

Dear Neighbor,

I hope that you and your loved ones are staying healthy and safe. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused disruption and uncertainty in our lives over the past few months. I would like to thank and commend you for all the efforts you have taken to keep yourselves, your families and your neighbors safe during this global pandemic. Over the course of the pandemic, you've helped uplift and support the Mohawk Valley's families in need, along with our businesses and non-profits. As always, Mohawk Valley residents have proven just how tough and united we are.

I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to the graduating Class of 2020! Although this school year was more different than anyone could have imagined, our students' ability to complete their studies despite the challenges caused by a global pandemic is a testament to their strength and dedication. I wish our graduates and all the Mohawk Valley's students the best of luck this upcoming year – no matter their plans.

If you haven't already, I urge you to complete the 2020 Census. Billions of dollars in federal funds and grants for public education, housing, roads, bridges, economic development and so much more are at risk for our area if we do not have an accurate census count. Given the economic challenges caused by COVID-19, it is more important now than ever to ensure the Mohawk Valley receives its fair share.

To all those in our community who have experienced hardships – be it a loss of a home to flooding or the loss of a job or business due to COVID-19 – please know that you are not forgotten, and that progress continues to be made.

As summer ends and we head into fall, I wish you, your family and friends health, happiness, peace and prosperity. Please do not hesitate to reach out to my office if you have any questions, comments or concerns.

Sincerely,



Assemblywoman Marianne Buttenschon
119th Assembly District



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My office is open for virtual meetings.

News in Brief:

Assemblywoman Marianne Buttenschon is fighting for our communities

Combating COVID-19

The unprecedented challenges brought on by COVID-19 have left families, businesses and communities across the state looking toward an uncertain future. To better help New Yorkers and combat the virus' spread, I helped pass a law that provided \$40 million in emergency funding (**Ch. 23 of 2020**).

Requiring the Use of an Antimicrobial Copper Alloy for Touch Surfaces in New Construction

As we continue to do everything we can to flatten the curve and protect New Yorkers during these difficult times, it's critical that we utilize new knowledge and technology to help mitigate any future health crises. Research has shown that using copper on frequently touched surfaces can significantly reduce the spread of viruses and infections, which is why I've introduced legislation (**A.10267**) to require all construction projects funded by the state to use antimicrobial copper. By promoting the use of bacteria- and virus-killing materials, this bill will help safeguard the public health now and for future generations.

Veterans

COVID-19 has had a dramatic impact on the State overall, but veterans and their families have suffered unique and disproportionate impacts. Veterans already struggling with PTSD, substance abuse and isolation issues have had to additionally struggle with getting access to health and mental health services while experiencing higher than average unemployment rates. To veterans and families: please call my office or the Division of Veterans Services Hotline at 1-888-VETS-NYS (1-888-838-7697) for assistance.

Providing liquor license credit for food establishments

I fought to pass legislation that provides a credit for food establishments who were forced to close due to COVID-19 when they renew their retail, on-premise liquor license (**A.10563-A**). It's critical that we do all that we can to support our small businesses so they're in the best position to succeed. That includes expanding relief to these establishments in these trying times.



News in Brief:

I also helped pass laws that:

ensure schools that have closed due to COVID-19 without the presence of a state or local state of emergency will not have state aid withheld (**Ch. 107 of 2020**)

allow industrial development agencies to implement a state disaster emergency loan program that provides up to \$25,000 loans to small businesses and not-for-profit organizations (**Ch. 109 of 2020**)

require residential health care facilities to submit an annual pandemic emergency plan to the Department of Health (DOH) commissioner (**Ch. 114 of 2020**)

extend library project deadlines by 12 months for libraries that received library construction grant funds in the last three fiscal years and are unable to complete the project during the proscribed period due to COVID-19 shutdowns (**Ch. 120 of 2020**)

Allowing BOCES to establish and encourage young farmer apprenticeship programs

I helped pass legislation that would authorize Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) to establish an agricultural program upon local interest from one or more component school districts (**A.7104-A**). These programs would provide students with the skills necessary to work in the agricultural field and could include partnerships with local farms and agricultural entities to provide students with hands-on experience.

Early Retirement Incentive

I joined Senator Joe Griffo in proposing a bill that would offer retirement incentives to employees who are more than 50 years old with 25 years of service, or more than 55 years of age with 10 years of service (**A.10897**). Eligible employees would be members of the New York State and Local Employees Retirement System, the New York State Teachers' Retirement System, the New York City Teachers' Retirement System, the New York City Board of Education Retirement System and certain members of the New York City Employees' Retirement System. If passed, this would be a win for the dedicated public employees who have served our state for so many years, while recognizing the reality of the state's short-term fiscal outlook.

Resolutions

During my time in office, I believe it's important to not only assist our families, but to recognize the significant achievements that the 119th District has brought to New York State. Thus, the New York State Assembly accepted my Resolution to proclaim July 2020 as **Ice Cream Month** in honor of Mohawk Valley dairy farmers.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we've seen the strength and resilience of New York's incredible teachers. I passed a resolution memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim May 5, 2020, as **Teacher Appreciation Day** in New York, in honor of their dedication to our youth.

