



September 5, 2023

Dear Neighbors,

I know many of you have been aware of the looming September 1 date as Ithaca Carshare indicated that if bill [A5718/S5959-B](#) was not signed by the Governor by Sept. 1, they would face permanent closure. While it is disappointing that we have passed Sept. 1 without a signed bill from the Governor, Sen. Lea Webb and I are continuing to work closely with the Governor's team to negotiate this technical bill involving insurance markets. We continue to be in conversation with Ithaca Carshare throughout this process and difficult time and are working to avoid their closure. I hope to bring you all an update shortly.

Legislative Update

Green Transit, Green Jobs Legislation

I was able to join my colleague Assemblymember Jeffrey Dinowitz, environmental advocates, and union leaders for a [virtual press conference](#) in support of the Green Transit, Green Jobs Legislation ([A.6414](#)), as we called on Gov. Hochul to include the bill in the 2024 Executive Budget. As we transition to clean energy across New York State, the Green Transit, Green Jobs bill that moves our public transportation to zero-emission and all-

electric buses is a critical shift to curb greenhouse gas emissions while also ensuring good-paying union jobs. Tompkins County has been a leader, making this transition with success since 2018 and serves as a case example that the shift to all-electric public transit is possible. Tompkins County Area Transit (TCAT) has bought only electric buses since 2020 and plans to be fully electric by 2035. Tompkins is one of the hilliest and coldest areas in the state, and we have never had to take a bus off the road for insufficient remaining charge. TCAT has trained all existing employees and has not had to reduce or change any workforce due to this transition. Given that transportation in NY is responsible for approximately 30% of all greenhouse gas emissions, we will not reach our climate goals if we do not transition our major municipal transportation systems. I am proud to join the 70 bi-partisan co-sponsors of the bill, and we are ready to shift to all-electric public transit, with the necessary infrastructure, across the state.

“The infrastructure is there, the will is there, the pilot studies are there. This is a very important bill, but also an easy step to take.”



AM DR. ANNA KELLES | GREEN TRANSIT, GREEN JOBS VIRTUAL EVENT

ELECTRIFYNY

Around the District

Overdose Awareness Vigil in Cortland

International Overdose Awareness Day was August 31, and I was honored to speak at the vigil at Courthouse Park in Cortland to honor the lives lost to Substance Use Disorder (SUD) overdoses as well as stand with families who have lost loved ones and support those in recovery. 296 purple flags adorned the park to represent the 296 lives lost each day in the United States from a drug overdose, which totals over 108,000 each year. I've personally lost dear friends to overdose, and it is important to not "other" those who are struggling, as any member of our families can be impacted. I am proud that the NYS Budget included \$212 million for harm reduction initiatives for people with Substance Use Disorder, including the Opioid Stewardship Fund. As members of the LGBTQ+ population suffer at a higher rate of SUD, I'm proud that my bill [A4903](#) was signed into law, which assures that individuals can receive addiction services based on their gender identity/expression or sexual orientation. I have also sponsored an important bill that was progressing through committee this past legislative session, [A4213](#), which would ensure that individuals cannot be refused services at addiction treatment centers operated by the Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) due to their inability to pay. I look forward to working with my legislative colleagues and constituents in the community to pass this legislation.



Labor Day Picnic

I had a great time at the 37th Annual Labor Day Picnic hosted by the Tompkins County Workers' Center and the Midstate Council for Occupational Safety and Health, speaking with constituents and celebrating the contributions of workers. Thank you to all the organizations in the district working to protect workers' rights and to improve wages and working conditions for all.



Funding for Upgrades to the Ithaca Wastewater Facility

I am pleased to report that Ithaca Common Council [has approved \\$6.2 million](#) in funding to upgrade critical components of the wastewater treatment plant. Cayuga Lake and our freshwater resources are fundamental to the health and well-being of our district, and the wastewater treatment plant impacts our lake tremendously. This is an important investment that will help Ithaca achieve the goals of the Green New Deal.

New Laws

There are new laws taking effect this September, including [A10477](#), which is an important law to combat wage discrimination. The law requires employers to disclose compensation or the range of compensation to job applicants upon issuing an internal or publicly viewed employment opportunity. The justification from the bill memo explains: “Wage discrimination in hiring plays a central role in perpetuating the wage gap between men and women. Women applying for a new position and/or for internal job promotion often face implicit and structural barriers that result in lower salaries. This is compounded for women of color, women with disabilities, LGBTQ+ individuals and mothers. By enhancing transparency around compensation at the start of the hiring process and limiting the role of implicit employer bias, this bill serves to empower applicants with critical information, prevent wage discrimination, reduce negative negotiation outcomes and address systemic gender-based wage disparities that originate during the hiring process.” A full list of new laws can be found [here](#).

Community Resources

Grants Available

The New York State Assembly publishes information on available state, federal and private grants. The September publication of [Grants Action News](#) is now available for your organization to review grant opportunities.

Health and Self-Care Festival

The community is invited to attend the Health and Self-Care Festival, hosted by Calvary Baptist Church, on Saturday, Sept. 9 from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. outside of the Greater Ithaca Activities Center (301 W. Court St, Ithaca). There will be workshops, health information, resources, food, and fun activities for all ages!

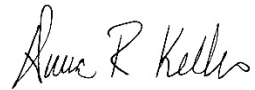


Celebrate 35 years of Community Food Rescue

Congratulations to the Friendship Donations Network for 35 years of

community food rescue! The community is invited to celebrate this anniversary on Thursday, Sept. 14 from 5 - 7 p.m. at the Ithaca Farmers Market along with the volunteers, food distribution partners, and food donors. Details and an RSVP form can be found online.

In good health,



Anna Kelles, Ph.D.

Assemblymember, 125th A.D.

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