



October 30, 2023

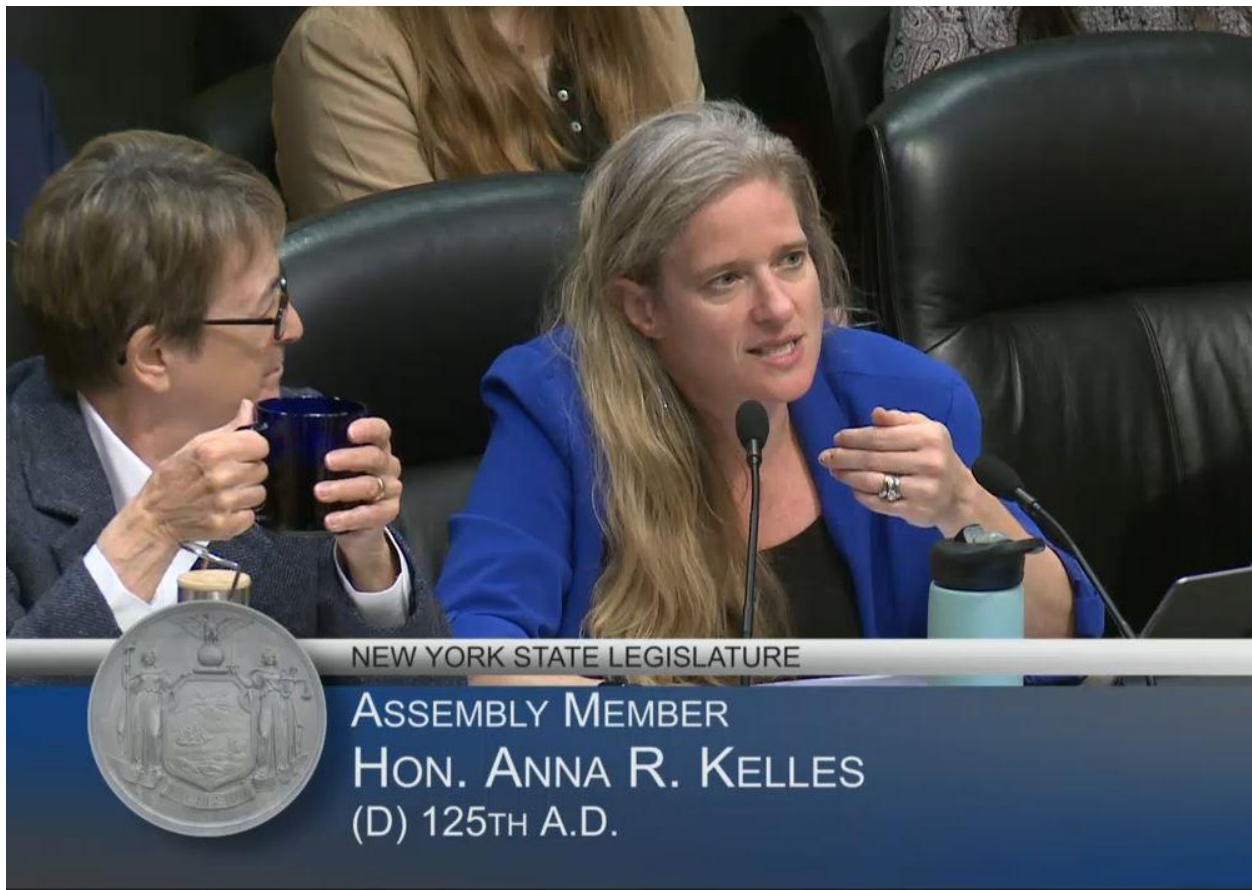
Dear Neighbors,

It has been a productive week as I spent part of the week in Albany, attending a public hearing as well as meetings to prepare legislation for next year's session. Two of my bills were also signed into law this week – digital asset disclosure bill and a home rule bill! Back in the district, my team members from Albany, Ithaca and Cortland and I had the opportunity to be together in person to plan and organize our work moving forward. I invite you to read more below about!

