



Dear Friends,



On Jan 8, 1964, President Lyndon Johnson declared a [War on Poverty](#) and set forth far-reaching initiatives including Head Start, Medicare and Medicaid, as well as programs to ensure equal access to a good education. While we have come a long way, we still have a distance to travel. Over 20 percent of children in New York State live in the grip of poverty. The [Assembly Standing Committee on Children and Families](#) sponsored a roundtable and two hearings last year to examine issues facing children in poverty. As the newly-appointed [Committee Chair](#). I am eager to work with my colleagues and our community leaders to improve the lives of children and families across our state.”

~Ellen~

Speaker Appoints Ellen to [Education Committee](#)

"The children and families in New York State will be well-served by Ellen's newest appointment. She brings to the work her commitment to education policies that prepare our children to choose pathways that can lead to a fulfilling life as contributing citizens. On a personal level, I am pleased Ellen and I will have new opportunities to work together on legislative priorities that expand and enrich our state's educational agenda." - [NYS Regent Judith Johnson](#)

Alliance for Quality Education Rally in Albany



I joined advocates, parents, students and community members at the [Alliance for Quality Education](#) rally to show our strong support for a full phase in of [Foundation Aid](#) that will improve our schools and reduce the shameful inequality that exists in school districts across our state. As a newly-appointed member of the Assembly Education Committee, I am energized and ready to work .

Letter Opposing [Appointment of Betsy DeVos as US Secretary of Education](#)

DeVos has spent millions promoting her school privatization agenda that will turn our diverse public schools into segregated corporate charter schools, disproportionately affecting low-income families and students of color and destroying public education, the very cornerstone of our democracy. Despite a complete lack of evidence that privatizing public schools produces a better education system, DeVos' blatant attack on our public schools is reason enough to disqualify her from serving as Secretary of Education. Read my full [letter of opposition](#).

[Comprehensive Contraception Coverage Act](#)

I applaud Attorney General Schneiderman for continuing New York's long and progressive history of protecting reproductive rights and look forward to working with him to strengthen and expand State law to ensure that everyone has access to the contraception of their choice. The ability to plan when, or if, to have a child is a right everyone must have equal access to, not only those who can afford to pay for contraception. Protecting equal access to cost-free contraception is a vital component of healthcare that should be available to everyone no matter their income level.



Closing Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant

For years I have stated my vocal opposition to the re-licensing of the aging [Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant](#). I have also introduced and the Assembly passed a [resolution to oppose the re-licensing of Indian Point plants 1 and 2](#). While I recognize the concerns about assuring there is adequate

energy, I am certain this is the wrong plant, at the wrong site for our area. Each and every one of the thousands of people – men, women, and children - I represent is at risk in the event of an accident. I applaud Governor Cuomo for putting public health and safety first.

YMCA Youth in Government Day



It's always a pleasure to participate in the [YMCA Youth in Government](#) Day and panel discussion at Nyack High School where I was asked to speak about the [NY SAFE Act](#), sensible gun laws and what can be done about the epidemic of gun violence facing our country.

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