



Assemblymember

Anna Kelles

Assembly District 125



August 7, 2023

Dear Neighbors,

In the past days, weeks, and months, I've enjoyed the opportunity to work with my colleagues in the New York State Legislature - Senator Lea Webb and Senator Rachel May - to pass legislation borne out of the needs of our constituents in Central New York, the Finger Lakes Region, and Southern Tier.

I share legislation with Senator May on the safety of our drinking water and the health of our lakes - a keystone in New York's tourism industry. We also continue to work together in passing legislation to ensure safe, affordable, and accessible housing. These bills will provide help and protection for those both in and beyond our region.

It is such a pleasure to work with Senator Lea Webb in bringing home legislation that improves life across our shared district. On Saturday we stood together in bringing voice to our constituents' needs as well as in celebrating Voting Rights.

Legislative Update

Sign the Carshare Bill Press Conference



Senator Lea Webb and I, along with City of Ithaca and Tompkins County legislators, and community advocates, held a press conference this weekend on the Ithaca Commons. We called on Gov. Hochul, without delay, to sign the Carshare bill which was passed by both the Assembly and Senate ([A5718B/S5959B](#)). Since Ithaca Carshare paused its operations on May 19, 1,500 local members have been without access to 30 vehicles for their transportation needs, and staff have been furloughed. Ithaca Carshare is now at risk of closing permanently if this bill isn't signed right away. If you would like to add your voice, Ithaca Carshare has compiled this [helpful resource](#) in writing advocacy emails or letters to the Governor's office.

Transportation continues to be one of the greatest contributors of greenhouse gas emissions. One of the solutions to combating

transportation's impact on climate change, identified by NYSERDA, is community carsharing and the electrification of carshare fleets. To keep carshares as viable transportation options, the organization needs to secure car insurance. This bill would not only benefit nonprofit carshares, but also all nonprofits seeking insurance options.



Around the District

Democracy Fest at Southside Community Center



I had a great time this weekend at the First Annual Democracy Fest at Southside Community Center to celebrate and commemorate voting rights. On August 6, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 into law, breaking down some of the barriers that prevented Black Americans from voting. Though this was a tremendous step forward, we are still experiencing threats to our democracy and the democratic process. It is important to participate in events like this to remember that democracy works best when we all engage in the political process and that our fight against voter suppression continues. Thank you to Sen. Lea Webb for presenting the Senate Resolution that she sponsored earlier this year recognizing this pivotal moment in our nation's history.

Ithaca Youth Bureau 75th Anniversary Party



Happy 75th Birthday to the [Ithaca Youth Bureau](#)! It was an honor to attend the celebration this weekend and present an official Assembly citation to the Ithaca Youth Bureau (IYB), whose mission is to provide wholesome activities for teens and children. Under their exceptional leadership, IYB continually makes recreational programs, such as theater, dance, art, improv and athletics available to thousands of youths and their families, as well as coordinates youth development programs such as the Ithaca Youth Council, the College Discovery Program, and Big Brothers Big Sisters. Through thoughtful stewardship, they have maintained community resources such as the Cass Park Swimming Pool and Ice Skating Rink as well as fostered a diverse and inclusive environment for staff, volunteers, youth, and their families throughout their history.

From the Governor

Applications Now Open for \$500 million in Child Care Workforce Grants

Childcare staff are among New York's most essential workers. To help them thrive, New York State is providing retention and referral bonuses for existing staff and sign-on bonuses for new workers ranging from \$2,300 to \$3,000 for those in caregiving roles. For information about eligibility requirements and to apply for a grant, service providers can visit the [Workforce Retention Grant Program website](#).



**New York is delivering
\$500 million to support
our child care workers!**

**These funds continue the Assembly
Majority's commitment to putting
families first by strengthening our
child care workforce.**

Community Resources

From Southern Tier AIDS Program: MPox Vaccination Clinic

In response to recent developments regarding MPox (formerly known as monkeypox), a crucial vaccination clinic has been organized to safeguard the health and well-being of the community. The MPox Vaccination Clinic, hosted by the Southern Tier AIDS Program (STAP), will take place on **Friday, August 11 from 12 - 4:00 p.m.** at 314 W. State St., Ithaca, NY 14850.

MPox is a serious infectious disease that demands our attention and proactive measures. With Tompkins County having the highest number of MPox cases in the Southern Tier, it is imperative that people of Ithaca are vaccinated against the virus. The vaccination clinic will provide individuals with a much-needed opportunity to receive the first shot of the two-dose MPox vaccination. A follow-up clinic for the second shot is scheduled four weeks later to ensure comprehensive protection.

Please bring your identification, if available, to facilitate the vaccination process. You can [pre-register](#) and walk-ins are also available.

For more information about MPox and the vaccination clinic, please contact:

Haythi Ei, Program Manager, MPox at Hei@stapinc.org or 607-798-1706 ext. 163.

Pollinator Garden Tour

The Town of Ithaca Conservation Board invites you to join them on a Pollinator Garden Tour of four gardens on **Saturday, August 19 from 10 am - 2 pm**. Gardeners in the Town of Ithaca will open up their gardens for you to visit for inspiration and for a chance to learn about ways to create important wildlife habitat. Register [here](#), and upon registering, you will receive an email with details (garden addresses, descriptions, etc.) at least one week before the event. Questions? Please contact planning@town.ithaca.ny.us or ingridzabel607@gmail.com.

In good health,



Anna Kelles, Ph.D.

Assemblymember, 125th A.D.

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