## Legislative Update

### **Packaging Reduction Public Hearing**

We are drowning in waste. One major cause of waste is packaging - the boxes, bags, and wrappers that the products we consume come in. I was able to participate in a public hearing last week in Albany focused on package reduction. I am a proud co-sponsor of the Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act ([A5322A Glick](#)) that requires producers to develop a packaging reduction and recycling plan, shifting responsibility to producers to engage in waste reduction efforts of their products. This is an important bill that would reduce waste, reduce toxins in packaging, and invest in recycling infrastructure. While recycling is vitally important, recycling alone has not kept pace with consumption. We need to also focus on waste reduction and reusing items. As I have shared in previous newsletters, we need to move from the “take-make-waste” linear model of consumption to a more circular economy. You can [watch the full hearing online](#). You can also [view a clip of my comments](#) about why we have not made this shift prior as well as [my questions about toxins in advanced plastic recycling](#).



## **Cryptocurrency and Digital Asset Disclosure for Public Officers Signed into Law**

I'm proud that the Governor signed my bill [A2873B](#) into law! Cryptocurrency is a new form of wealth, and given that companies have a highly influential stake in crypto mining activity, it leaves the possibility for legislators to be influenced by investments and donations. This law will require clear reporting of cryptocurrency and other digital asset holdings on financial disclosure statements for public officers, bringing more transparency to the public on their representatives who have an interest in this type of digital property.

☑ Signed into Law! ☑

## Digital Assets Disclosure Bill

Assembly Bill A02873-B (Kelles)

This bill ensures that New York State public officers are required to disclose the ownership and trading of cryptocurrency, NFTs, and other digital assets.



ANNA  
KELLES  
Assemblymember for the 125th



## Around the District

### Potential Cargill Sale of Cayuga Salt Mine

I participated in a virtual press conference last week along with Sen. Lea Webb, local elected officials and advocates, [calling on Gov. Hochul to take swift action](#) in addressing the serious public health and environmental risks posed by Cayuga Salt Mine, owned and mined by Cargill, and to stop any sale of the mine. Cayuga Lake is a critical resource for drinking water, tourism, and recreation in the region. Salt mining under the lake is inherently dangerous, and any mining accident could threaten the health of our water. Cargill has been mining at the Cayuga Salt Mine for years without a full, unbiased



environmental review and is now looking to sell the mine. To ensure the future health of Cayuga Lake, we need a full, independent environmental review of the mine. The health of over 100,000 New Yorkers who rely on the lake for drinking water is not worth risking for private corporate profits. I understand the potential economic impact and job loss if the mine were to close, and that needs to be part of the conversation. We can do both – protect the economic development of the area and transition workers while we also protect the health and safety of our community. You can watch my comments online as part of the [full press conference](#).

## Human Services Coalition Directors Meeting



I am grateful for the opportunity last week to attend a [Human Services Coalition](#) (HSC) Board of Directors meeting and receive updates on the critical services HSC offers in Tompkins County. There has been an increased utilization of the [211 helpline](#) as residents continue to seek help post-pandemic for housing and food. HSC offers important assistance in navigating health care options as well as leading housing initiatives. Funding and staffing issues in the nonprofit sector continue to be major concerns. I appreciate all the work of the HSC and will continue to advocate for the needs of our area to State leaders.



# Community Resources

## **Medicare Open Enrollment Walk-In Clinic**

Want to make sure you're getting the best coverage at the best cost? Want to explore any new Part D or Medicare Advantage plan offerings? Consider attending the Medicare Open Enrollment Walk-In Clinic at the Enfield Community Center (162 Enfield Main Rd.) on October 31 from 9 - 11:30 a.m. Plan to bring: 1) a list of your prescriptions, dosages/frequency; 2) your Medicare card; 3) any other health insurance cards or information; 4) documentation of monthly or annual income, and 5) a mask. For more information call Mary-Ann Reeter, HIICAP coordinator, at 607-273-1511. Certified HIICAP

counselors can also offer free, unbiased, one-on-one health insurance counseling year-round.

