sufficient to cover the bare cost of living, and hour of labor short enough so that after his day’s work is done he will have time and energy to bear his share in the management of the community, to help in carrying the general load” Governor Theodore Roosevelt.

In The News-New York State



NYS 2026 Legislative Session Speeding to a Close

With the June 23rd New York State primaries looming, the State Legislature sped this week to close the 2026 session.

The Senate adjourned in the early hours Friday morning and the Assembly hopes to close down its operations early this evening. At time of publication the Legislature had given two-house approval to 672 bills. Previous sessions’ work totaled 856 (2025), 805 (2024), and 898 (2023) approved bills.

2026 was hampered by protracted budget negotiations which bled into May. The final spending plan came in on May 27th, leaving the legislature one week to finish the State’s business. And work they did. Three hundred ninety-eight bills received two-house passage during that week (at time of publication), eclipsing the January 8 through May 30 total of 274.

Included among these measures were bills to:

- ❖ Propose a Constitutional amendment to allow mid-decade redistricting.
- ❖ Place a one-year moratorium on data center development.
- ❖ Provide additional protection to judges and their family members under the Judicial Security Act.
- ❖ Require law enforcement agencies to ensure their radio communications, with the exception of sensitive information, may be monitored in real time by professional journalists, newscasters, and individuals employed by emergency services organizations.
- ❖ Propose a Constitutional amendment to require certain elections be held in even-numbered years at the general election (outside the City of New York).

After the Assembly gavels out, the legislature will adjourn at the call of the respective leaders.



Bills Passed by Both Houses



A79 – Sponsored by AM Pheffer Amato/Senator Jackson -- Requires body armor worn by New York city emergency services personnel to be replaced every five years.

A1202A – Sponsored by AM Simon/Senator Ramos -- Permits public sector workers and certain public sector workers in contract with the state to use any accrued sick time, vacation time, personal time, or other compensation time during a waiting period for their workers' compensation.

A1428 – Sponsored by AM Forrest/Senator Fernandez -- Requires insurers to cover the substitution of a brand name prescription drug when the federal food and drug administration has declared that there is a supply issue with a generic drug.

A3733A – Sponsored by AM Bronson/Senator Fahy -- Designates records and information relating to a patient who has been deceased for a period of fifty years or longer as historic records no longer subject to privacy protections

A5894A – Sponsored by AM Berger/Senator C Ryan -- Expands the list of authorized providers of services under the workers' compensation program to include Mental Health Practitioners with diagnostic authority.

A6465 – Sponsored by AM Hunter/Senator Bailey -- Prohibits insurers from reducing disability benefits due to the actual or anticipated receipt of social security disability benefits unless certain conditions are met.

A6561B – Sponsored by AM Weprin/Senator Bailey -- Includes image-guided biopsies under certain insurance coverage for breast cancer screening.

A6950 – Sponsored by AM Cruz/Senator Ramos -- Enacts "the construction reporting pay act."

A8091B – Sponsored by AM Peoples-Stokes/Senator Hinchey -- Establishes a procurement model that encourages buying power centered on the values of local economies, environmental sustainability, racial equity, valued workforce, farmers first, animal welfare, and nutrition and provides that purchase contracts to purchase food can be awarded to a qualified bidder when such bid is not more than 10% higher than the lowest responsible bidder.

A8810A – Sponsored by AM Dinowitz/Senator Rivera -- Extends the Special Accidental Death Benefits currently payable to children until age 18 or age 23, to all children under age 26 at the time of the member's death until the youngest child reaches age 26.

A10497 – Sponsored by AM Fall/Senator Scarcella-Spanton -- Updates the statutory base pilotage tariff schedule used to calculate pilotage fees for vessels navigating through the Port of New York and New Jersey.

A10510 – Sponsored by AM Rozic/Senator Ramos -- Prohibits gas and electric corporations from recovering costs related to labor-related legal activity or workers' compensation loss adjustment expenses from ratepayers.

A11007 – Sponsored by AM Williams/Senator Stavisky -- Extends tuition waivers for police officer students of the city university of New York through July 1, 2028.

