



Assemblywoman

# Crystal D. Peoples-Stokes



Summer 2017

## Community News

Assemblywoman Peoples-Stokes just concluded a very successful legislative session in Albany and is eager to continue her work back home in the district.

## 2017 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

### Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes' sponsored bills that passed in the Assembly

#### **A1862 (S3199)- Peoples-Stokes**

Requires the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to publish a list of all areas in the State that are most adversely affected by existing environmental hazards

#### **A2131- Peoples-Stokes**

Provides that each state agency that maintains a website shall ensure its website provides for online submission of requests for records subject to FOIL

#### **A2142 (S3809)- Peoples-Stokes**

Relates to sealing records for certain proceedings

#### **A2279- Peoples-Stokes**

Authorizes cities having a population between 250,000 and 300,000 to establish a senior citizen longtime resident real property tax exemption

#### **A2310 (S1818)- Peoples-Stokes**

Relates to requiring mandated reporters to receive coursework or training regarding the identification and reporting of child abuse and maltreatment

#### **A2317 (S5022)- Peoples-Stokes**

Validates the protection of specific health benefits under the ACA from formulary changes

#### **A2788 (S5489)- Peoples-Stokes**

Establishes the Lupus education and prevention fund and outreach program and provides taxpayer gifts for lupus education and prevention.



Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes at the rostrum inside Assembly Chambers, temporarily serving as Speaker Pro Tempore leading legislative floor proceedings.

#### **A2856- Peoples-Stokes**

Relates to destruction of personal information stored on copiers, facsimile machines or multifunctional devices

#### **A7966 (S6551)- Peoples-Stokes**

Relates to the eligibility of school districts outside of the city of New York for annual apportionments equal to the amount of the supplemental basic tuition of a charter school that year

#### **A2924- Peoples-Stokes**

Relates to HIV post-exposure prophylaxis and other health care services for sexual assault victims

### Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes' sponsored bills that passed in both houses and are awaiting possible action by Governor Cuomo

#### **A2882 (S5627)- Peoples-Stokes - Savino**

Relates to the disclosure of the list of practitioners registered to certify patients for the use of medical marijuana

#### **A4711 (S4427)- Peoples-Stokes - Kennedy**

Ensures that \$150,000 bond secured by City of Buffalo is used for the construction of an archway between Michigan Avenue and Broadway Street

#### **A7281 (S5408)- Peoples-Stokes - Gallivan**

Expands list of surviving family members eligible for reimbursement of crime scene cleanup expenses when a family member is killed in a shared residence

#### **A7944 (S5943)- Peoples-Stokes - Jacobs**

Relates to the creation of a Michigan Street African American Corridor that will include African-American historically significant buildings

#### **A8084 (S1704)- Peoples-Stokes - Parker**

Creates Sickle Cell Disease awareness license plates and a Sickle Cell Disease research and education fund

#### **A8087 (S1703)- Peoples-Stokes - Parker**

Creates Lupus awareness license plates and a Lupus research and education fund

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# COMMUNITY UPDATES



Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes speaks at Big Ditch Brewery on East Huron Street to announce the passage of ridesharing in Upstate New York that occurred in Albany on April 8th. Ridesharing officially became available to Upstate New Yorkers on June 29th. Statewide ridesharing is expected to help local economic development by providing a new job market of drivers through popular companies such as Uber and Lyft, as well as providing riders with new safe ways to travel, as was noted in a City University of New York study which attributes a 25-35 percent decrease in alcohol-related crashes to the availability of ridesharing services in NYC.



Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes stands with Avi Israel, the founder and president of Save the Michaels House of Hope, at an opioid awareness event at Bennett High School. The State announced in April that it was successful in securing \$16 million in funding for WNY to fight heroin addiction and the opioid crisis.

workforce solutions being led by the Buffalo Niagara Regional Workforce Development Coalition, assembled by the Buffalo Niagara Partnership. Other topics include Boys and Young Men of Color being led by Say Yes to Education Buffalo, Juvenile Justice and the Re-Entry Coalition focused on improving operating and support systems for citizens returning to society.

