



May 22, 2023

Dear Neighbors,

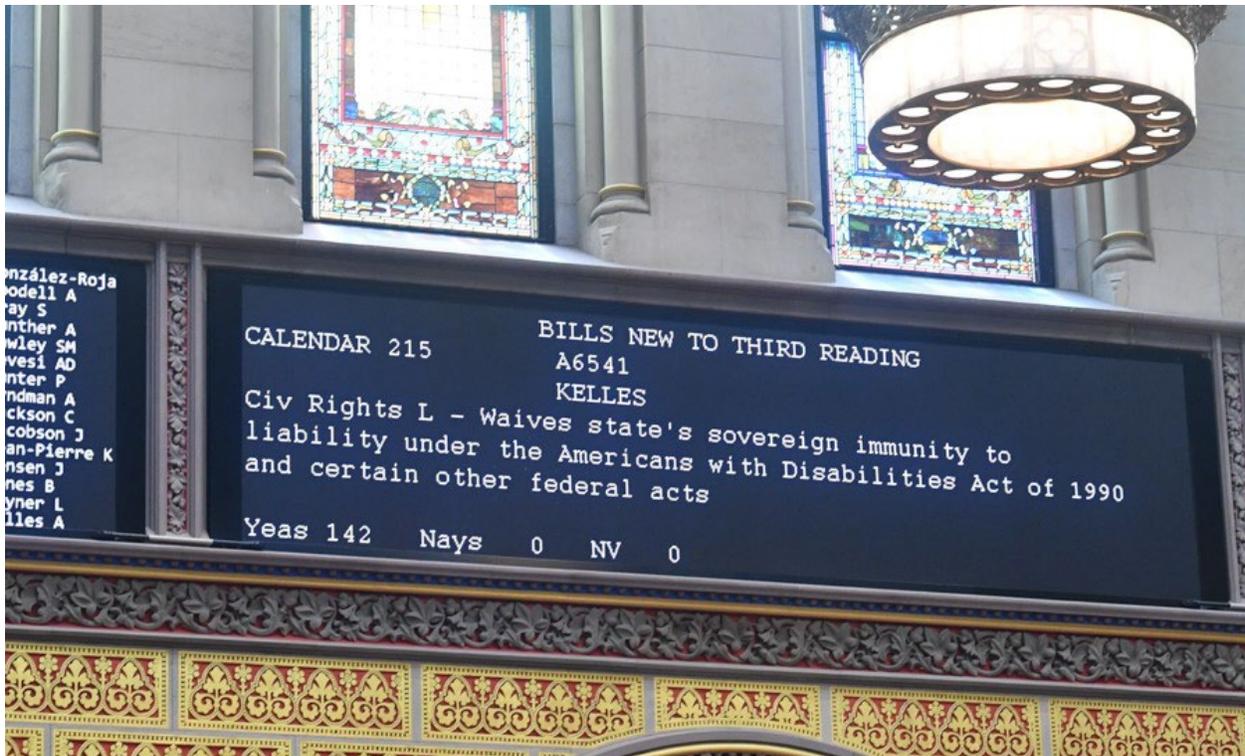
This past week was one of mixed emotions. While I am pleased to have two bills pass the Assembly (see details below), I am deeply saddened that Ithaca Carshare had to pause their operations on May 19 due to ongoing challenges securing insurance. Carshare is an incredibly valuable resource in our community, providing an equitable transportation option while reducing the number of cars on the road, fighting climate change. It has been an uphill battle educating people on the unique insurance needs of community carshares. I remain committed to my bill [A5718](#), which addresses the technical insurance regulation issues Ithaca Carshare is facing, and it is a top priority for my office.