In honor of our wonderful refugee communities, I proclaimed August 2020 as **Karen American Heritage Month** and October 2020 as **Polish American Heritage Month** in New York. I also requested that Governor Andrew M. Cuomo proclaim September 21, 2020, as **Day of Peace** in the State of New York.

Around the 119th

As your representative, it's my job to make sure that all Mohawk Valley residents are up-to-date on important developments in our community and state – a role I don't take lightly. To that end, I have hosted a virtual town hall to address current state issues, including the ongoing public health crisis as well as the recently passed 2020-21 state budget. I also attended several virtual joint legislative hearings that allowed me to hear directly from community stakeholders on a host of coronavirus-related issues.

Across our district, hardworking men and women have faced hardships and countless losses as a result of the pandemic. To date, my office has proudly helped over 1,000 constituents facing issues, such as unemployment and child care. Your needs are my top priority and will remain at the top of my list for as long as I'm privileged to serve this district. I'll always work to be a strong voice for the Mohawk Valley, so don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns!

Stop the Bleed

At the beginning of the year, I partnered with local fire department representatives to host six Stop the Bleed courses across the Mohawk Valley. This course was part of a national awareness campaign that trains, equips and empowers citizens to aid in a bleeding emergency before first responders arrive.

Blood Drive

As of July, almost 40,000 blood drives have been cancelled since March due to the crisis, resulting in over 1 million blood donations going uncollected. That has increased our hospitals' need for donations. Now, in order to maintain our area's blood supply, I am setting up multiple drives that will run throughout the months of September (Utica) and October (Rome) at several locations around our district in an effort to rebuild that number. If you can give blood during these drives, or through another drive through the American Red Cross, please consider doing so – you could be giving someone a second chance at life.



Around the 119th

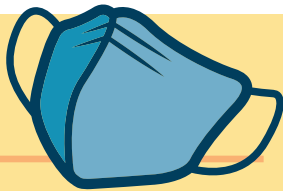
Hand Sanitizer Distribution

Over the past four months, my staff and I have delivered 1,500 personal hand sanitizers, as well as 300 gallons of hand sanitizer to local veterans' organizations, senior housing complexes and food pantries throughout the 119th Assembly District. I was proud to help these establishments that have done so much to care for our community for so many years.



How to Wear a Mask

by Dr. Eva S. Mroczek



How to put ON mask and gloves

1. Wash your hands with soap, or rub with hand sanitizer, for 20 seconds.
2. Put your mask on your face first.
3. Adjust your mask to ensure it is tight fitting and covers your nose and mouth completely.
4. Wash your hands again and then put on gloves.
5. Note: You do not need gloves. But if you choose to wear them you need to be sure to wear them properly, and to dispose.

How to take OFF mask

1. If you are wearing gloves, remove the gloves first!
2. Wash your hands.
3. Remove your mask by the elastic or straps that held the mask in place.
4. Do not touch the mask - it is contaminated. Be careful not to touch your mouth, nose, and eyes when removing the mask.
5. If the mask is reusable, place it in a bag.
6. Wash your hands immediately after taking the mask off.



Summer Reading Challenge

Over the summer, I visited our libraries and took steps to keep young readers engaged over the summer months with my Summer Reading Challenge. Unlike previous years, where children received flyers from their teachers and at pick-up locations, I partnered with the Rome and Utica school districts to fill grab-and-go lunch meals with the Summer Reading Challenge calendars and bookmarks, and distributed the same materials through municipal housing units so that no child was overlooked.

New York State Canal Cleanup

We're fortunate to have a beautiful canal system that allows us a place to exercise, fish, bike and enjoy nature. The Erie Canal is a beloved, historic cornerstone of New York State, and it's critical that we do all that we can to preserve it for future generations. I've worked closely with the state Canal Corporation to address measures that will ensure boat safety, help local businesses along the canal and maintain our trail systems safety and preservation.



Around the 119th

Honoring Local Heroes



This year, I was proud to host multiple recognition awards for our essential workers. From our **nurses, teachers, first responders, police and corrections officers**, it was important that we take the time to acknowledge all they do, especially during this trying time, and continue to show them our support and dedication. Without them, our area would not be where or what it is today.

I also honored several **outstanding women** in the 119th District with Women of Distinction Awards and was proud to award **middle school students** for their insightful essays on National African American History Month.

To The Unsung Heroes

Essential workers – whether they're health care workers, first responders, teachers, child care workers or grocery store and other service employees – continue to put their and their family's health at risk to provide critical care and services for our communities.

Join me in thanking all the essential workers who've kept our state moving forward during these unprecedented times.

Census Campaign:

From determining crucial funding for our communities to informing our state's political representation, it's hard to overstate the importance of participating in the 2020 Census. In the past, New York State – and our region in general – has been undercounted, resulting in the loss of billions in funding for emergency services, infrastructure and schools.

I recently sent mailers to everyone in the 119th District reminding them to complete the census so that our area receives the funding it deserves. This is the one thing everyone can do to help reshape our community. I'm also working closely with the Refugee Center and MUNY to help get the word out and increase the response rates.

You can fill out the 2020 Census online at 2020census.gov or over the phone with a Census Questionnaire Assistance representative at 1-844-330-2020.



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Look inside to see how Assemblywoman Marianne Buttenschon is delivering results for local families



"Whether in good times or bad, I'll always do everything I can to support Mohawk Valley communities."

Marianne Buttenschon