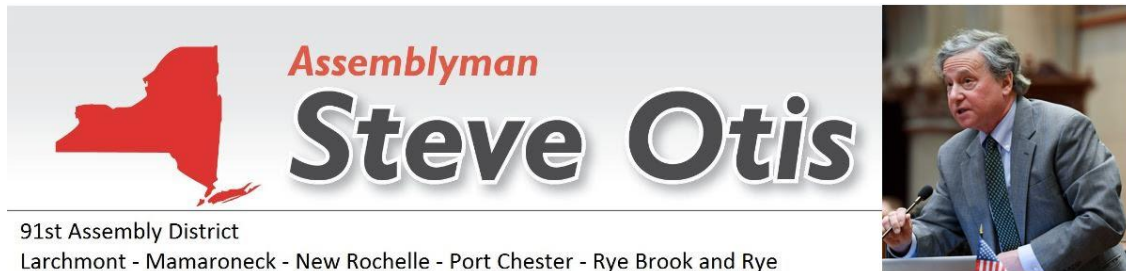


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91st Assembly District

Larchmont - Mamaroneck - New Rochelle - Port Chester - Rye Brook and Rye

September 23, 2022

Dear Friends,

The last couple of weeks featured numerous meetings to follow up on various flood mitigation actions being considered and advanced by Sound Shore communities. This work will continue with the involvement of federal, state and local programs and officials. I continue to press the need for project implementation.

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation is one agency playing an important role by reviewing existing hydrology studies for watersheds on the Sound Shore. The goal is to facilitate inter-municipal cooperation and identification of projects that should proceed.

Reminders of our own storm vulnerability are with us each week, most recently with the damage caused by Hurricane Fiona for Puerto Rico and other island and coastal areas. I have included in this newsletter some ways in which you can contribute to relief efforts.

The NYS Association of Conservation Commissions 2022 Conference on the

Environment will focus on the Environmental Bond Act proposal on the ballot on November 8th with a focus on programs in the proposal that will benefit community projects. The conference is geared towards members of Conservation Commissions, Sustainability Committees, local environmental committees and individuals active in environmental issues. I have been a member of the NYSACC Board of Directors for over 30 years and am helping organize what will be an informative conference. See below for more information and how you can register for this virtual event.

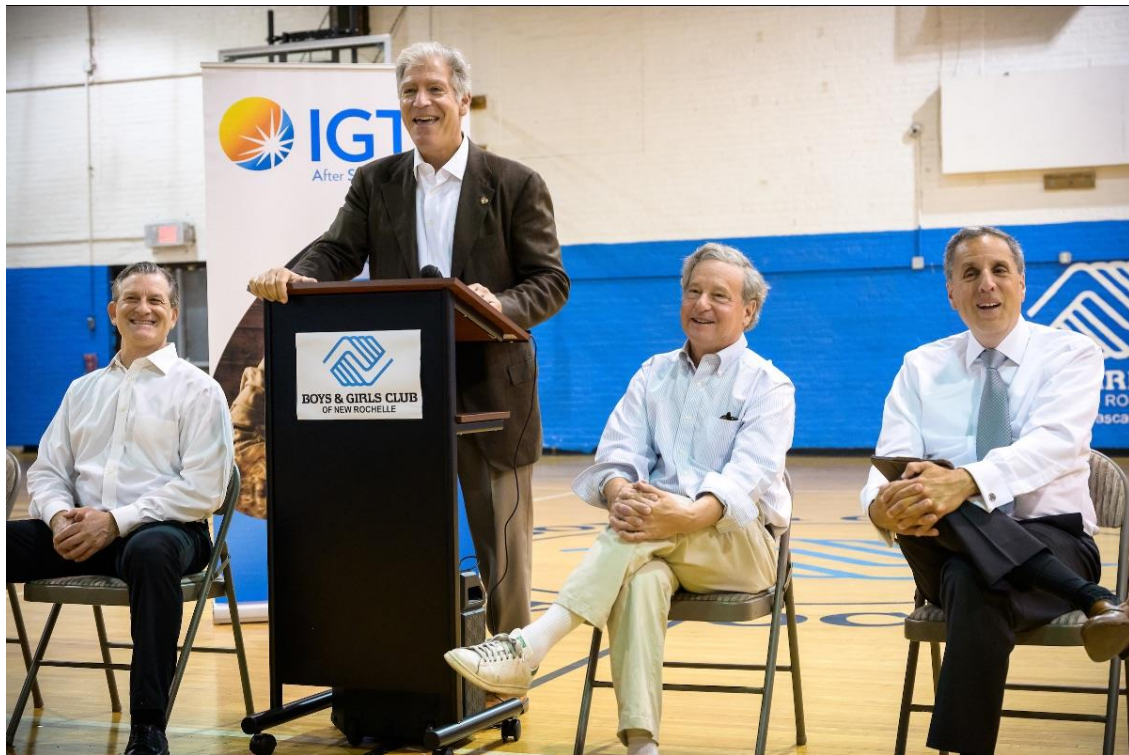
Governor Hochul has announced a new effort to buffer the price increases for energy costs. Energy prices worldwide have risen dramatically. One method of protecting consumers is to require utilities to diversify the portfolio of energy sources they purchase. Early this year, when prices rose significantly, the NYS Public Service Commission reviewed purchasing practices of electric utilities and provided guidance on better diversification. The Governor's new initiative, described in this newsletter, uses the Public Service Commission to again press these practices. I have also included other consumer information on how to reduce energy costs.

