

[View this email in your browser](#)



November 30, 2022

Dear Friends,

Last week Governor Hochul signed legislation, which I co-sponsored, to put a moratorium on energy-intensive “proof of work” cryptocurrency authentication that works against the state’s Climate Action goals. I have taken a leadership role on state involvement on the “proof of work” issue, working with a coalition of environmental and business groups from around the state. The answer needs to be a move towards more energy-efficient forms of cryptocurrency authentication. More information on this environmental challenge and the legislation is included below.

One of my priority issues has been providing municipalities additional state funding to support clean water infrastructure projects that would be cost prohibitive without additional assistance. I am pleased that Port Chester was recently awarded a grant that will allow them to move forward with major sanitary sewer upgrades from the Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIA) grant program I helped initiate in 2015. The program was created and designed based upon the needs of communities like Port Chester. I am very happy that Port Chester is again receiving another WIIA grant.

Last week Governor Hochul signed another piece of legislation that I co-sponsored that will expedite statewide investments in EV infrastructure and advance New York's transition to clean transportation. One of my major priorities has been to accelerate the deployment of EV charging infrastructure to match the availability of EV vehicles scheduled by automobile manufacturers in the next few years.

Below you can also find:

- United Way Grants for Westchester Non-Profits
- 211 Info for Hudson Valley
- Home Energy Assistance Program
- Long Island Sound Report Card
- Port Chester Holiday Toy Drive

I hope you find news on these issues of interest. Please contact me on any issue that I can be of assistance. My District Office number is 914-939-7028.

Warm regards,



Governor Hochul Signs Crypto Mining Moratorium



Assemblyman Otis speaking at an Albany press conference earlier this year on the cryptocurrency mining issue.

Legislation I co-sponsored was signed by Governor Hochul last week. It places a two-year moratorium on new cryptocurrency mining operations in New York state that uses energy intensive proof of work authentication. The law would create the first-in-the-nation moratorium on new permits for fossil fuel power plants that house proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining and is a key step for New York as we work to address the global climate crisis.

The law will prohibit certain Environmental Conservation Law permits from being issued for two years to “proof-of-work” cryptocurrency mining operations that use behind-the-meter fossil fuel electric generating facilities. To ensure the ongoing protection of communities from greenhouse gases, it further requires the Department of Environmental Conservation, in consultation with the Department of Public Service, to prepare a generic environmental impact

statement on cryptocurrency mining operations that use proof-of-work authentication methods to validate blockchain transactions.

The legislation would still allow the issuance of permits for electric energy facilities that use alternatives to carbon-based fuel, such as hydropower, which would permit growth and business development in this industry while still striving for the goals in the nation-leading Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA).

Last year I co-chaired an Assembly hearing on the “proof of work” issue through the Science and Technology Committee.

There are over 15 different methodologies for authenticating cryptocurrency transactions. “Proof of work” uses 99% more energy than the second most common method called “proof of stake”.

Ethereum, one of the major cryptocurrency companies, moved from “proof of work” to the “proof of stake” method in September in a long-anticipated transition that Ethereum called “The Merge”. Their action should be an indicator that the industry will move away from energy-intensive verification methods like “proof of work.”

Cryptocurrency is facing challenges on a number of consumer, banking and SEC issues. Those questions will undoubtedly be sorted out over time. The legislation we passed only addresses the environmental and energy use issues involved in the “proof of work” authentication method. My view is that with all the technology and innovation available, we should require energy efficient forms of authentication.

Port Chester Awarded Water Infrastructure Grant

Assemblyman Steve Otis (AD – 91) and Senator Shelley B. Mayer (SD – 37) announced the award of a state clean water grant to support a major water infrastructure project by the Village of Port Chester for sanitary sewer system upgrades. The grant funding comes from the Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIA) grant program, which is administered by the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation.

Assemblyman Steve Otis said, “The purpose of the WIIA program is to lessen the cost of clean water projects on local property taxpayers. Port Chester has won funding towards a major local project in which outside funding is especially helpful.”

Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, “I am pleased Port Chester will receive this WIIA grant. Ensuring New Yorkers have access to clean water and healthy environments is critical. Thank you to Governor Kathy Hochul for making this investment.”

The Village of Port Chester has received an award of \$4 million towards its Downtown Sanitary sewer Revitalization Project. This award represents 25% of the net eligible project costs of PHASE 1 of the plan to replace and enlarge the sewer capacity from Smith Street to Ryan Avenue. This project is part of a major upgrade of Port Chester’s sanitary sewer system.