A11188 – Sponsored by AM Lavine/Senator Martinez -- Relates to pilotage fees on vessels transiting the New York state waters of Long Island Sound or Block Island Sound east of Execution Rocks or Sands Point

A11388 – Sponsored by Rules (Romero) /Senator Sepulveda -- Provides additional protection to judges and their family members under the Judicial Security Act.

A11389 – Sponsored by Rules (Lavine)/Senator Sepulveda -- Creates the statutory authority for the filing and service of papers by electronic means at the Court of Appeals.

A11454 – Sponsored by Rules (Burke)/Senator Bottcher -- Extends the effectiveness of the coordinated construction act for lower Manhattan relating to joint bidding on contracts for public work projects.

A11455 – Sponsored by Rules (Burke)/Senator Bottcher -- Extends the effectiveness of joint bidding on contracts for public work projects.

S372A - Sponsored by Senator Gianaris/AM Bronson -- Establishes the "no severance ultimatums act," prohibiting severance ultimatums including requirements that employers provide notification of the right for an employee or former employee to consult an attorney regarding the agreement; provide at least 21 days for an employee to review agreement; allow an employee to revoke an agreement within 7 days of execution of the contract; and allow an agreement to be signed in less than 21 days so long as it is knowingly and voluntarily done.

S1280B – Sponsored by Senator Krueger/AM Solages -- Requires labeling and signage regarding the health impacts of gas stoves.

S4574B – Sponsored by Senator May/AM Kelles -- Enacts the "PFAS discharge disclosure act," creating a monitoring protocol for PFAS industrial dischargers.

S4667A – Sponsored by Senator Jackson/AM Pheffer Amato -- Removes a statutory reduction totaling 50t of the primary social security benefit imposed on the early service, normal service, and vested retirement benefits for Tier 3 sanitation members of the New York City Employees Retirement System (NYCERS).

S4706A – Sponsored by Senator Jackson/AM Pheffer Amato -- Removes a statutory reduction totaling 50% of the primary social security benefit imposed on the early service, normal service, and vested retirement benefits for Tier 3 corrections members of the New York City Employees Retirement System (NYCERS).

S5053B – Sponsored by Senator Scarcella-Spanton/AM Fall -- Increases the mandatory retirement age for New York police department members from 63 to 65.

S8122B – Sponsored by Senator Jackson/AM Pheffer Amato -- Permits New York city correction and sanitation members to borrow from accumulated contributions.

S8968A – Sponsored by Senator Scarcella-Spanton/AM Lavine -- Establishes, in consultation with the Department of Health and the Department of Veterans' Services, the veteran suicide mortality board.

S9276 – Sponsored by Senator Sepulveda/AM Tapia -- Ensures state-paid judges and justices receive death benefits even if they were not retired by their time of death.

S9408A – Sponsored by Senator Gounardes/AM Kassay -- Places a temporary ban on the commercial sale of chatbot toys, which are defined as childrens toys that have an AI companion integrated with or embedded into the toy.

S10590 – Sponsored by Senator Jackson/Rules (Pheffer Amato) -- Allows any Tier 6 member who is a uniformed court officer or peace officer employed by the Unified Court System to retire without early age reduction upon attaining 30 years of creditable service and age 55. It will also reduce the normal retirement age from 63 to 62, and lessen the reductions in benefits for those who retire prior to normal retirement age.

S10605 – Sponsored by Senator Jackson/Rules(Fall) -- Allows a member of a retirement system who participated in World Trade Center rescue, recovery or cleanup operations, or their eligible beneficiary in the case of the member's death, to file a statement indicating the underlying dates and locations of employment no later than September 11, 2030.

S10637A – Sponsored by Senator Stewart-Cousins/Rules (Heastie) -- Updates provisions relating to the independent redistricting commission.



State Legislature Approves First Passage of Constitutional Amendment Allowing Mid-Decade Redistricting

The Democrat-led New York state legislature passed a constitutional amendment Wednesday that would allow for mid-decade redistricting in 2028 and beyond.

The Amendment allows the Legislature to draw the redistricting maps if the State's Independent Redistricting Commission cannot agree and removes language in the state Constitution that restricts drawing maps to benefit parties or incumbents. Both houses passed the bill on partisan lines: 38-22 in the Senate, and the Assembly 91-47.

