



November 20, 2023

Dear Neighbors,

It has been an exciting and productive week in the district and across the state. I presented conference sessions at the New York State Association of Reduction, Reuse and Recycling conference in Cooperstown as well as the Clean Energy Summit in New York City. Back in our district, I met with stakeholder groups to discuss the Fashion Act and my EMS funding bill.

I was honored to end my week with the Varna Volunteer Fire Company at their annual banquet and present an official Assembly Citation to Roy Rizzo, recognizing 50 years of outstanding volunteer service!

Legislative Update

Governor Signed Clean Slate into Law

I was thrilled to be able to be present in Brooklyn on November 16 when [Gov. Kathy Hochul signed the Clean Slate Act into law](#). Clean Slate

allows for automatic sealing of criminal records from public access three years after conviction or release from jail for a misdemeanor and eight years after conviction or release from prison for a felony – provided individuals have maintained a clean record and are no longer on probation or parole. New York is safer when people have stable employment and housing. The law will remove the burden of permanent criminal records that hold individuals back from accessing housing, education, and employment, which has disproportionately impacted our brown and Black communities and contributed to generational poverty. Business and labor unions supported Clean Slate since they recognized that the law will strengthen our workforce and economy, creating jobs and filling the labor gap. You can view a [video clip of my comments](#) as I explain my vote in favor of the bill when it passed the Assembly in June. To understand the law more fully, I encourage you to review the [Myths and Facts Information Sheet](#).

If you have a criminal record from a prior conviction or incarceration, find out what Clean Slate will mean for you. The Center for Community Alternatives will host a virtual Q&A session on Monday, Nov. 20 and Monday, Dec. 18 at 6 pm. [RSVP here for the Zoom link](#).



New York State Association for Reduction, Reuse and Recycling Conference

I was honored to be a keynote speaker with NYS Senator Brian Kavanagh at the annual [New York State Association for Reduction, Reuse and Recycling Conference](#). Sen. Kavanagh focused on Extended Producer Responsibility, and my presentation focused on building deconstruction in New York. Deconstruction is the systematic dismantling of buildings, roadways, and other infrastructure to maximize the salvage of valuable materials. Deconstruction, rather than demolition, reduces emissions since you need to manufacture less new materials and reduces the flow of materials into landfills.

According to the [New York State Solid Waste Management Plan](#), NY produces 42.2 million tons of waste annually, and 46% is from construction and demolition materials. While NY does recycle some construction and demolition materials, we still landfill too much, and our landfills are quickly filling up. As one of the largest economies in the world, New York can build the needed infrastructure to spearhead the establishment of a truly circular economy. I look forward to introducing legislation that encourages the infrastructure, marketplace, and workforce development needed to develop a circular economy. Thank you to the conference organizers and to all the waste management professionals who engaged in this discussion.



New Bills to Track

New Legislation to Protect Cayuga Lake and Require Full Environmental Review for Salt Mining Permits

Cayuga Lake is a critical resource for our area, providing drinking water for over 100,000 residents and serving as the bedrock of our region's \$3 billion, 60,000-employee food, wine and recreational tourism economy. Cargill, Inc. has been mining salt under Cayuga Lake for decades, which is inherently dangerous, and any mining accident could permanently jeopardize the health of our drinking water. While the Mine Safety and Health Administration has been able to inspect the operation for worker safety, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has not regularly inspected the mine for issues related to protecting the Cayuga Lake ecosystem. After decades of mining by Cargill, Cayuga Lake is saltier than nearly all the other Finger Lakes.

I've introduced new legislation ([A8520](#)), sponsored by Sen. Lea Webb in the Senate, that requires any future mine permit approval, sale or transfer to include a full environmental review as well as a reclamation plan with appropriate financial security. While the bill does not call for the mine's closure, it does call for a prompt, public, state-confirmed review of the health of the mine in order to protect Cayuga Lake as well as the communities and jobs that depend on it.



Around the District

Celebrate Community Reuse with me this Holiday Season!

