



Assemblymember

Anna Kelles

Assembly District 125



August 28, 2023

Dear Neighbors,

Off-session from July to December can be a busy and exciting time. While the Assembly is not actively debating and voting on bills, this is the time of year I can work on legislation for the upcoming term, meet with constituents on issues affecting the district, and attend in-district events. In addition to two visits to the New York State Fair this week, I continued work on the Fashion Act and participated in meetings around water health, housing, and federal grant opportunities.

I am back to work after having spinal surgery in the beginning of August. My recovery is going well, and I am getting stronger each day. I wanted to take a moment and express my deep gratitude to the numerous people who reached out in support post-surgery. Please accept my collective thank you to all who have sent their best wishes. I deeply appreciate it!

Around the District

The Great New York State Fair

The Great New York State Fair is 13 days that showcases our wonderful home state. From agriculture and livestock, music and entertainment, innovative exhibits, food and rides, there is something for everyone to enjoy. I had a great time at the fair with Speaker Heastie and my Assembly colleagues on Aug. 24 for Assembly Day. My team and I also had the opportunity last week to staff the official Assembly booth at the fair – greeting visitors from all over the state, connecting them with their elected Assemblymember’s information, providing resources, and taking pictures of them as if they were sitting at the Assembly!





I had the honor to speak at the fair on Aug. 25. at the ceremony commemorating Pride Day, sharing the important legislation passed this year to support and protect the LGBTQ+ community. In 2015, New York became the first state fair in the United States to hold an official Pride Celebration. Eight years later, it remains the only official day celebrating members of the LGBTQ+ community at any state fair in the country.

During the ceremony, I provided the important update that New York lawmakers have, in two consecutive sessions, passed the New York Equal Protection of Law Amendment, which would ban a wide range of discrimination based on sex, expressly including sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, pregnancy and pregnancy outcomes, as well as provide a constitutional right to abortion and other reproductive health care. The measure will now appear on the ballot in November 2024 for final

approval, requiring a majority vote to pass and be enshrined in the state constitution. This is an important amendment, and we will need to educate all New Yorkers about the vote on next year's ballot.

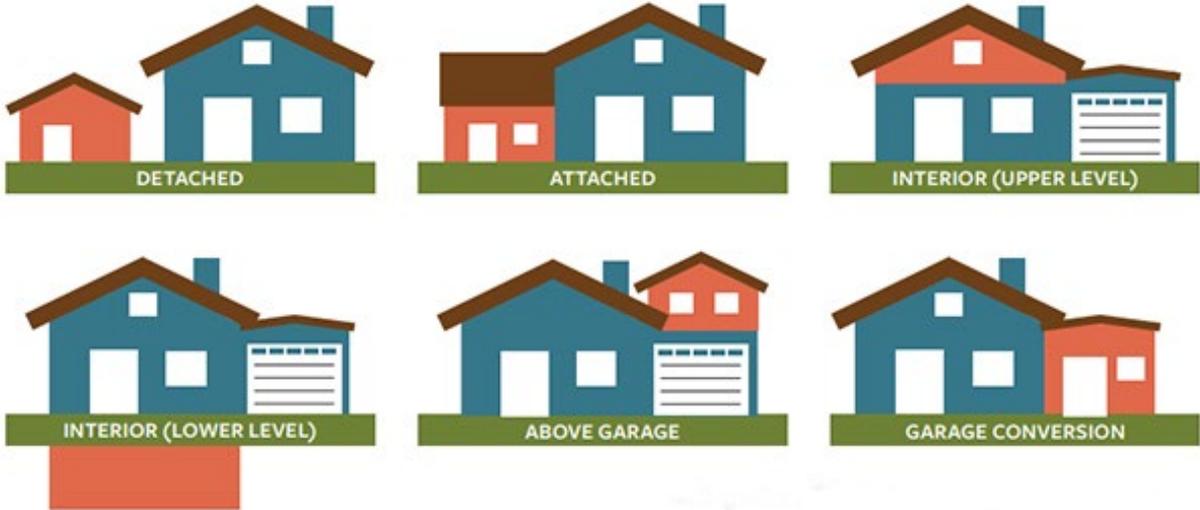


New York State Plus One ADU Program

The [Plus One Accessory Dwelling Unit \(ADU\) Program](#) launched with \$85 million in capital funds from the 2022-2023 budget. For homeowners, the goal is to create and upgrade accessory dwelling units across New York State and aims specifically to support low- and middle-income single-family homeowners. Select municipalities have been awarded to launch this program, and I am excited that the City of Ithaca has been selected as one of the initial municipalities, with Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Service (INHS) distributing funds.

AARP recognizes that [accessory dwelling units](#) can be a flexible and affordable housing option to meet the needs of older adults and young families. While it is disappointing that additional municipalities in Tompkins and Cortland Counties were not included in this round of funding, constituents can [submit an interest form](#) to indicate that they'd like their municipality included for the future.

