



Assemblyman

Steve Otis



91st Assembly District

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

March 10, 2023

Dear Friends,

The state budget process continued this week with further discussion within each house of the legislature in preparation for one-house budget proposals and negotiation with Governor Hochul and her team on the governor's initial executive budget proposal.

One of my priority issues is support for digital inclusion programs to provide digital literacy to individuals in need of broadband access, devices and training. I am working with advocates across the state and national experts on this important equity issue.

An important part of this effort is a statewide series of regional meetings on digital equity that will help NYS draft a digital equity plan required for the 2024 round of federal funding towards these programs. Our regional meeting, which I helped organize, will be held at SUNY Purchase on March 24. I have attached the flyer below. The sponsors are New York State's ConnectALL office and the STEMAlliance. SUNY Purchase is a great host and partner. I have attached the event flyer below. The purpose of the meeting is to hear about digital inclusion needs and solutions from:

- Local and county government leaders
- Regional planning and economic development organizations
- Internet service providers
- Educational institutions
- Workforce development organizations
- Non-profit organizations serving vulnerable New Yorkers

Please consider attending and helping contribute to the statewide plan. We want to bring more funding to Westchester to support these programs.

Last weekend I co-hosted two well-attended community forums with State Senator Shelley Mayer, County Executive George Latimer and County Legislator Catherine

Parker. These sessions in Rye and Larchmont brought forth great questions and issues from attendees and an opportunity for the four of us to provide updates on the state and county issues on which we each work.

This week I have also included information on how to comment to the NYS Public Service Commission on ConEd's proposed rate increase application and information from Governor Hochul on how to protect your personal identification information during tax season.

This weekend I will be attending the SOMOS conference in Albany and hosting a workshop focused on not-for-profits serving the Latino community in suburban and upstate communities. I am co-hosting this discussion with Assemblyman Phil Ramos of Long Island.

As always, do not hesitate to contact my office if we can be of assistance at 914-939-7028.

Warm regards,



PROVIDING EQUITABLE INTERNET ACCESS FOR ALL NEW YORKERS



An important discussion on digital equity and New York State's plans to ensure connectivity across the Mid-Hudson region.

Join us to provide input on issues of digital equity in your area!

The STEM Alliance, in partnership with Empire State Development's ConnectALL Office, invites residents and local organizations to contribute to this public, free INTERNET AND DIGITAL EQUITY LISTENING SESSION.

ConnectALL is an initiative from Governor Kathy Hochul to deliver affordable internet access to millions of New Yorkers, bolster digital equity and transform the state's digital infrastructure.

The STEM Alliance, ConnectALL and the Mid-Hudson partners are looking to gain input from those working to close the digital divide and improve the well-being of marginalized populations including:

- Local and county government leaders
- Regional planning and economic development organizations
- Internet service providers
- Educational institutions
- Workforce development organizations
- Non-profit organizations serving vulnerable New Yorkers

This event will include a discussion of existing barriers to internet access and the resources and opportunities we need to close the digital divide.

Partners for Digital Equity in Mid-Hudson include: **Mercy College, Mid-Hudson Library System, Ramapo Catskill Library System, Southeastern New York Library Resources Council, The Stem Alliance, Westchester County Association, Westchester Digital Inclusion Coalition, and Westchester Library System**

March 24, 2023 • Time 10am – 12 noon
SUNY Purchase

Durst Family Humanities Building
735 Anderson Hill Road, Purchase, NY 10577

We invite you to participate in person or virtually.

Please register with the link or QR code below:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/559050062787>



Scan Me!

DIGITAL EQUITY is achieved when all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy. Digital equity is necessary for civic and cultural participation, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services.

National Digital Inclusion Alliance

ConnectALL is a Division of Empire State Development



**Department of
Environmental
Conservation**

Port Chester and Rye Each Receive \$10M NYS Water Quality Grants

State water infrastructure funding is an essential tool in assisting local governments as they implement needed upgrades to aging water systems. We received great news this week with word that the Village of Port Chester and the City of Rye have each been awarded \$10 M grants from the state's Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP).

The funding will help each community implement wastewater system improvements. With these grants, both municipalities will make significant upgrades to their sewer systems. Rye's project will complete spot repairs and replacements, installing 22,000 linear feet of pipe lining and repairing 500 manhole defects city wide. The project will reduce the amount of untreated wastewater entering Long Island Sound during storm events. The Village of Port Chester is also undertaking an aggressive program of sanitary sewer repairs that, consistent with the WQIP program goal, will improve water quality in the Byram river, ground water and Long Island Sound.

These upgrades will help protect water quality in Long Island Sound. As coastal Sound Shore communities, wastewater infrastructure upgrades benefit water quality and aquatic habitat in the Sound.

Water infrastructure funding has been a major priority of mine in the State Assembly. The 2023-24 State Budget process is now underway, but Governor Hochul has already committed to another year of strong support for these clean water grant programs.

Port Chester and Rye were two of only three Westchester communities to be awarded grants in this round of funding. State Senator Shelley Mayer and I worked closely together to support these applications and the work of Port Chester and Rye to move forward on needed improvements. Hurricane Ida highlighted the importance of upgrading and improving all water infrastructure. Every community on the Sound Shore is involved in similar work.

The mission of WQIP is to fund projects that will directly improve water quality of aquatic habitats or protect a drinking water source. This funding will further the broader efforts toward preserving and protecting the aquatic habitat of Long Island Sound and continue the important work of putting the sound on a path toward a cleaner and healthier estuary. To learn more and to apply for funding visit DEC WQIP resource page [HERE](#).

Coffee and Conversation in Larchmont and Rye



Community Forum at Idea Kitchen in Larchmont



Community Forum at Ruby's Oyster Bar in Rye

Governor Hochul Urges New Yorkers to Take Steps to Protect Their Personal Tax Account Information During Tax Season

Governor Hochul announced steps New Yorkers can take to protect themselves from having their sensitive information compromised online during tax season. The State Office of Information Technology Services has teamed with other state agencies to promote tips to help New Yorkers protect their personal information during tax season, raising awareness of phishing schemes, using strong passwords, and exercising greater caution with information shared on social media. To read more about what you can do to safeguard your information, click [HERE](#).

Report It

If you're a victim or believe you may be a victim of tax-related identity theft, alert us immediately. We will track your information to help keep it private and protected. Visit the Tax Department's [Report fraud, scams, and identity theft](#) webpage.

Access more information and [educational resources](#) from ITS and [NYS Chief Information Security Office](#) newsletter.

For more taxpayer scam information, please visit the Division of Consumer Protection's [Taxpayer Scam](#) webpage. For additional identity theft prevention and mitigation resources, call the Consumer Helpline at 800-697-1220 or visit the Division's [Identity Theft Prevention and Mitigation Program](#) webpage.



Public Service Commission Comment Period on Proposed Con Ed Hike

The Public Service Commission has opened a public comment period on Con Ed's proposed major rate hike for electric and gas service. Details of the proposal can be found [HERE](#) (reference Case 22-E-0064 and 22-G-0065). The proposed rate hike is incremental across 3 years ending in 2025.

To comment - go to the [PSC Website](#) for the specific case number [PSC Website](#). Comments may be mailed to the Hon. Michelle L. Phillips, Secretary,

Public Service Commission, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York 12223-1350.