Each year 2.3 million pounds of gift wrap ends up in landfills. Let's do our part and share the gift-wrapping materials we already have! I'm collecting donations of wrapping paper, ribbon, gift bags, gift tags, tissue paper and shirt boxes. If you have extras that you'd like to donate, items can be dropped off at the Ithaca District Office (130 E. State Street), Monday - Friday from 1 - 4 p.m.

From December 1 - 20, all constituents are welcome to come to the Ithaca District Office, Monday - Friday from 1 - 4 p.m., with your holiday gifts and wrap them for free with our collected supplies!

Join me again on **December 20 from 4 - 7 pm** for a Holiday Open House! All are welcome to join for some holiday cheer - and my staff and I will wrap your presents for you!



**IF YOU HAVE SPARE
WRAPPING SUPPLIES
(PAPER, RIBBONS, BAGS,
SHIRT BOXES, TISSUE
PAPER, GIFT TAGS OR
TAPE)**

**Donate them to my
Ithaca District office!**

**We are now accepting donations of
wrapping supplies for community use.**

Come to our office!

**130 E State Street
Monday-Friday
1PM-4PM**

Community Resources

Accessing Shelter during Freezing Weather

As the temperatures drop, it is important for the community to be aware of the warming centers, shelters, and resources in the district to be able to refer residents in need. A [recent Ithaca Voice article](#) highlights resources available in Tompkins County as well as New York's "Code Blue" policy, requiring local social services districts to provide shelter regardless of income, sobriety, or citizenship status when temperatures drop below freezing. The best way a person can quickly access housing or other information in both Tompkins and Cortland Counties is to dial 2-1-1. Throughout the winter season in Cortland County, individuals can access the warming centers at the Salvation Army or Grace and Holy Spirit Church.



Cortland County Department of Social Services

CODE BLUE Warming Center

The Warming Center is a warm, safe place for individuals to go and stay overnight during the cold weather season.

This is a **free**, voluntary program that requires **no eligibility determination** and available to any adult who seeks assistance for a place to stay.

OPEN DAILY DURING PERIODS OF EXTREME COLD

(32 DEGREES WITH WIND CHILL. FIRST DAY OF OPERATION: NOVEMBER 3, 2023)



Grace & Holy Spirit Church

13 Court St.
(entrance, back/left side)
P: 607.314.0153

Monday – Friday
4:30 pm to 8 pm

Saturday – Sunday & Holidays
8 am to 8 pm



The Salvation Army

138 S. Main St.
(entrance, back/parking)
P: 315.399.8918

Monday – Friday
8 pm to 8 am

Saturday – Sunday & Holidays
8 pm to 8 am

CONNECTIONS TO ADDITIONAL SERVICES WILL BE OFFERED

More Information: 607-753-9363

Please Check the DSS Website For Updates: <https://www.cortland-co.org/149/Social-Services>

The Great American Smokeout

November 16 marked the 46th anniversary of the Great American Smokeout! In recognition of the annual day, the Cortland County Health Department shared important information to support smoking cessation. Smoking remains the single largest preventable cause of death and illness in the world. Give yourself the gift of improved health this holiday season!

- [New York State Smokers' Quitline](#) for free coaching via phone, chat and text as well as free nicotine patches
- [The Butt Stops Here](#), free 7-week (1-hour sessions) virtual statewide program for tobacco cessation
- [Become An Ex](#) program, free digital resources to help tobacco users quit, including an active social community, text and email messaging support, expert guidance and interactive quitting tools.

Happy Thanksgiving!

I wish you all a relaxing Thanksgiving filled with joy and peace! I hope you are able to spend time with loved ones and reflect on what you are thankful for. I am deeply grateful to be able to serve the 125th district as your Assemblymember!

Due to the holiday, my offices in Albany, Ithaca and Cortland will be closed Wed. Nov 22 - Fri. Nov. 24. We will reopen Monday, Nov. 27. We are also going to take a brief break from the newsletter next week. Our next newsletter will be emailed Monday, December 4.



In good health,

Anna R. Kelles

Anna Kelles, Ph.D.

Assemblymember, 125th A.D.

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