## The Buffalo Central Terminal

After conducting a week-long study, the Urban Land Institute concluded on Friday, June 30th that the restorations to the Buffalo Central Terminal and Broadway-Fillmore community should be symbiotic to maximize impact. In addition to the ULI's involvement, Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes has secured \$250,000 in funding to support installing solar panels, as well as upgrading the Terminal's electric panels to ensure restoration and improvement to the site's elevators, dining room, and security systems.

## African American Veterans Memorial Committee

A committee was formed by Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples-Stokes meeting for over the last four months, Chaired by Warren Galloway to plan the design, creation and installation of a monument in tribute to African American Veterans who served in the US military. It will include all of the 12 wars from the Revolutionary War to the Afghanistan War and during peace time. The memorial will be located in the Buffalo & Erie County Military & Naval Park. The estimated project cost is \$650,000. Expect to hear more about the project in the coming weeks at a community meeting near you.

The proposal to include all of the wars that US African American soldiers fought in is extremely unique, being one of the only memorials of its kind in New York State and the entire country.



Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes assists in breaking ground for a soon to be mixed-income apartment complex located at 120 Minnesota Avenue, the former Buffalo Public School 63. The \$16 million project being developed by CB Emmanuel Realty, titled Lofts at University Heights, will have 44 units set to be made available to community members later this year. This project is supported by funding from the Better Buffalo Fund, NYS Housing Finance Agency, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, and many other sources.



## Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act

On June 12th, the Start SMART (Sensible Marijuana Access through Regulated Trade) NY campaign joined Assemblymember Crystal Peoples-Stokes in Albany for a day of action. Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes spoke to the campaign members as she reintroduced the Marijuana Regulation Tax Act (bill A3506) to the Assembly floor. Alongside fellow bill sponsor, Senator Liz Krueger of Manhattan, Peoples-Stokes' comments focused on the profound impact that decriminalizing marijuana could have on the futures of young adults of color. The goal of both this bill and the campaign is to demand an end to marijuana prohibition in New York and in turn eradicate the racially biased and draconian enforcement procedures of marijuana criminalization with the hope of creating a new thriving and just economic industry.

## Northland Corridor

The Northland Corridor Redevelopment Project is officially underway since demolition began at one of the sites located at 537 East Delavan Avenue. This was the first site bought by the Buffalo Urban Development Corporation in partnership with Empire State Development and the City of Buffalo for industrial and commercial redevelopment back in December of 2014. One of the main focuses of the Northland project is the Northland Workforce Training Center. The training center will be housed in another site located at 683 Northland Avenue which will not only serve as a training center and jobs initiative after its construction, but during it as well through its paid pre-apprenticeship program for construction-related careers targeting young minority and female residents.

## Racial Equity Roundtable

The Racial Equity Roundtable (RER) is created by the Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo, which is led by President & CEO Clotilde Perez-Bode Dedecker. The RER is Chaired by Alphonso O'Neill-White and is made up of more than 33 community leaders (including Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes) from public, private, nonprofits and faith institutions convened to advance racial equity and promote the change required to accelerate a shared regional prosperity. The RER's focus is on closing equity gaps and improving opportunities in four key areas: education and job readiness, criminal justice & safety, quality of life & neighborhoods, and income & wealth. Current endeavors include addressing systemic

# COMMUNITY UPDATES

## Free Wills & Estate Planning

Through the collaboration between Mayor Brown, Assemblymember Crystal Peoples-Stokes and Acea Mosey, Esq., free wills and estates workshops were hosted at three different locations between September 2016 and June 2017. Workshops were held at the Delavan-Grider Community Center, the North Buffalo Community Center, and the Fruitbelt's Moot Senior Center and consisted of a simple questionnaire followed by a complete will intake and execution for the participating residents. Over 200 residents have successfully had wills legally executed and filed with Erie County Surrogate Court. A very special thank you goes to the Center for Elder Law and Justice, members of the WNY Minority Bar Association, and the City of Buffalo's Law Department who all had lawyers and staff volunteer their time and efforts to make this possible. Please be on the lookout this fall as we consider workshops in the Broadway-Fillmore and University neighborhoods next.