The amendment would have to pass again in the state Legislature next year and be approved by voters in 2027 to allow Democrats to redraw districts in 2028.

"Is partisan gerrymandering healthy for democracy?" Republican state Senator Mark Walczyk asked Democratic Deputy Senate Majority Leader Mike Gianaris on the Senate floor, according to published reports.

"In an ideal world, no," Senator Gianaris replied.

"The world has changed since then, and not in a good way," Senator Gianaris explained, in published reports. "We do not operate in a vacuum in New York State. We are one of 50. We are electing members of Congress who don't just sit in New York State; they go to Washington. This process is one that undoubtedly has national implications."

Senator Gianaris added, "If you respect the voters, give them a choice."



Comptroller DiNapoli: DOCCS Transitional Services Programs Need Improvement

Audit Finds More Can Be Done to Promote Community Based Reentry Programs, Monitor Progress, and Better Target Need

The state's Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) needs to strengthen its program for housing recently released individuals to increase the likelihood that they reenter society successfully, [according to an audit](#) released by New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli.

DOCCS' Community Based Residential Programs (CBRPs) help people released from prison access food, shelter and employment counseling, as well as substance abuse treatment, mental health services and other support through community providers. If a person does not have a permanent residence, housing options are provided, including CBRP residential programs. The services are generally limited to 120 days, but can be extended.

According to DOCCS, of the 9,883 men and women released from prison in 2024, 4,443 (45%) were undomiciled – lacking a fixed, permanent residence. About half of these (1,954) were temporarily placed in half-way houses, hotels, motels or transitional housing. The remaining 2,489 (56%) were housed in homeless shelters.

In 2024, the nine counties with CBRP sites had the following numbers of unhoused individuals released from prison: Albany (127), Broome (116), Dutchess (58), Erie (199), Nassau (171), Niagara (62), Oneida (85), Schenectady (88), and Suffolk (224). The audit highlighted that other counties have more, like Monroe (238), Onondaga (171), and Westchester (120), but no CBRP locations, leaving parolees with limited options.

In New York City, there were 1,538 released prisoners with no housing. There are no CBRPs in the city, but there is the Edgecombe Residential Transitional Housing pilot that has 76 beds for men and 32 for women to combat the prison-to-shelter pipeline.

The audit made six recommendations to DOCCS, including that it analyze where CBRPs are needed based on, among other factors, the numbers of individuals released from prison without a permanent home and work with potential providers in these areas toward providing more of them with the option of enrolling. It also suggested DOCCS track enrollment, progress and discharges from the program to measure success.

DOCCS agreed with the audit findings and recommendations and said it was taking steps to implement them.

In The News-New York City



New York Knicks Postseason Has Generated \$202 Million in Economic Activity, with Potential to More Than Double During NBA Finals

The New York Knicks' 2026 National Basketball Association (NBA) postseason run has generated an estimated \$202 million in economic activity from home games played so far, according to analysis by New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC)

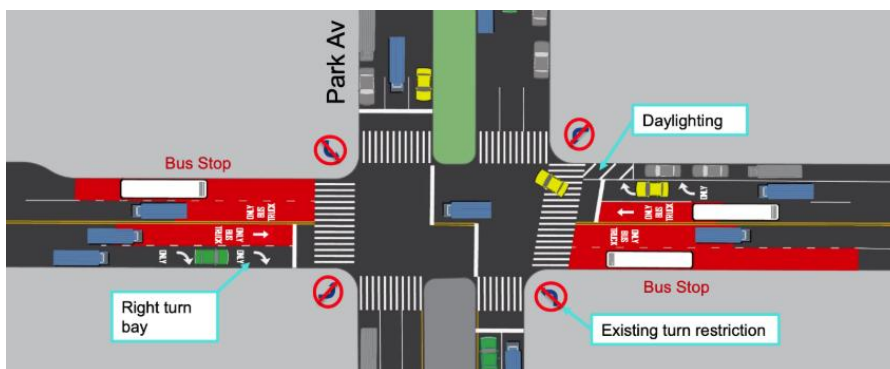
NYCEDC estimates the postseason has the potential to generate a total of \$465 million in economic activity if all possible home games in the Finals are played. This projection exceeds the estimated economic impact of the Knicks' 2025 postseason run, when the team advanced only through the Eastern Conference finals.

