

YEAR-END SUMMARY

We have all finished a most difficult year. Unemployment topped 10%. Food banks saw need increase 33% from the already high level of 2008. Nonprofits saw income plunge and had to make some painful choices. Some closed, some reduced staff... few were unaffected.

And yet, 2009 was also a good year for the WCC with plenty of results. Given the nature and scope of the issues we tackle, results can often take a long time.

- The year started with President Obama signing the Lily Ledbetter Pay Equity Act on which we had worked both directly and as a [founding] member of the Pay Equity Coalition.
- We achieved substantial reform to the Rockefeller Drug Laws.
- We had a letter to the editor published in the *New York Times* on NYC's budget crisis.
- Public Authorities Reform finally "escaped" Albany gridlock.
- The City Council passed the Greener, Greater Buildings plan.
- The State passed legislation which made energy efficiency upgrades easier.
- We bought more time to comment to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation on the proposed use of the gas drilling method known as hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") to extract natural gas from the Marcellus Shale formation which underlies New York City's watershed.
- And the year ended with the US Senate passing health care reform.

We have lots to do in 2010 in the areas of:

- Speaking out against the punitive and counterproductive ejection of the homeless from shelters.
- Advocating that fracking be banned within the watershed altogether.
- Continuing to press for paid sick leave.
- Spotlighting the lack of physical education in public schools as a cause of childhood obesity.
- Working on immigration reform starting with the DREAM Act which allows children who have grown up in the US to become citizens if they go to college or serve two years in the military.
- Expanding the Greenwich Village and Upper East Side historic districts.
- Advocating that the New York City Council ban non-recyclable take-out food containers, especially Styrofoam.
- Serving as a Census 2010 partner.
- Gaining passage of the NYS Family Health Care Decisions Act.

Let me finish by thanking you, our loyal members, for volunteering your time and providing financial support for the organization. Thanks, also, to the Board of Directors for excellent leadership by example. Lastly, thanks to the staff for doing extraordinary work with limited resources.

Happy and healthy 2010!
Ruth Acker