## Restore Our Community Coalition (ROCC)

The Environmental Assessment for covering the Kensington Expressway Route 33 project between Best Street and East Ferry Street is well underway. The \$6 million secured has a purpose to:

- Reconnect divided neighborhoods while improving their respective quality of life.
- Review environmental and socio-economic impacts of the target neighborhoods.
- Recover green space in the median of Humboldt Parkway via historic design cues of Frederick Law Olmsted.
- Improve connectivity of city streets and multi-modal forms of transportation.
- Maintain the expected functionality of the expressway.

Besides reviewing and addressing environmental community concerns, the NYS Department of Transportation (DOT) and its consultant, Labella Associates, will also begin design work to provide construction-ready specs and documentation by summer 2018. Please be on the lookout for an announcement of a community advisory meeting before the end of this summer.

## Rain Check Buffalo

Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper in partnership with the City of Buffalo Sewer Authority are making rain barrels accessible to city residents. The barrels can hold up to 60 gallons, standing 39in tall by 24in wide, weighing 20lbs. Upon signing up, your property will be assessed to see if disconnecting your downspout and installing a rain barrel is possible. If deemed a good candidate, residents will need to complete a program participation agreement. Once the agreement is received, the rain barrel will be delivered and installed free of charge. Residents can conserve water to be used for gardening, washing their car, or a multitude of other uses to reduce the amount of storm water overflowing our sewer system. For more info, please contact the Buffalo Sewer Authority at 716-851-4664.

## BENLIC and \$10 Million for East Side and Cheektowaga

At the Pratt-Willert Community Center on Thursday, July 13th, Governor Cuomo announced a \$10 million initiative as part of the Buffalo Billion Phase Two that will focus on eliminating "zombie" properties as well as improving housing in general on the East Side of Buffalo and the Town of Cheektowaga.

In 2016, Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes passed bill #A8156-B, enabling four foreclosure governing units (FGUs): Erie County, the City of Buffalo, the City of Lackawanna, and the City of Tonawanda, also known as BENLIC (Buffalo Erie Niagara Land Improvement Corporation) or the local land bank, to prevent problem or "zombie" properties to continuously cycle through irresponsible landowners. Often what's occurred at its annual In-Rem Foreclosure Auction, is a property that had been foreclosed on is then sold to new negligent owners in a public sale. That property remains vacant and



Office intern Dominique Evans accompanies Office Counsel Lisa Yaeger to deliver Meals on Wheels to district resident Pauline Steward. Meals on Wheels advised that they have a shortage of volunteers to deliver meals to more than 350 inner city residents.

subsequently impacts the surrounding neighborhood by lowering the value. This cycle then repeats. Thanks to Peoples-Stokes, the law now grants a municipality the authority to immediately select specific foreclosed properties, removing them from the auction list so that these previously abandoned sites can be renovated or repurposed. Attempting to improve neighborhoods whose values have been plagued by foreclosures, this legislation offers new homeownership opportunities as once specified foreclosed properties are selected by a municipality and renovated, ownership preference will first be offered to the original tenants (if renters), accompanied by assistance in securing a mortgage plan, then the surrounding community, and finally any other interested parties.

Together, this legislation and the \$10 million in funding from Buffalo Billion Phase Two will work to stabilize the East Side and the Town of Cheektowaga by improving the neighborhoods, raising the value of the housing stock, increase new homeownership opportunities and prevent future foreclosures.

## WNY Strikeforce

In May 2016, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced the Western New York Employment Strikeforce, an initiative targeting high unemployment and under-employment rates in the cities of Buffalo, Lackawanna, and Niagara Falls. The NYS Department of Labor is spearheading the Strikeforce in partnership with local leadership and community organizations.

