



Assemblywoman

# Crystal D. Peoples-Stokes

Winter 2019



## Community News

Assemblywoman Peoples-Stokes just began a very successful legislative session in Albany and is eager to continue her work back home in the district.

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Every winter we are faced with the challenge of battling “Old Man Winter.” While sometimes we can be overwhelmed by snow and freezing temperatures we always make it through to warmer, better days. The same can be said of the State Legislature. For years our progressive legislation was bottlenecked by a Senate Majority that had a different philosophy. Now with a clear majority, for the first time in nearly a decade, in control of the Senate and the Assembly, I can say, like spring follows winter, brighter days are ahead.

For the first time in New York State history, both houses will be led by two African Americans— Andrea Stewart-Cousins was elected to lead the new Senate Majority and the Assembly continues to be led by Speaker Carl Heastie. I recently had the honor and privilege of being appointed as Majority Leader of the Assembly by the Speaker, becoming the first woman and minority to ever hold the position in our state’s 242 year history.

I’m proud to say the start to the 2019 legislative session has put forth one of the most progressive agendas in 30 years. In the first month alone we’ve managed to pass bills aimed at protecting New Yorkers from gun violence, protecting women’s reproductive rights, as well as giving the childhood sexual abuse survivors a chance to have their day in court. This letter details those bills and many others we’ve passed as well as the marijuana legalization bill that I’m sponsoring that we hope to pass this session.

As always, I look forward to continuing to hear from you, my constituents and community stakeholders, to help me fight to improve the quality of life for all of our residents.

Sincerely,

Crystal D. Peoples-Stokes



### Assemblywoman Peoples-Stokes Makes History

January 9, 2019, Assemblywoman Crystal Peoples-Stokes is sworn in as Assembly Majority Leader, becoming the first African-American Woman in state history to hold the position in the New York State Assembly. Peoples-Stokes joins Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie as the three top leaders of our State Legislature.

## Legislative Lane

### ■ Bills that have been Chaptered

**A2279A** – Authorizes cities having a population of between 250,000 and 300,000 to establish a senior citizen longtime resident real property tax exemption

**A2788B** – Provides for taxpayer gifts for lupus education and prevention, and establishes the lupus education and prevention fund and outreach program

**A10074** – Relates to Buffalo sewer authority bonds

**A10275** – Relates to the reimbursement of shelter costs and crime scene cleanup for certain, non-injured victims

**A10298A** – Extends provisions of law relating to authorizing a pilot residential parking permit system in the city of Buffalo

**A10618A** – Authorizes the city of Buffalo to add unpaid housing code violations to the city’s annual tax levy

### ■ Governor-Vetoed Bills

**A1789** – Directs the director of the division of minority and women’s business development to provide for the minority and women-owned business certification of business entities owned by Indian nations or tribes

**A7966C** – Relates to the amount of the supplemental basic tuition for charter schools

**A8156** – Enacts various provisions relating to procurement procedures

**A10744A** – Relates to the certification classifications for businesses owned by minority group members or women

### ■ Passed Assembly Only

**A1862** – Identifies the criteria the commissioner of environmental conservation should consider in publishing a list of high local environmental impact zones

**A2142** – Relates to sealing records for certain proceedings

**A2317C** – Relates to prescription drug formulary changes during a contract year

**A2924** – Relates to HIV post-exposure prophylaxis and other health care services for sexual assault victims

**A303B** – Requires dialysis center disaster preparedness plans

**A10810** – Relates to establishing in the city of Buffalo a demonstration program implementing speed violation monitoring systems in school speed zones by means of photo devices

**A11012** – Relates to the timeframe for the implementation of recommendations included within final reports for corrective action

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## NYS Legislative Highlights

The NYS Legislature recently passed a 7-bill package that will positively change the way we as a state vote in attempts to bring the state into the 21st century. Important points to remember include, Early Voting, No-Excuse Absentee Voting, Same-Day Registration, Consolidated Primary, Pre-Registration for Minors, Universal Transfer of Registration and the LLC Loophole.

Highlighting the Consolidated Primary bill, it changes the NYS primary date from September to the month of June in efforts to match the federal and state local elections. This adjustment aims to increase voter participation by moving our state voting calendar to match that of our Federal Elections. New York was the last state in the nation that held separate Federal and State primaries, by passing this bill we are estimated to save the state \$25 million per election cycle.



### Celebrating Our Diversity

*Enjoying this moment with our Broadway-Fillmore Muslim community members, celebrating the unique cultures that enrich the 141st! This meet and greet gave our Islamic neighbors the ability to learn about the various available government resources and services, opened a line of communication, and allowed them to share their views on our district and the City of Buffalo at large.*

## Development Drive

On December 18, 2018 Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced that more than \$763 million in economic and community development funding has been awarded through Round VIII of the Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) initiative.