Also included is information regarding cybersecurity upgrades at the NYS Department of Labor that are of special importance to individuals receiving unemployment insurance payments.

I hope these resources and information are helpful. Please contact me on any issue where I can be of assistance. My District Office number is 914-939-7028.

Warm regards,

Steve



IGT Donates Advanced Technology & Equipment to the Boys & Girls Club of New Rochelle for STEM Room Initiative

On Monday I participated in the ribbon cutting at the Boys and Girls Club of New Rochelle to celebrate the opening of a new STEM lab. The state-of-the-art equipment donated by International Game Technology (IGT) will support the Boys & Girls Club of New Rochelle’s STEM Program which aims to advance youth education and academic achievement.

Access to STEM opportunities for youth and digital equity has been a priority of

mine in the Assembly through my advocacy on behalf of digital inclusion programs and enhancing the science and technology curriculum in early grades. I serve as Chair of the Assembly Committee on Science and Technology.



Aid Resources for Puerto Rico

The Hispanic Federation

The Puerto Rico Community Foundation has been working for more than 35 years to increase access to renewable energy, drinking water, housing, education and economic development for the people it serves.

Taller Salud is a feminist grassroots nonprofit focused on women's health and safety.

The PRxPR Relief and Rebuild Fund, run by the Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico, has delivered humanitarian aid to the island in the wake of Hurricane Maria's devastation.

All Hearts and Hands

United Nations World Food Programme

The SATO Project - Rescuing Puerto Rico's Dogs and Cats



NYSACC's 2022 **Virtual** Conference on the Environment



A **one-day, online forum** for municipal conservation commissions, advisory boards, sustainability committees and community activists from around New York State

Conference focus: The New York State **Environmental Bond Act 2022** —learn how this act will fund restoration and climate adaptation efforts in your community

Conference format: Following an opening plenary on the Environmental Bond Act at noon, join themed breakout sessions and participate in networking opportunities. Come from 10am-noon for platform tutorial plus bonus sessions.

Sponsored by: **Dandelion Energy**, the northeast's #1 geothermal installer, plus **AreaHub** and **CANY**. Visit our **sponsors page!**

[Conference Schedule](#)

[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more and to register.

