



Assemblyman

**Steve Otis**



91st Assembly District

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

March 3, 2023

Dear Friends,

The intense state budget process continues with budget hearings wrapping up this week. In the two last weeks I have participated in budget hearings on Environmental Conservation, Education, Local Government, infrastructure, parks and economic development. The Westchester delegation also met with School Business Officials to learn more about the unique budgetary challenges faced by area school districts.

One area I have continued to target is helping develop the EV charging infrastructure we need across the state to meet our climate action goals. I have highlighted this issue in the budget hearings to help consumers and to seek assistance for school districts as they transition to EV school buses. State and federal support is needed for school district charging infrastructure and for EV buses. The Environmental Bond Act and the Federal Infrastructure bill both included funding to help on this issue.

I have also focused attention on the cybersecurity threats faced by local governments and school districts as part of my work as chair of the Science and Technology Committee.

Also included is a news story on the change in health insurance eligibility for EMS workers that Senator Shelley Mayer and I announced two weeks ago. This was a major victory in our efforts to support EMS organizations around the state. We continue to work on other reforms needed to bolster EMS staffing and response time.

On Saturday, State Senator Mayer, County Executive George Latimer and County Legislator Catherine Parker and I will host two coffee and conversation meetings to hear from members of the community on state or county issues. RSVP link and details can be found in the flyer below.

The North Ave bridge in New Rochelle which crosses I-95 is being replaced, a

construction project that will take a couple of years. To keep the community up to date, the DOT has created a website for regular updates. Details can be found below.

NYS offers free tax help for eligible individuals and other resources to assist you in filing your taxes. Links can be found below.

HEAP programs are still available to help eligible New Yorkers heat their homes. More information on available programs can be found below.

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

Warm regards,

*Steve*



On February 14th, Assemblyman Otis questions Erik Kulleseid, Commissioner, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation and Richard A. Ball Commissioner, New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets during a joint legislative budget hearing on environmental conservation, agriculture and energy. You can view the clip [HERE](#).

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Assemblymember Otis questions Andrew Pallotta, President, New York State United Teachers, Henry Rubio, President, Council of School Supervisors and Administrators and Cynthia E. Gallagher, Director of Government Relations, School Administrators Association of NYS during a joint legislative budget hearing on education. You can view the clip [HERE](#).

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Assemblyman Otis speaks with Peter Baynes, Executive Director, New York State Conference of Mayors and Steven J. Acquario, Executive Director, New York State Association of Counties on cybersecurity threats to municipalities during a joint budget hearing on local/general government. You can view the clip [HERE](#).

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# RYE AND LARCHMONT COFFEE & CONVERSATION

JOIN US FOR A CUP OF COFFEE AND CONVERSATION IN RYE OR LARCHMONT!

COUNTY EXECUTIVE  
GEORGE LATIMER





STATE SENATOR  
SHELLEY MAYER

STATE  
ASSEMBLYMAN  
STEVE OTIS





COUNTY LEGISLATOR  
CATHERINE PARKER

**SATURDAY MARCH 4**

**SESSION 1: 10:30 A.M. AT RUBY'S OYSTER BAR & BISTRO,  
45 PURCHASE STREET, RYE**

**SESSION 2: 3:00 P.M. AT THE IDEA KITCHEN,  
1940 PALMER AVE, LARCHMONT**

RSVP Requested: <https://bit.ly/CCLarchRye>

Please join us on Saturday to hear County and State updates. Please [RSVP](https://bit.ly/CCLarchRye) at the link above.



**Spectrum News: 'New York lawmakers say more support for EMS squads needed'**

The Spectrum News covered a recent press conference on an important win championed by Senator Mayer and I that would deem EMS an essential service, further legitimizing and professionalizing the important roles that paramedics and EMS crew play in our communities. You can read the article [HERE](#).



**North Avenue Bridge Replacement Project - New Rochelle**

Construction has begun to replace the North Avenue bridge in the city of New Rochelle, located above a section of I-95 and used by approximately 20,000 vehicles daily. This replacement project is necessary to address structural and operational needs, along with enhancing safety and improving mobility for motorists as well as pedestrians at this critical intersection.

Working closely with the city of New Rochelle, Thruway Authority engineers determined the project should be completed in three stages to maintain access to the heart of the city. Stage 1 will consist of vehicles relocated to the center of the existing bridge so its outermost components can be removed. It will also include the construction of new substructures, erection of steel and placement of concrete decks. Stage 2 will move vehicles to the new outer bridge sections so the

remainder of the old bridge can be removed and rebuilt. Stage 3 will move vehicles to the center of the new bridge so sidewalks, paving and other work can be completed.

The project began in January 2023 and is anticipated to be substantially completed in Fall 2025.

The DOT has created a page that will be regularly updated. It can be accessed [here](#).

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Need to file an income tax return? Use your computer, tablet, or mobile device to prepare and electronically file whenever and wherever you want. Access the FreeFile tax preparation software or the same free tax software we use at our [Tax Assistance Program \(TAP\)](#) sites.

### **Get started**

Not sure where to begin? Take a look at our videos, which explain:

- [About New York State Free File](#)
- [Free File – What You Need to Get Started](#)
- [Free File – Choosing the Right Software Product](#)
- [Free File – Using the Software](#)

## **Prepare to e-file**

Electronically filed returns are more accurate than paper-filed returns. Additionally, most New Yorkers who electronically file their returns can receive their refunds up to two weeks sooner than paper filers.

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## **Home Energy Assistance Program**

[HEAP](#) is federally funded and can help eligible New Yorkers heat and cool their homes. Normally, eligible households can receive one regular HEAP benefit each winter and could also be eligible for a single emergency HEAP benefit if they face an energy crisis.

The amount a household receives from HEAP depends on income, household size and how the home is heated. A family of four can earn up to \$5,485 per month and still qualify for assistance. A needy household that heats with oil and qualifies for a regular HEAP benefit and two emergency benefits could receive nearly \$3,000 in total assistance this winter. Applications for emergency HEAP benefits are accepted at local departments of social services in person or by telephone. A list of offices by county can be found [here](#).

## **Home Energy Efficiency Programs**

NYSERDA offers a range of residential programs designed to help New York State residents identify areas where their homes are driving up energy costs and can provide assistance in completing energy efficiency improvements for a healthier, more comfortable home. More information is available [here](#).