Mayor of Port Chester, Luis Marino said, “The Village of Port Chester is very appreciative that the State of New York and the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation has recognized and awarded significant funding towards our initiative to revitalize our village’s sanitary sewer system. This project will be

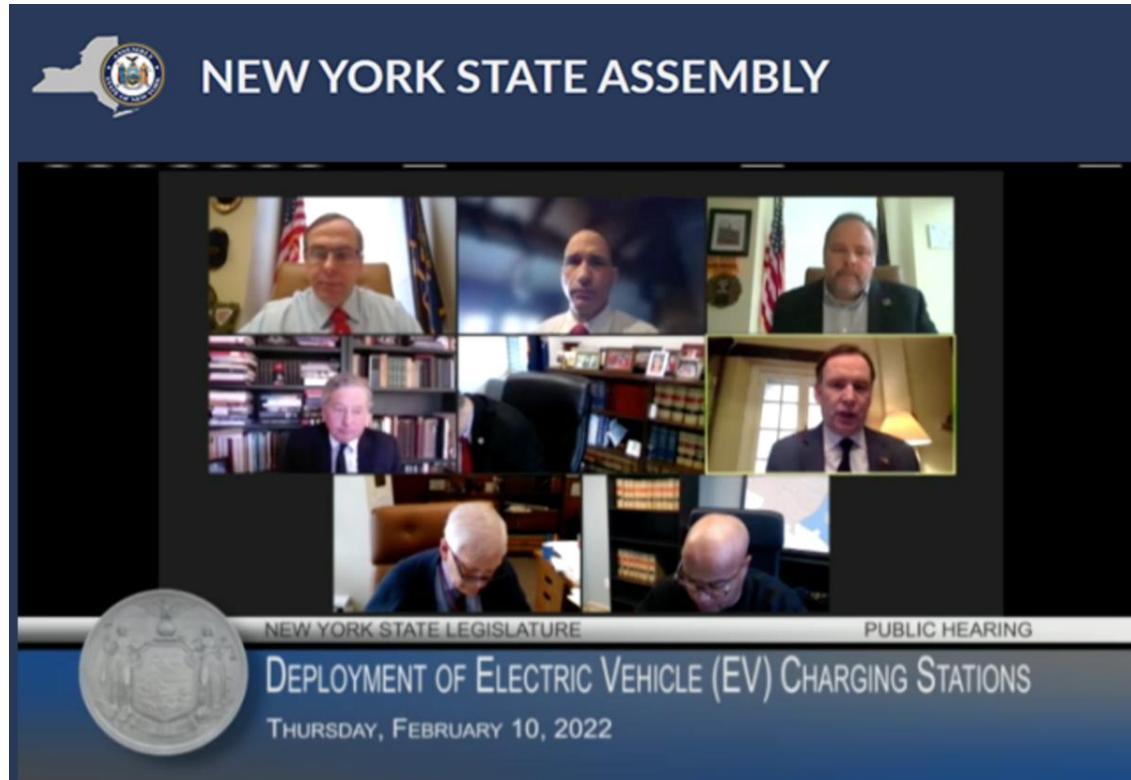
transformative for all who live here and I wish to thank everyone who helped us throughout this process.”

The Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIA) of 2015 is a state grant program initiated to provide state funding to make local clean water infrastructure projects more affordable for communities and local taxpayers. Since 2015, the program has delivered \$2 billion in state grants to over 800 projects across the state, including over \$55 million in grants to Westchester local projects. The Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) is the state agency responsible for NYS’s clean water infrastructure grants for local municipalities.

Assemblyman Otis and Senator Mayer added, “When we started the WIIA in 2015, the program was designed with communities like Port Chester in mind, municipalities with clean water projects on the drawing board and in need of financial assistance to make those projects affordable. Port Chester has received state clean water funding awards in prior years. This new funding will help the village move forward with an environmentally important project.”

This award is part of Governor Hochul’s announcement of the 2022 round of nearly \$300 million is being awarded to communities through the WIIA program and related Intermunicipal, Green Innovation, and Engineering Planning grant programs to fund critical water infrastructure projects across New York State. The grants are projected to save local taxpayers an estimated \$1 billion.

Assemblyman Otis and Senator Mayer work each year to assist municipalities in applying for clean water and other environmental grants.



Governor Hochul Signs Legislation to Advance New York's Transition To Clean Transportation

Drives New York State's Goal of Reaching 850,000 Zero-emission Vehicles by 2025, and Goal for All New Passenger Vehicles To Be Zero-emission by 2035

Governor Hochul signed legislation I co-sponsored that will advance clean transportation efforts by removing barriers to the installation of electric vehicle charging stations on private property. The legislation will prevent homeowners' associations from prohibiting homeowners from installing charging stations on their private property while also allowing the associations to provide input on the installation process. By making it easier for New Yorkers to transition to electric vehicles, this legislation will contribute to New York State's goal of reaching 850,000 zero-emission vehicles by 2025 and for all new passenger vehicles to be zero-emission by 2035.