[Governor Hochul Announces Actions to Prepare New Yorkers for Rising Global Energy Costs This Winter](#)

Governor Hochul announced new State actions to prepare New Yorkers for rising global energy costs and supply issues expected this winter. At Governor Hochul's direction, Public Service Commission Chair Rory M. Christian sent [letters](#) to Chief Executive Officers of New York State's largest utility companies, urging measures to mitigate the anticipated extreme commodity price increases over the winter and enhanced customer communications. New Yorkers can also take advantage of cost-efficient programs in anticipation of the winter to adopt energy efficiency and electrification solutions for homes and businesses.

The global commodity costs of natural gas, heating oil, and propane have continued to rise, resulting in utility and heating cost increases, along with additional increases oil and gas prices. The state's utilities — including Con Edison, — must undertake a series of actions including enhanced communications to customers, fuel storage inspections, alternative supply reviews and enhanced coordination, to mitigate the impact of potential oil supply disruptions.

PSC Chair Christian requested a response with recommendations for how each utility will execute on all of the actions by September 30, 2022.

Tips for Consumers

As energy prices rise during the winter months, New Yorkers can take the following steps to protect against higher energy costs:

- **Apply for HEAP.** [Apply for HEAP](#) beginning November 1, applications will be accepted for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). To qualify for heating assistance from HEAP, a family of four must have a

maximum gross monthly income of \$5,485, or an annual gross income of \$65,829.

- **Take immediate action to be more energy efficient.** NYSERDA offers energy saving tips for [residents and homeowners](#), as well as businesses that can lower energy usage. NYSERDA also offers a range of [home energy efficiency programs](#) that can help save energy and reduce costs over time. Income-eligible customers may qualify for reduced cost or free energy upgrades to their homes through [EmPower New York](#) and [Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR®](#) programs. Homeowners should also check with their local gas and electric utility companies to access discounted products and services that can help them lower their energy costs all year long.
- **Receive a customized list of energy-related assistance in the State.** [New York Energy Advisor](#) can help income-eligible New Yorkers managers locate programs that help them spend less on energy and create healthier and more comfortable spaces.
- **Sign up for Community Solar.** Consumers can subscribe to a Community Solar project where available and start receiving credits on their electric bill for the clean energy produced by a solar farm. Find more information [here](#).
- **Get a free energy audit.** Homeowners across New York are eligible for a free home energy assessment through NYSERDA's [Residential Energy Audit Program](#).
- **Reduce your business or building's energy costs.** [Community Energy Advisors](#) across New York State can help residents, businesses, and multifamily building owners reduce their energy use and costs.
- **Join a Clean Heating and Cooling Campaign.** Visit [NYSERDA](#) to see if your community is participating in a Clean Heating and Cooling Campaign.

- **Know your rights and protections.** The New York State Home Energy Fair Practices Act has comprehensive protections for residential customers regarding their utility services. Learn about these from the Department of Public Service at [AskPSC](#).
- **Consider bill payment options.** When getting in touch with your utility provider, inquire about billing options that allow for deferred payments or "budget billing" options that balance out bills that are higher in one season and lower in another. This can structure your payments and make it easier to navigate costs.
- **Better understand the energy management of your building.** [Put Energy to Work](#) provides a deeper understanding of tools and programs for businesses that help in energy management.

Visit [NYSERDA](#) for more information about the programs, funding and technical assistance available to assist homeowners, renters, and businesses manage their energy needs.



The Department of Labor is implementing [Multi-Factor Authentication](#) (MFA). To help familiarize customers with the new security process, DOL has given the

option to “opt in” to MFA for the past several weeks. The new authentication is mandatory as of September 21.

Effective today, UI customers will be prompted to provide a second form of authentication when logging into their Unemployment Services portal of their NY.gov accounts. MFA is now required for customers who wish to use the online portal to:

- Certify for benefits
- View payment history
- Update banking information or mailing address
- Update and view tax information and 1099-G form, and more

You ***must*** enroll in MFA to certify for UI benefits online. You may do so at: labor.ny.gov/signin, and will be prompted to sign up there. Additional multi-lingual tips and resources are available on our website at dol.ny.gov/MFA.