Examples of ADUs:



Public Hearing

Civil Service and Pensions Public Hearings

Several constituents have reached out to my office in the past year with concerns about civil service workforce and pension issues. The New York State Senate Standing Committee on Civil Service and Pensions will be hosting two public hearings, [Sept. 13 at 10 a.m.](#) and [Sept. 20 at 11 a.m.](#), to discuss retention and recruitment for civil service jobs in New York State, the New York State pension fund, pensions, and civil service benefits. The hearings will be live streamed, and you can watch from the NYS Senate Calendar (linked above) or on the [NYS Senate YouTube channel](#).

Community Resources

Menstrual Equity Center

Menstruating people in the Ithaca area now have access to free menstrual products at the new Menstrual Equity Center (MEC). The MEC is located in Center Ithaca, on the Commons, outside of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance (DIA) office at 171 East State St. The MEC will be open from 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. on Saturdays; the center will be closed on Sundays. The Center opened on Aug 10 to ensure that people have access to affordable and sustainable menstrual products and aims to eliminate the shame and stigma around periods. Thank you to the DIA for spearheading this important resource in our community.

MENSTRUAL EQUITY CENTER

OUR MISSION

THE MENSTRUAL EQUITY CENTER MISSION IS TO PROMOTE AND ENSURE MENSTRUAL EQUITY FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS, BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS AND ADDRESSING THE SYSTEMIC BIAS TO UNDERSTANDING MENSTRUATION. WE STRIVE TO CREATE A WORLD WHERE MENSTRUATING INDIVIDUALS HAVE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE AND SUSTAINABLE MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS, COMPREHENSIVE MENSTRUAL HEALTH EDUCATION, AND SUPPORTIVE POLICIES, THROUGH EDUCATION, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, AND PARTNERSHIPS. WE WORK TOWARD SUPPORTING THE FOOD SYSTEM, AND HEALTH AND ECONOMIC INCLUSIVE AND EMPLOYMENT ENVIRONMENTS THAT RESPECT AND RESPECT MENSTRUAL HEALTH AS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT. OUR GOAL IS TO IMPROVE INDIVIDUALS AND CREATE A SOCIETY WHERE MENSTRUATION IS CELEBRATED, NORMALIZED, AND WE CHECK LACK OPPORTUNITIES IN PERPETUATED INEQUALITY.

HOURS OF OPERATION
 MONDAY-FRIDAY / 8:30AM - 5:30PM
 SATURDAY / 8:30AM - 4:30PM
 SUNDAY / CLOSED

SCAN WITH YOUR PHONE TO SEE MORE SERVICES AND SERVICES

Community Foundation



Microcredential Funding Available for Tompkins County Residents

Tompkins Cortland Community College has an exciting funding opportunity for Tompkins County residents to obtain a microcredential for free. A [microcredential](#) is a defined set of college courses that takes less time to complete than a degree or certificate – and is typically designed to teach specific, in-demand skills needed by local employers or available jobs. Microcredentials offer a valuable career credential upon completion, and courses can also be applied to an existing degree or certificate program. Individuals who are interested in learning more should complete an [online form](#) to request information or contact the Admissions office at admissions@cortlandtompkins.edu or 607-844-6580.



Cortland Community Matters Fair

The 4th Annual Cortland Community Matters Fair will be held Sunday, September 3 from 12 - 4 p.m. in Suggett Park. This free event is an opportunity for the residents of Cortland to come together for fun, to foster a sense of community, and to connect to resources in the area.

THE FOURTH ANNUAL CORTLAND COMMUNITY MATTERS

F A I R

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3
12-4 P.M.
SUGGETT PARK

COME HAVE A BLAST!

Yard Games by Clocked In
Water Balloon Baseball
Water Balloon Corn Hole
Basketball Contest
Community Rock Painting
Balloon Animal Maker
Mega Kickball
Facepainting
Go Fish
Bracelet Making
Caricatures by Noel Comix
And More!

GIVEAWAYS
& PRIZES

MUSICAL
CREATION STATION

LEARN A NEW
INSTRUMENT FROM
PROFESSIONALS!

DUNK TANK
DUNK YOUR
ELECTED
OFFICIALS

AND LOCAL
BUSINESS
OWNERS!

FREE
EVENT!

BACKPACK AND
SCHOOL SUPPLIES
GIVEAWAY SPONSORED
BY CORTLAND REUSE
AND CCMA

PIZZA
TASTING
CONTEST!

VOTE FOR THE
BEST PIZZA IN
CORTLAND!

SPONSORED BY LOCAL BUSINESSES!

Entertainment sponsored by FunFlicks Indoor & Outdoor Movies
Media & Entertainment sponsored by Cortland Voice

In good health,



Anna Kelles, Ph.D.

Assemblymember, 125th A.D.

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