

## Gianaris: 'Let State Secure Gas Pipelines Around Airports'

Citing the failed plot to blow up gas pipelines at Kennedy Airport, Assemblymember Michael Gianaris and state Senator Dean Skelos of Long Island have introduced legislation that would give the state's Homeland Security office power to bolster security at pipelines feeding jet fuel to airports.

Presently, Gianaris (D-Astoria), and Skelos (R-Rockville Centre) pointed out that gas pipelines in and around airports are privately owned with security determined solely by their owners.

Their bipartisan legislation would give state Homeland Security a fundamental role in overseeing these security efforts. Homeland Security would also conduct annual reviews and the state could mandate increased security at these locations.

This approach, they said, is already being used successfully for power plants and chemical storage facilities throughout the state under a law authored by Gianaris.

Noting that his and Skelos' bill, which was developed in conjunction with state Deputy Secretary for Public Safety Michael Balboni, is vitally needed, Gianaris stated: "We were fortunate to dodge a bullet at JFK, but we should not wait for disaster to strike before taking action."

"Security for this sensitive infrastructure is a matter of public concern, and the public deserves a role in ensuring that security is adequate."



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Skelos, noting that tremendous police work averted a disaster at JFK, stated: "That said, the state has a responsibility to ensure the safety of its residents who live near the pipeline."

"This legislation will enable the state Office of Homeland Security to conduct the necessary security reviews and ensure the safety of these residents and help prevent future acts of terrorism."—**John Toscano**

## 4 New Members Join SB 30

BY RICHARD GENTILVISO

Community Education Council District 30 members were announced at the June 12 meeting held at I.S. 230 in Jackson Heights. Four new members will join seven returning members when the council begins its new term on July 1.

Newly elected CEC 30 members Rebecca Alexander, Vanessa R. Bynes, Michael McCoy and Shireen Soliman will join re-elected CEC 30 members Ernest Brooks, Dominic Coticchio, Lavinia Galatis, Jeffrey R. Guyton and Catherine Yankopoulos. Also returning to CEC 30 as reappointments by Borough President Helen Marshall are Jeannie Tsavaris-Basini and Jose Batista.

Cornelia Caraballo, Shing Wong and Syed Sohail will leave CEC 30 at the end of the month.

As mandated by New York state election law, nine parent members with children attending schools in the district were selected to the community education councils for each of the 32 community school districts in the city by a vote of the president, secretary, and treasurer of the Parents Association (PA) and/or Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) of every elementary and intermediate school in the city on May 7 and 8.

Two more members who live, or own or operate a business in the district are appointed by each of the five borough presidents, giving each community education council a total of 11 voting members. A non-voting high school senior who lives in the community school district and is an elected student leader is also appointed to the council by the community superintendent.

In addition, there is also one citywide council on special education and one citywide council on high schools.

"I want to thank the council members that will be leaving us for their hard work and dedication and also those incumbents that will be

returning," CEC 30 President Tsavaris-Basini said in a written statement read at the meeting.

Dr. Philip Composto, District 30 superintendent, said, "It has been an honor and a privilege to work with this group. Thank you for all you do for us."

Wong, Caraballo and Sohail, all elected in 2005, will receive certificates of recognition for their service on the council.

CEC 30 has had two members leave in the last year and three vacancies overall since the term began in 2005. But those numbers are minimal, compared to other school districts in the city.

As the elections were about to begin in May, the *New York Times* (April 28) reported that in at least two districts there were only four or five candidates on the ballot. District 30 was one of the few districts in the city that had full compliance with voting PAs/PTAs in every school.

In Queens, in addition to District 30, only Districts 24, 25 and 29 have had nine confirmed candidates elected to the new community education council term. District 26 still has three vacancies, District 28 two vacancies, and District 27 has one candidate whose eligibility is still pending.

Although the new CEC 30 term is two years, July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2009, it is not clear if Tsavaris-Basini can serve the full term. Appointed to CEC 30 in July, 2004, she was reappointed in July, 2005. However, state law mandates a borough president appointee serve a maximum of two 2-year terms, totaling four years. Since Tsavaris-Basini served only one year in her first term, she challenged the law on the basis that it clearly defines a term as two years. If Tsavaris-Basini serves a second two year term, she will have been appointed for five years.

## Crowley Bill Would End Shoe Tax, Saving Moms Billions

BY JOHN TOSCANO

An outdated tax on shoes and sneakers, sometimes as high as 40 percent, would be eliminated under bipartisan legislation introduced by Congressman Joseph Crowley and Texas Republican Kevin Brady. American shoe makers support it.

"Once enacted, this common-sense, uncontroversial reform of an outdated duty system will stop this unfair practice that costs American families up to \$5 billion annually," Crowley (D-Queens/The Bronx) declared.

"American families, unbeknownst to them, are being forced to pay an unfair and steep tax passed along to them when purchasing shoes for their children," the Elmhurst lawmaker, a member of the powerful Way & Means Committee, said. "By eliminating this duty system, we are saving billions for American families who need to meet their obligations and live within fixed budgets."

Brady stated: "As parents of young children ourselves, we are calling on Congress to untie the shoe tax. Why should a mom pay 30 percent more for her child's shoes because of tariffs from half a century ago that are still on the books?"

Crowley explained that ending the tax is not controversial because it would not affect a protected industry. "High footwear duties originated in the 1930s to protect a manufacturing sector that no longer exists as it once did," Crowley said. "Over the last 20 years, U.S. footwear production has virtually disappeared except for the few footwear producers that have been successful in focusing on niche items that are distinguished by specialty and quality. Low-priced shoes, made primarily in China, Indonesia and Vietnam, are still subject to these outdated yet protective tariffs."

The Crowley/Brady Affordable Footwear Act would protect American shoe manufacturers while eliminating import duties—border taxes—on many types of footwear sold in the U.S., Crowley said. Currently, the United States applies a unique, regressive tax on footwear imports, meaning that it charges higher rates for lower-valued merchandise.

"Some of these rates range as high as 67.5 percent, translating into higher costs for retailers and consumers," Crowley said.

Last year alone, he noted, importers paid \$1.9 billion in duties on footwear which, because of distribution markups, means families are paying an estimated \$4 billion to \$5 billion in unnecessary taxes.



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