Legislative Update

Disabilities Awareness Day Legislation

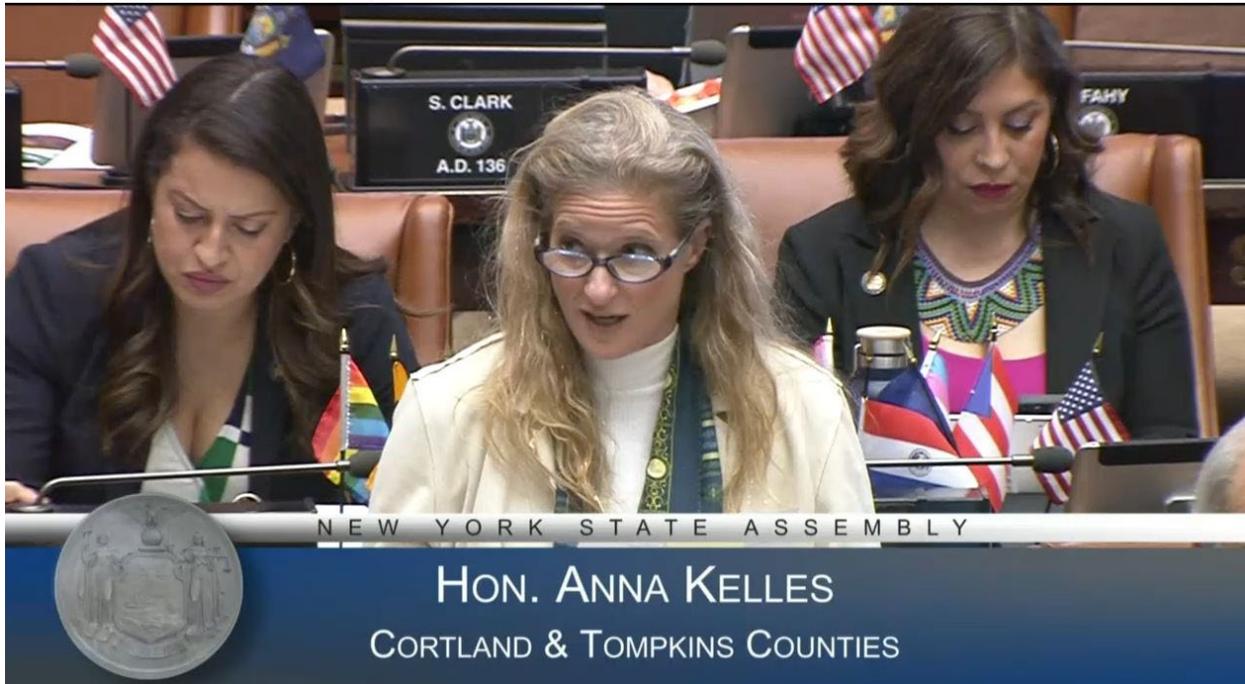
May 15 was Legislative Disabilities Awareness Day, and the Assembly passed a package of legislation which reinforces that all New Yorkers deserve to live in communities where they feel respected and supported, with access to resources they need to thrive. I am proud to have my [bill A.6541](#) pass, which waives the state's sovereign immunity to liability under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Fair Labor Standards Act,

the Age Discrimination in Employment Act and the Family and Medical Leave Act. Sovereign immunity prevents individuals from suing the state government for failing to comply with federal law, so removing this protection puts more pressure on state entities to ensure their facilities and resources are accessible to people of all abilities. My bill, along with the additional legislation passed, will help pave the way for more accessible and equitable communities.



Gender Neutral Terms in Law

As we advocate as legislators for more inclusive laws, we also need to ensure that the language in which we write those laws is also inclusive. My [bill A1142](#), which passed the Assembly this week, makes that happen. It requires the use of gender neutral terms, such as the “individual,” “staff,” “person,” or “they,” in the construction of new law. Individuals should be referred to in the manner in which they want to be referred, and our laws should not be written in exclusionary language. You can [watch my remarks](#) from the floor.



Around the District

Game Farm Road Crossing

On Saturday, May 20, the towns of Dryden and Ithaca celebrated the opening of the Game Farm Road crossing between the [Dryden Rail Trail](#) and the [East Ithaca Recreation Way](#), officially connecting these two popular trails. Although the Game Farm section of the Dryden Rail Trail has been open since the Fall of 2021, the crossing at Game Farm Road required additional planning and improvements to make it safe for the public. For walkers, runners, and cyclists, the trails are important recreational paths but can also serve as commuter routes to Cornell, community centers, or stores. Thank you to the leaders in Ithaca and Dryden committed to this

project, and I am happy my office could play a role in helping it come to fruition.



Community Resources

Stay Up to Date in Tompkins County

Tompkins County SIREN (**S**afety and **I**ncident **R**eal-Time **E**mergency **N**otifications) is the official mass notification system for Tompkins County, the City of Ithaca, and local towns and villages to communicate with the community during emergencies. You can [sign up to receive SIREN alerts](#) via text, email, or voice message.

For non-emergency news and information in Tompkins County, you can [subscribe online](#) through the county website for updates via email or text.

Spring into a New Job

Cortland Works Career Center is hosting a job fair on **Thursday, May 25 from 2 - 4 p.m.** at the SUNY Cortland PER Arena, 1 Folmer Drive, Cortland, NY. The job fair is free for attendees and open to the community. Over 60 companies will be represented with hundreds of opportunities. Bring copies of your resume and dress for success! If you need assistance updating your resume, contact the [Cortland Works Center](#) before May 24.

Food \$en\$e in Cortland County

Food \$en\$e is a monthly food buying co-op program from the Food Bank of Central New York for anyone who wants to stretch their grocery dollars. Food \$en\$e provides a monthly box of 12-15 staple grocery items at a discounted price, along with several low-cost monthly specials. The program is administered locally by Cortland Loaves and Fishes. Stay up to date on the monthly order and pick-up dates through their Facebook page.

As a reminder, there are many resources in both Tompkins and Cortland Counties for residents in need of free food. Residents can call 211 for a referral or review the listings online for food pantries or prepared meals in [Tompkins County](#) or Cortland County.



This is an exciting time of year as the colleges in the district host their Commencement ceremonies. Congratulations to all the graduates from SUNY Cortland, Ithaca College, Tompkins Cortland Community College, and Cornell University! I wish you all the best as you begin the next chapter in your career or educational pursuits!

In solidarity and health,

Anna R. Kelles

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Assemblymember, 125th A.D.

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