The REDC was established in 2011 as a centerpiece of the Governor's strategy to jumpstart the economy and create jobs. The Regional Councils replaced the state's old top-down approach to economic development with one that is community-based and performance-driven. Western New York was awarded \$66 million for 118 projects. Some of the projects located within the 141st District include:

1. \$2,850,000 for Buffalo Sewer Authority.
2. \$1,750,000 for Buffalo and Erie County Industrial Land Development Corporation.
3. \$1,200,000 for Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute
4. \$1,000,000 for Shea's O'Connell Preservation Guild
5. \$1,000,000 for Rosina Food Products
6. \$587,310 for Buffalo Niagara Water Keeper
7. \$500,000 for Buffalo Place Inc.
8. \$375,000 for Buffalo Niagara Freedom Station Coalition
9. \$369,000 for Western New York Land Conservancy, Inc.
10. \$100,000 for Journey's End Refugee Services

The following organizations and community groups also received REDC grants ranging from \$94,000 to \$20,000: Buffalo & Erie County Workforce Development Consortium, Inc.; Elizabeth Pierce Olmsted, MD Center for the Visually Impaired; the Salvation Army; Kaleida Health; Tapecon, Inc.; Visit Buffalo Niagara; Locust Street Neighborhood Art Classes; NYSARC, Inc. Erie County Chapter; Western New York Book Arts Collaborative, Inc.; Alleyway Theater, Inc.; Buffalo and Erie County Public Library; Buffalo Media Resources; and the University District Community Development Association.



### Health and Wellness Housing

*RAR Development and SA&A broke ground on the Buffalo Forge project. This will be a new mixed income residential development focused on residents' health, wellness and active living. This effort aims to turn the former Buffalo Forge Manufacturing site located at 490 Broadway into a "new community" integrating 185 mixed income multi-family units while providing a community feel.*

## Save the Date

### WNY Kidney Foundation Free Kidney Screening

**Saturday, April 13, 2019**

**10 a.m. – 2 p.m.**

**Pratt-Willert Community Center**

644 Pratt Street, Buffalo, NY 14204

### Movies in MLK

**Wednesday, August 7 and 21, 2019**

**6 p.m. – dusk**

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Park**

Best and Fillmore Avenues, Near the Basketball Courts



### Honoring Trailblazer Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm

*Majority Leader Peoples-Stokes joined Assemblyman Sean Ryan, Buffalo School Board President Dr. Barbara Seals-Never Gold, Erie County Legislature Majority Leader April Baskin, and Erie County Commission on Women Executive Director Karen L. King Ph.D. at Forest Lawn Cemetery. Together they announced plans to erect a statue in honor of Shirley Chisholm, the first African-American woman to run for president.*

# NYS HCR continues to make positive change within the 141st

New York State Homes and Community Renewal Agency preserves housing and also helps provide affordable housing for private, public and nonprofit partners. The goal of the HCR is to create inclusive, safe, “green” and resilient places to live within New York State.

■ **A proposed low-income, multi-family Veterans Housing Project, 25 West Utica Street.** The building located just one block from the Veterans One Stop would include 41 dwelling units, including 33 single bed and 4 two bed units.

■ **Hope House.** This \$10.8 million will transform an old school building into a facility with 27 permanent supportive housing units. The project also will include Community Service Facility that will house the Matt Urban Center administrative offices as well as program space including a food pantry, job development programs and the Urban Diner by Friends of the Night People. In 2017, Hope House provided emergency shelter for 620 women and women with children.

■ **Thomas Wojnar Apartments, 104 Lewis Street.** This \$2.8 million project calls for rehabilitating an existing occupied 32-unit senior housing project. The building will undergo significant improvements and remain housing for low income seniors.

■ **The Linwood/Lafayette Senior Apartments, 637 Linwood Avenue.** This \$11.5 million People Inc. project calls for the infill construction of a three story 37 unit building. The mixed income property would have seven units for seniors with intellectual/ developmental disabilities and the remainder for low income households.

## ■ 5 Tips To Do Your Heart A Favor:

- Eat healthy fats, NOT trans fats.
- Practice good dental hygiene, especially flossing your teeth daily.
- Get enough sleep.
- Don't sit for too long at one time.
- Avoid second hand smoke.

This Healthy Heart Tip is brought to you by Elderwood Health Plan, Managed Long Term Care.



### New Jefferson Avenue Housing

People Inc., Sinatra & Company, and CSS Construction have partnered on a \$31 million project to create 89 affordable and supportive housing units, 16 of which are dedicated to the developmentally disabled. Also included on Jefferson Avenue is 16,500 sq. ft. of first floor retail space.