## **Tompkins County Recycling Tours**

Tompkins County Recycling and Materials Management Department (TCRMM) invites the public to celebrate [New York Recycles Day](#) by taking a free walking tour of the County's Recycling and Solid Waste Center (RSWC). The tours will include an overview of the facility, which accepts single-stream recycling, food scraps, yard waste, household hazardous waste, electronics, scrap metal, and other materials.

Two tour options are available: 1) Tuesday, November 14, at 10:30 a.m. or 2) Wednesday, November 15, at 2 p.m. Tours will be limited to 20 participants per tour. Participants must be at least 18 years of age to attend. [Online registration](#) is required for the tours, and registration will close on Tuesday, November 7 at 5 p.m.



## **Tompkins County Food Scraps Recycling**

Tompkins County Recycling and Materials Management Department (TCRMM) continues to offer their Food Scraps Recycling Program. You can easily and sustainably dispose of your food scraps (up to 10 gallons a day), including paper napkins and towels, at one of the local drop spots in Tompkins County. For more information, including location, availability, and drop-off procedure, review the [TCRMM Food Scraps Recycling page](#).

## **Assistance with HEAP Applications for Cortland Area Seniors**

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded program to assist income-eligible households meet their home energy costs. The Cortland County Area on Aging will be at various locations throughout Cortland County in November to assist people over age 60 with their applications. Please bring: 1) a recent utility bill, 2) proof of income, 3) proof of age for all household members, and 4) proof of address. Please see dates and locations below. For more information, contact the Agency on Aging at 607-753-5060.





# HEAP

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded program that is designed to help eligible households meet their home energy costs. Applicants may be eligible for a one-time regular HEAP benefit paid directly to your heating or utility company. Benefit amounts vary based on heating type, income, and household size.

The HEAP season officially opened on November 1st, 2023.

### 2023-2024 HEAP gross monthly income guidelines:

Household Size	Max Income
1	\$3,035
2	\$3,970
3	\$4,904

A representative from the Area Agency on Aging will be available to assist individuals age 60 and over in completing an application for the 2023-2024 HEAP season.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
• Cortland/Chenango Rural Services, Cincinnatus	November 1st	10:30 a.m.
• Scott Senior Center	November 3rd	8:30 a.m.
• Lamont Library, McGraw	November 3rd	2:00 p.m.
• Virgil Seniors, UM Church	November 7th	10:30 a.m.
• Truxton Senior Center	November 7th	3:00 p.m.
• YWCA Cortland	November 8th	11:00 a.m.
• Cortland Age Well Center	November 8th	1:00 p.m.
• Homer Senior Center	November 15th	10:30 a.m.
• Preble Seniors	November 15th	1:00 p.m.
• Harford Creamery Hills	November 17th	10:00 a.m.

Applicants will need to provide proof of income and proof of age for all household members, along with proof of address and a recent heating/utility bill.  
Please have copies available.

For more information, please contact the Area Agency on Aging at 607-753-5060



The Cortland County Area Agency on Aging is sponsored by the Cortland County Legislature in conjunction with the New York State Office for the Aging under Title III of the Older Americans Act of 2020, as amended.

## Cortland County Toys for Tots Holiday Assistance Sign up

Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots program will again be offering assistance to families this holiday season in Cortland County. Families interested in receiving toys for their children should sign up online at: <https://cortland-ny.toysfortots.org/> and "Request a Toy." All applications for assistance must be made online, beginning Nov. 1, and applications close Nov. 30. Parents or guardians will need to show proof of residency and the child's identification (birth certificate or guardianship papers) on the toy distribution day. Toy donations to



the program can be made at various businesses throughout Cortland in November, and monetary donations are accepted [online](#).



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Hate has no place in New York. In the wake of the conflict in Israel and Gaza, we need to ensure that our communities are safe for people of all ethnic and religious backgrounds.

New York has launched a new hotline and online form to combat hate and bias and keep our communities safe. New Yorkers who witness something or are impacted by hate or bias are encouraged to call 844-NO-2-HATE hotline or fill out the online form at [forms.ny.gov/s3/DHR-Bias-Incident-Form](https://forms.ny.gov/s3/DHR-Bias-Incident-Form).

In good health,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anna R. Kelles".

Anna Kelles, Ph.D.

Assemblymember, 125th A.D.

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