



September 11, 2023

Dear Neighbors,

It has been a busy and exciting week! I enjoyed the opportunity to connect with several municipal leaders and community stakeholders in Tompkins County at in-district events, which I share more information about below. Negotiations also continued with the Governor's team around the Carshare bill, and I am hopeful that I will be able to bring you an update this week.

Around the District

Water Health Experience on Cayuga Lake with District Leaders

I had the pleasure of hosting, along with Senator Lea Webb and Senator Rachel May, Tompkins County municipal leaders and local water health experts for an informative afternoon exploring Cayuga Lake and its ecosystem. Aboard the Discover Cayuga Lake boat, we experienced the "floating classroom" with hands-on activities led by Bill Foster and crew. Cayuga Lake and its watershed is vitally important as a source of freshwater in the region. Leaders in our district were able profoundly, and viscerally, to experience Cayuga Lake's impact on the communities surrounding it, and truly understand that the health of the lake and its watershed is inextricably

connected to the health and well-being of all the people in our district. The lake serves as the primary drinking water source for at least 40,000 residents. The watershed spans parts of 6 counties (Cayuga, Tompkins, Seneca, Schuyler, Tioga and Cortland) and is impacted by the needs of agriculture, industry and tourism. In the face of climate change, lake health is threatened. As leaders, we all need to be ambassadors for the lake, working together to educate our community and advocating for policies and funding that will protect this natural resource for generations to come.



Presentation on Forever Chemicals



Following the boat tour, we gathered at Ithaca Farmers Market for a presentation by Dr. Roxanne Razavi, Assistant Professor of Environmental Biology at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF), on per- and polyfluoroalkyl chemicals (PFAS or “forever chemicals”). Dr. Razavi guided participants through what PFAS are, how they present in our water, and their impact on our health. Senator May and I sponsor the PFAS Discharge Disclosure Act ([A3296](#) / [S227B](#)) which would require all permitted facilities discharging waste in the state to disclose the measurement of PFAS chemicals found in any discharges. We look forward to our bill advancing in the legislature in the upcoming session.

Forever Chemicals

What you need to know

- F** Fluorine - carbon bond that resists breakdown
- O** Opposite properties - water repelling & water loving
- R** Risk - to our bodies, ecosystems, and reproduction
- E** Exposure is everywhere
- V** Voice support for research, remediation and safer alternatives to PFAS
- E** Energize friends, family, and colleagues to support legislation that bans PFAS in non-essential products
- R** Re-think our approach to chemical production and use

PFAS Seminar Roxanne Razavi 9/5/2023

Housing Round Table Discussion

I joined Sen. Rachel May for a housing roundtable in Ithaca as we discussed the challenges of housing for New Yorkers with key stakeholders in the district, including Unity House, INHS, Human Services Coalition, CNY Fair Housing, Housing Visions, senior staff from Sen. Lea Webb's team, and the City of Ithaca. Affordability and availability of quality housing remain primary concerns. In addition to expanding housing stock, particularly affordable housing, we also need to address the social factors that impact homelessness, as well as the recruitment and retention of staff in supportive housing. I appreciate the insights shared by all participants during this informative discussion, and I look forward to applying these insights as we address housing issues in our legislative session.



Community Resources

Discrimination Financial Assistance Program for Farmers

During U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack's excellent presentation at Cornell, I was very pleased that he took time to mention that The Inflation

Reduction Act (IRA) includes funding (from section 22007) to provide financial reparations to farmers, ranchers and forest landowners who experienced discrimination from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) farm lending program prior to January 1, 2021. Impacted farmers can [learn more about the assistance program](#), review the [eligibility requirements](#), and [file an application](#).



New York Forward Loan Fund 2

Our state would not be what it is without small businesses. To retain and grow our small business sector, businesses and nonprofits with fewer than 100 employees are eligible to apply for the [New York Forward Loan](#), a loan of up to \$150,000 with competitive, fixed interest rates. Loan funds can help businesses invest in capital improvements or equipment as well as cover payroll, utilities and rent, supplies, and advertising.

AARP Seeking Nominations for Community Service Award

Every year, AARP honors the legacy of Founder Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus by highlighting a dynamic person 50-plus, who is committed to service in their community. AARP NY is seeking nominees for the Andrus Award for Community Service, which recognizes outstanding individuals sharing their experiences, talents and skills to enrich the lives of others. Please consider nominating a person from our district that has exhibited their commitment to the community. The deadline is September 29, 2023. [Click here](#) to complete the nomination form.

Recovery & Reentry Resource Fair

The Office of Employment and Training at Tompkins Workforce NY Career Center invites folks in any phase of recovery and anyone in the process of reentry after incarceration to attend a free Recovery and Reentry Resource Fair, September 14 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the Tompkins County Public Library BorgWarner room. Community agencies will be available to speak with community members. Fentanyl test strip kits and Narcan kits will also be distributed.

Join Us!

SEPTEMBER 14
11:00 - 1:00



RECOVERY & RE-ENTRY RESOURCE FAIR

Local resources for those on their journey to
recovery and/or re-entering the workplace after
incarceration.

AT THE TOMPKINS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY (TCPL)



Emergency Preparedness & Safety Fair

Tompkins County Emergency Response and Whole Health will host their

2nd annual Emergency Preparedness & Safety Fair on Saturday, September 16th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Shops at Ithaca Mall. The event is being held in conjunction with National Preparedness Month, observed each September to raise awareness about the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies that could happen at any time, with this year's focus on the well-being of older adults. Local agencies and organizations, along with local police, fire and EMS departments, will share information as well as host CPR and first aid demonstrations.

2024 Assembly Internship Applications Now Available

The Assembly Internship Program is a full semester paid internship in Albany for undergraduate juniors/seniors or graduate-level students during the legislative session (spring semester) that gives students extraordinary access to lawmakers and the chance to work in Assemblymembers' offices. I have had wonderful interns from colleges across New York, and I encourage interested students in the district to apply! More information and the application can be found on the [Assembly website](#).

Public Hearing

In a previous newsletter, I shared information on upcoming public hearings regarding **Civil Service and Pensions**. Please note that the days and times of those hearings have changed from September to October.

The New York State Senate Standing Committee on Civil Service and Pensions will host two public hearings, [Oct. 11 at 11 a.m.](#) and [Oct. 17 at 10](#)

[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](#).

In good health,



Anna Kelles, Ph.D.

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