Legislation (S.8518A /A.6165A) will help remove barriers to the installation of electric vehicle charging stations on private property. Increasing the adoption of electric vehicles is essential for New York to able to meet emissions goals, but without a robust charging station network, New Yorkers may be discouraged from seeing electric vehicles as realistic alternatives to gas powered vehicles. This legislation will prevent homeowners' associations from prohibiting homeowners from installing charging stations on their private property while allowing associations to provide input on the installation process. The new law will require that any denial of a homeowner's application to install an electric vehicle charger to be in writing and contain a detailed description of the reasons for denial. If no written denial is issued to the homeowner within 60 days, the application will be deemed approved unless the delay in approval resulted from the homeowners' association's reasonable request for more information.

This legislation will help advance [New York State's goal](#) to reach 850,000 zero-emission vehicles by 2025 and to have all new passenger vehicles to be zero-emission by 2035. New York is rapidly advancing these goals through a range of initiatives including [EV Make Ready](#), [EVolve NY](#), the [Drive Clean Rebate](#), the [New York Truck Voucher Incentive Program](#), and [Charge NY](#). These efforts contributed to a record increase in the number of electric vehicles sold in New York in 2021, bringing the total number of EVs on the road as of September 2022 to more than 114,000 and the number of charging stations in the state to more than 10,000, including Level 2 and fast chargers.

In the last year, I have advocated for increased charging infrastructure in the state budget process, through legislation and in co-chairing a legislative hearing on the issue through my chairmanship of the Assembly Science and Technology Committee.

Grants Available for Westchester Non-Profits



United Way of Westchester and Putnam announced it would administer about \$350,000 in grants to local nonprofits serving Westchester County through the [Emergency Food and Shelter Program](#).

“The high rate of inflation has caused housing and food insecurity for many residents in Westchester County,” said United Way President and CEO Tom Gabriel. “In response, the United Way is honored to announce the availability of \$350,000 in Emergency Food and Shelter funding to help our nonprofit partners address the basic human needs of hundreds of thousands of families in our community.”

These funds are in addition to the \$1.5 million allocated in Emergency Food and Shelter grants at the beginning of 2022.

United Way of Westchester and Putnam is accepting applications for Phase 40 of the Emergency Food and Shelter Funds available through the Local Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) Boards in Westchester County. This program provides federal funding, which helps to extend currently available services for the hungry and homeless.

The deadline for submitting completed applications is 5 p.m. on Monday,

December 5, 2022. The application is available online at www.uwwp.org/efsp40. Applicants can obtain further information on the program by contacting: Faith Ann Butcher, EFSP Director at United Way of Westchester and Putnam, at (914) 997-6700 ext. 753.



Dutchess • Orange • Putnam
Rockland • Sullivan • Ulster • Westchester



NYS Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

As energy prices rise during the winter months, New Yorkers can take steps to protect against higher energy costs. The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) can help eligible New Yorkers heat their homes.

If you are eligible, you may receive one regular HEAP benefit per program year and could also be eligible for emergency HEAP benefits if you are in danger of running out of fuel or having your utility service shut off.

[Apply for HEAP](#)

Beginning November 1, applications will be accepted for HEAP. To qualify for heating assistance from HEAP, a family of four must have a maximum gross monthly income of \$5,485, or an annual gross income of \$65,829.



Earlier this month, [Save the Sound](#) released their 2022 Long Island Sound Report Card. The biennial report has now compiled 14 years of water testing results in the open waters of Long Island Sound and four years of testing more than 50 bays and bay segments in the region. The results were mixed with the 2022 report card raising some concerns for the future after many years of marked improvements in our area's coastal region. Specifically, the report's science advisors noted that previous gains in water quality may be threatened by rising water temperature in Long Island Sound. There were hopeful signs, as well, indicating that efforts to reduce nitrogen pollution are having a positive impact in the western Sound, demonstrated by modest improvement in open waters of New York City.

One area where government has played an important role in improving water quality is through the water infrastructure improvement grants managed by the Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC). Municipalities along the sound shore have been the recipients of these grants that has allowed them to complete projects that would otherwise be overly costly to local taxpayers, such as sewer and storm drain improvements.

To review the report card, click [HERE](#)

The poster features a decorative border of blue and white snowflakes. In the top right corner is a circular logo for the "PORT CHESTER • RYE BROOK • RYE TOWN Chamber of Commerce". The main title "Holiday Toy Drive" is centered in large red letters. Below it, a blue text box contains the message: "Donate new, unwrapped toys to be distributed to children at the Don Bosco Community Center Santa Breakfast in Port Chester!". Underneath this, in bold blue text, are the collection dates: "Collection dates:
Monday Nov. 28th to Friday Dec. 9th". Further down, the locations are listed: "Locations:
Town of Rye Tax Office
222 Grace Church St. 3rd floor". A small blue box on the left identifies "Madison's Niche" as being "In the Rye Ridge Shopping Center". At the bottom left is a cartoon illustration of a snowman wearing a top hat and holding a broom. To the right of the snowman, contact information is provided: "Questions? Call 914-939-1900 or email:
info@pcrbchamber.net".