### Where There's a Will There's a Way

Assemblywoman Peoples-Stokes is joined by Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown, the WNY Law Center, The Minority Bar Association, the Volunteer Lawyers Project, and the Center for Elder Law and Justice to help more than 65 residents, many from the University District, plan their estates and execute their wills.

# Body Cams and Smart Cards

The City of Buffalo is one step closer to having body cams for our police officers and Smart Cards for NFTA commuters.

## 1. NFTA-Metro Fare Collection Update

By Fall 2019, the NFTA will complete a gradual transition from cash/tokens to smart cards, where you can re-load funds, similar to New York City's MTA card. Smart cards can be reloaded through an online account, meaning if a commuter loses their smart card their money is not lost. Its designed to make boarding a Metro Bus or Rail easier and more efficient for commuters by paying fares faster.

## 2. Former Attorney General Underwood awards Buffalo Police Department with 300 body-worn cameras

Body-worn cameras aim to increase safety and transparency and the relationship between law enforcement and civilians. In 2018, Attorney General Barbara Underwood awarded \$150,000 to the Buffalo Police Department as a part of her \$1 million contribution to 13 law enforcement agencies in NYS. This award roughly translates to 300 body-worn cameras for our on-duty officers here in the City of Buffalo. The funds come from the Attorney General's CAMS (Capture an Account of a Material Situation) program – which was launched in July 2018 and is funded with money recovered from organized crime takedowns by the Attorney General's office.



The Majority Leader, Mayor Brown and University District Councilmember Rasheed Wyatt join Delaware North and M&T Bank to announce \$1 million for Buffalo Promise Neighborhood's Children's Academy to be located at Gerard Place, near the corner of Bailey & East Delavan Avenues.



### African American Veterans Monument

Mayor Byron Brown and Senator Chris Jacobs join the AAVM Committee. We've successfully raised \$1.2 of a \$1.5 million legacy project. We broke ground on Veterans Day 2018 and have a new target completion date of early summer 2020.

# Academic Avenue



## Buffalo School District Rises in Ranking

The Buffalo Public Schools have been steadily rising throughout these past couple of years; more than 37 of our schools have attained good standing by being removed from the State Receivership list. We joined Superintendent Dr. Kriner Cash in celebration of this amazing turn-around. Ensuring quality education for our children will only help to bolster the Buffalo community at large.



## Northland Workforce Training Center

The Northland Workforce Training Center gives individuals that are 18 years or older the opportunity to reduce many barriers that prohibit students from enrolling and completing higher forms of education. The Northland Center has committed itself to providing for-credit education with little to no cost to those in need, while providing an intensive training program to help students successfully graduate. Through their SUNY educational partners Northland offers for-credit certificates and Associate Degree programs. Students get hands-on training in welding, electrical construction and maintenance, machine tool technology, energy utility, mechatronics and CNC precision machining.



## We are Family!

Majority Leader Peoples-Stokes with over 60 constituents and family members of the 141st District. These supporters traveled to Albany to witness her swearing-in to the office of Assembly Majority Leader. A local ceremony was held on Wednesday, January 16th at True Bethel Baptist Church.

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Assemblywoman  
**Crystal D.  
Peoples-Stokes**

**Community News**

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## Legislative Women's Caucus Corner

Becoming Assembly Majority Leader required that I step down as Chair of the Women's Legislative Caucus. While being bittersweet, I'm proud to say the Women's Caucus is stronger than ever.

A "Pink Wave" swept through Albany in November. Seventy women were elected and re-elected to the New York State Legislature on November 6, 2018, the most ever in our state's history. That number reflects a state that wants to empower the voices of women and puts families' and women's issues at the forefront. I look forward to continue being part of those efforts.

This year also marks the centennial anniversary of the first women elected to the New York State Legislature: Ida B. Sammis and Mary Lilly. Since 1919, 193 women have been elected to the Legislature.

On January 22nd, the Legislature passed a package of three bills that would protect women's reproductive rights and grant all New

Yorkers access to family planning. These bills will update New York State law to reflect the protections for reproductive healthcare recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court (A.21), require that insurers provide cost-free contraception coverage (A.585A) and prohibit employers from discriminating against employees based on their reproductive healthcare choices (A.584).

We're also addressing an issue that impacts every man and woman in the workplace - sexual harassment. The #MeToo movement has shined a bright light on the scourge of sexual harassment, assault, and inappropriate workplace behavior. The Senate and Assembly held a joint hearing on sexual harassment on Wednesday, February 13th. We heard from survivors, advocates, and experts to learn about best practices for prevention. It's our responsibility that employers are trained to provide a safe workplace and that all employees are protected and have access to recourse.