

Editorial

Tax Cuts Are Good Start To A Brighter Day In NYC

Of all the ambitions outlined for New York City by Mayor Michael Bloomberg in the State of the City Address he delivered at the New York City College of Technology in Brooklyn last Wednesday, the two that seem most significant to us are the \$1 billion in tax cuts to be realized through tax relief for homeowners and small businesses, and elimination of the sales tax on clothing and shoes. Both measures will benefit both New Yorkers and visitors alike, besides bearing testimony to the mayor's foresight and perspicacity.

Lowering the property tax rate by five percent will result in \$750 million in savings to the property owners that make up a sizable portion of the population of New York City. Bloomberg calls for implementing this measure while retaining the \$400 property tax rebate already in effect.

Property owners also make up a sizeable portion of another segment of its population that the city can ill afford to lose—the middle class. Without a tax break for middle-class property owners, the city will trend more and more toward a population of very rich and very poor. No civic entity can function without a thriving middle class—schoolteachers, police and firefighters, small business owners and their employees, to name just a few who fit in the category. Not only does a viable middle class perform jobs without which the city could not function, its members also make a major contri-

bution to a city's economy. The goods and staples they buy, the utility bills they pay, the fees they pay for licenses and permits all help to keep money in circulation. Their use of the infrastructure makes maintaining that infrastructure necessary and since the middle class supplies many of the workers employed in such endeavors, more money keeps circulating. As we all know, active circulation is vital for good health—fiscal as well as physical. There is no end to the ways the city and the people who live here can benefit from Bloomberg's proposed tax break.

The mayor's proposal to eliminate the city sales tax on all clothing, not just those items costing \$110 and under, is another idea whose time has certainly come. Like the property tax break, eliminating the city sales tax on all clothing items, regardless of price, will be an enormous benefit to every city resident. As any parent will attest, trying to keep growing children in clothes and shoes is an uphill battle. As for adults, even those who buy clothes more for comfort and convenience than to keep abreast of fashion trends will welcome having the tax on clothing items reduced by more than half or eliminated altogether.

Eliminating the city sales tax on clothing items will benefit more people than just those who live here. Besides clothing buyers by the hundreds who come to the city for shows of major designers' spring and fall

lines, many people around the country periodically visit the city to replenish their wardrobes because they know our stores carry the latest, trendiest and best made merchandise. While the state tax on clothing over \$110 will still be in effect, eliminating the city tax will reduce the total tax on clothing purchases to less than 5 percent. Bargain hunters will flock to New York City.

While they're here, the people who are doing their clothing buying in New York City either for themselves or because it's their job, will do more than shop. They visit our entertainment venues, dine in our restaurants and otherwise put money into cash registers and civic coffers. If ever we heard of a win-win situation, this is it.

The past five years of innovation, accountability and fiscal responsibility have put the city in a position of strength and led to a unique and special reward: an ambitious agenda that will prepare New York for a stronger, brighter, happier future. Lowering property taxes and eliminating clothing sales taxes will go far to bring about that future. In the mayor's own words: "Now is the time to continue to advance policies and goals that will continue our city on its upward trajectory." Saving property owners \$750 million in property taxes and instituting across-the-board benefits that will result from eliminating the city sales tax on clothing and shoes is an outstanding way to start.



SLA Welcomes Input

To The Editor:

A January 10, 2007, [Gazette] article titled "Community Board 4 Rejects Liquor License Applications" [by Richard Gentilviso] on the 500-Foot Rule reported, "The law limits new liquor licenses where three or more licensed places already exist within 500 feet of each other. But the SLA rarely, if ever, enforces it."

In 2006, in addition to the four-month-moratorium on new 500-foot licenses in Manhattan, the members of the SLA acted on 19 500-foot applications in New York City. Of the 19, the SLA denied nine and approved 10. Of the 10 approved, eight received community board support.

I want to let your readers know that notices for all 500-foot hearings are posted on our Web site

(www.abc.state.ny.us), including the address of the proposed premises, the applicant's attorney and the community board for the proposed premise. I encourage all concerned citizens to testify at the hearings or to provide the SLA with written statements. The SLA places substantial weight on input from community boards, local law enforcement and members of the community during our licensing process.

Sincerely,
Daniel B. Boyle
Chairman
New York State Liquor Authority

Hate Crime Solved

To The Editor:

On June 10, 2006, an individual stated he was walking down the street when eight (8) unknown white males hit him over the head with a baseball bat. This occurred at approximately 0110 (1:10 a.m.) hours at the intersection of Broadway and 34th Street. The victim sustained a deep laceration to his head and forehead. The perpetrators fled the location and a canvass of the surrounding area was conducted with negative results. Upon further investigation, this was believed to be an anti-gay incident and the Hate Crime Task Force took control of the case (carried under Complaint #2006-114-5992).

As a result of the investigation, on January 10, 2007 at approximately 2145 hours (9:45 p.m.), Detective Caban of the Hate Crime Task Force apprehended three individuals for this incident. Their pedigree information is as follows:

•Daniel Shamenti, m/u, 22 years of age, of 175 Lincoln Ave., Albany NY—

ARREST#Q07602121.

•Hector Dika, m/u, 21 years of age, of 34-07 36th Ave., Astoria, (resident of the 114th Pct.)—ARREST#Q07602076.

•Armando Uka, m/u, 20 years of age, of 70-06 Woodside Ave., Queens Village (resident of the 105th Pct.)—ARREST#Q07602066.

The perpetrators did yell anti-gay and anti-black epithets at the victim, along with several others, which resulted in a fight, at which time they proceeded to punch, kick and strike the victim with a baseball bat. The other victims who were menaced were able to flee the scene.

This appalling incident was a hate crime targeting gay men and was solved with tenacity. I would like to take this time to commend the dedicated and thorough work of the Hate Crime Task Force. I maintained a rapport with the investigators throughout and can assure you much time and effort was expended into bringing this matter to a successful conclusion.

Respectfully,
Brian McCarthy
Inspector
114th Police Precinct
Commanding Officer

Hails Humble Hero

To The Editor:

I would like at this time to commend a New York hero named Wesley Autrey, who saved Cameron Hillopeter. Here is a young man who suffered a seizure and fell on the tracks and where Wesley, a military veteran, jumped in to save him. We all have seen on television and on the news the bravery of this man and to see all the

The Queens
Gazette

PUBLISHED BY THE
SERVICE
ADVERTISING
GROUP INC.



Publisher/Editor Tony Barsamian
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Display Advertising Copy Deadline
Friday 5 p.m.

Camera Ready Deadline Monday 4 p.m.
Editorial Copy Deadline Friday 12 noon

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The Queens Gazette ISSN: 1547-3538 is published weekly on Wednesday for \$20 per year by Queens Gazette Newsprinting Service Advertising Group Inc. 42-16 34th Avenue. Long Island City, N.Y. 11101. Periodical postage paid at Long Island City. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Queens Gazette 42-16 34th Avenue Long Island City N.Y. 11101. *The Gazette is not responsible for the opinions expressed in the letters or op-eds contained on these pages.*