With the NBA Finals returning to Madison Square Garden on Monday, June 8, each additional Knicks home game is expected to generate an estimated \$90 million in economic activity for the city, supporting local businesses and creating jobs and economic opportunity across the five boroughs. The Knicks could generate up to an additional \$263 million in economic activity during the NBA Finals.

NYCEDC's analysis, compiled by its Economic Research & Policy (ERP) team, accounts for direct impacts from visitor spending, including tickets, concessions, merchandise, transportation and lodging for overnight visitors. The analysis also accounts for indirect and induced impacts from additional spending by arena operators and employees. The economic impact estimate of each game is based on average prices currently available for the NBA Finals.



Mayor Mamdani Advances 34th Street Busway



Mayor Zohran Mamdani and Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) Commissioner Mike Flynn this week announced the City will restart work on a busway on Manhattan's 34th Street, "delivering faster, more reliable" service for more than 28,000 daily bus riders.

The busway is aimed at improving street safety, support freight movement, and improve response times for emergency services.

“Too many New Yorkers spend too much time waiting on buses stuck in traffic. The 34th Street busway will change that, turning one of our most congested bus corridors into one that actually moves,” said Mayor Mamdani. “This is how we build a transit system that meets the scale of our city: fast, reliable and built for the people who depend on it every day.”

According to the plan, the 34th Street busway will run in both directions between Ninth Avenue and Third Avenue. In addition to speeding up bus service, the project will deliver significant safety benefits. 34th Street is a Vision Zero Priority Corridor, reflecting a high number of traffic deaths and serious injuries. Between 2020 and 2024, there were 324 traffic injuries along the corridor. Once implemented, the 34th Street busway will:

- ❖ Operate daily from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.
- ❖ Allow through traffic for buses, trucks and emergency vehicles.
- ❖ Maintain local access for cars, with drivers required to make the next available turn to exit the corridor.

NYC DOT expects to begin public outreach this month, install street furniture later in the summer and complete construction by the end of the fall.

In 2025, the project was halted because the Trump administration threatened to withhold federal funding for it, citing concerns about its impact to freight traffic and vehicle access. A spokesman for Mamdani said the city has "been in active communication with the federal government regarding their concerns," according to published reports.



New Report: Citywide Storefront Vacancies Decline, but Some Neighborhoods Still Face 20% Empty Retail Spaces

Comptroller Review Shows Uneven Rebound in Storefront Vacancy Rates Since Pandemic; Identifies Persistent Vacancy Hotspots in Lower Manhattan, Northern Brooklyn, and Western Queens

The Office of New York City Comptroller this week released *Who’s Minding the Storefront? An Analysis of Storefront Vacancies*, a comprehensive assessment of storefront vacancies across the five boroughs. While the citywide vacancy rate is improving, the study found recovery since the COVID-19 pandemic has been uneven, with as much as 20% of storefronts in some neighborhoods sitting empty.

According to the Comptroller, storefronts create local jobs, economic activity, and increased foot traffic. Some 15,700 spaces across the city are currently unoccupied, amounting to a vacancy rate of 11%, or roughly a half-point above the pre-pandemic level. The report highlights the following key concerns:

- ❖ **Uneven Post-Pandemic Recovery.** While the vacancy rate sits near its level more than six years ago, the issue today is a hyperlocal one. Parts of Lower Manhattan/Battery Park City, Northern Brooklyn, and Western Queens continue to see rates near or above 20%.

- ❖ **Vacancy is Concentrated.** The report found vacancies are clustered — a storefront located within one block of a vacant property is 30% more likely to be unoccupied itself than the typical storefront citywide.
- ❖ **New York City is an Outlier Among Peer-Cities.** Vacancy rates in some New York City neighborhoods are notably higher than what is seen in peer cities across the country.
- ❖ **Long-Term Vacancy Remains an Issue.** When storefronts close, they often remain empty for months or years. A concerning 80-90% of vacant storefronts in many neighborhoods at the start of 2026 had sat unoccupied for at least nine months. Some corridors have battled multi-year vacancies.
- ❖ **Chains are not Overtaking Small Business Storefronts.** While the emergence of larger, chain-style businesses seems to have displaced many small businesses, the report found a resilience within the “mom-and-pop” sector. The report found 84% of the 96,500 storefronts occupied by a small business in early 2020 were either still operating or replaced by another small business.