On April 26, 2017, a Career Expo was held at the Mt. Olive Baptist Church, located at 701 E. Delavan Avenue hosted by the NYS Dept. of Labor and the Concerned Clergy of WNY. Training providers, community-based organizations, and clergy were also present at the event to offer supportive services. Over 400 people attended. Since its inception, the WNY Strikeforce has assisted roughly 4,000 with their employment needs.

For more information about Department of Labor Services, job seekers can text "Strikeforce" to 81336 to get assistance with job search strategies, training opportunities, resume writing and more. The WNY Strikeforce has satellite locations within the 141st Assembly District which are the Delavan-Grider Community Center, the Gloria J. Parks Community Center and the Lt. Col. Matt Urban Community Center.



## Mary's Little Lambs Ribbon Cutting

Proprietor Mary Goodwill, her husband and family are joined by Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes, Mayor Brown, Masten Councilmember Wingo and representatives from Excelsior Growth Fund and the NYS Business Development Center. Mary's Little Lambs Child Care celebrated its grand opening on July 14th. The Child Care Center employs 20 full time and 18 part time workers, handling up to 105 children from 6 weeks old to age 12 weekdays from 6:15am until midnight. Interested parents can call 716-725-0501.

## Peoples-Stokes Elected Chair of State Legislative Women's Caucus

**NYS Legislature currently boasts 45 female legislators, the most ever in its history**

On June 8th, it was announced that Assemblymember Crystal Peoples-Stokes was elected as the new Chairwoman of the Legislative Women's Caucus of New York State. The position carries a two-year term.

The Legislative Women's Caucus of NYS was founded in 1983. Its members have worked to increase the participation of women in government and to advocate for issues that directly impact women in New York State.

Peoples-Stokes plans to create opportunities for improving financial literacy and access to capital, streamlining the Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises certification process, and facilitating female mentorships along with encouraging a "tech-savvy" approach toward business operations. Additionally, Peoples-Stokes plans to further improve access to employment by seeking fully-funded day care services statewide through the 2018-2019 state budget process.

## EVENTS

**Monday, August 14th  
from 6:30-8p.m.**

### RESUME WRITING WORKSHOP

Hosted by Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes and Roswell Park Cancer Institute  
Delavan-Grider Community Center 877 E. Delavan Ave.

**Thursday, September 14th  
from 11a.m. – 3p.m.**

### EMPLOYMENT FAIR

Hosted by Governor Cuomo's Executive Chambers, NYS Dept. of Labor, Mayor Brown, Senator Kennedy and Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes  
Rev. Dr. Bennett W. Smith Family Life Center  
833 Michigan Ave.

**Saturday, September 23rd  
from 10-11:30a.m.**

### WHY DO YOU NEED A LIBRARY TOWN HALL MEETING

Hosted by Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes and Senator Kennedy  
Buffalo & Erie County Central Library, One Lafayette Square  
(Ring of Knowledge)

425 Michigan Avenue, Suite 107, Buffalo, NY 14203



Assemblywoman  
**Crystal D.  
Peoples-Stokes**

**Community News**

Summer 2017

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On July 13th Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes, local elected officials and community stakeholders joined Dr. Rhonda Ricks and David Alexander to cut the ribbon on the grand opening of the Parkview Apartments across from MLK Park. With the completion of this \$8 million project, Dr. Ricks becomes the first female minority developer in the City of Buffalo. Parkview boasts 26 affordable luxury units with rents less than \$800 and was fully rented before completion. Congratulations Dr. Ricks!



Assemblymember Peoples-Stokes and Senator Kennedy pose with representatives from National Grid and Solar Liberty after announcing that participating Fruitbelt residents will reach an anticipated 500kw of power through solar installations once all of the 40 plus systems are completed, including two churches and one non-profit. Twelve more systems are under construction. All Fruitbelt residents will receive a minimum of a \$15 credit on their monthly electric bills.