Last week, Comptroller Levine announced a new partnership with Hebrew Free Loan Society to deliver a total \$8 million in interest-free loans to small businesses. Eligible low- and middle-income entrepreneurs will be able to access loans of up to \$60,000 at zero-interest, offering a vital alternative to high-interest debt and predatory lending that too often burden small business owners seeking to expand, hire, or stabilize operations. For more information about interest-free loans for NYC small businesses and how to apply, visit [HFLS.org/small-business](https://hfls.org/small-business).

The full report is available here: <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/whos-minding-the-storefronts>.

Briefs

Governor Hochul Announces Confirmation of Three Cabinet Members

The State Senate confirmed three members of Governor Kathy Hochul’s cabinet this week, approving the heads of the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, Office of Cannabis Management and Office of Parks, Recreation.

Terry O’Leary, Commissioner, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services

Commissioner O’Leary previously served as Executive Deputy Commissioner of DHSES for a decade. Previously, he served as the Deputy Secretary for Public Safety for the New York State Executive Chamber. Prior to his time with New York State, Commissioner O’Leary served as an Assistant District Attorney in the New York County District Attorney’s Office between 2001 and 2011, where he was assigned to the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor.

John Kagia, Executive Director, Office of Cannabis Management

Prior to his role as Executive Director, Mr. Kagia served as the Director of Policy at OCM where he led the team responsible for policy development and implementation for the medical, adult use and cannabinoid hemp programs, and managed the development of research systems in New York.

Kathy Moser, Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Prior to her confirmation, Commissioner Moser served in the role in an acting capacity since being appointed by Governor Hochul in October 2025. Before that, she had been Chief Conservation and Policy Officer at the Open Space Institute (OSI), an East Coast land trust based in New York. Commissioner Moser directed OSI’s Parks, Stewardship and Government Relations programs. Before taking on that role in June 2020, she served as OSI’s Senior Vice President of Parks and Policy. Prior to OSI, she was appointed Deputy Commissioner for Natural Resources at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) in December 2011.

Mayor Mamdani’s Charter Revision Commission to Meet

Mayor Zohran Mamdani’s Charter Revision Commission--the Commission on Government Efficiency--will convene its first three public hearings next week.

Specifics of the meetings include:

Manhattan Hearing 1: Streamlining Government for Infrastructure Projects and Public Realm

Tuesday, June 9, at 5:00pm
New York Law School 2nd Floor Lecture Hall
185 W Broadway, New York, NY 10013

Bronx Hearing 1: Streamlining Government for Small Business and Community Organizations

Wednesday, June 10, at 5:00pm
Fordham University McShane Campus Center
441 E Fordham Rd, Bronx, NY 10458

Brooklyn Hearing 1: Modernizing Government and Streamlining Government Technology

Thursday, June 11, at 5:00pm
Brooklyn Law School, 7th Floor Lecture Hall
250 Joralemon St, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Coming Up

New York State

*No meetings scheduled on the State level at the time of this publication**

New York City

Monday, June 8th

Committee on Higher Education, Council Chambers – City Hall, 10 a.m.

Committee on Finance, Council Chambers – City Hall, 10 a.m.

Committee on Education, Council Chambers – City Hall, 12 p.m.

Committee on Small Business, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 1, 1 p.m.

Tuesday, June 9th

Committee on Finance, Council Chambers – City Hall, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, June 10th

Committee on Finance, Council Chambers – City Hall, 9:30 a.m.

Committee on Public Safety, 250 Broadway – 8th Floor – Hearing Room 3, 10 a.m.

Thursday, June 11th

Committee on Finance, Council Chambers – City Hall, 11 a.m.

City Council Stated Meeting, Council Chambers – City Hall, 1:30 p.m.

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