



Assemblyman

Steve Otis



91st Assembly District

Larchmont - Mamaroneck - New Rochelle - Port Chester - Rye Brook and Rye

December 5, 2023

Dear Friends,

This newsletter contains news of Governor Hochul's approval of legislation I sponsored with Senator Shelley Mayer to improve access to life-saving AED devices as part of the first aid plans for youth sports programs and camps. The attached press release shares the importance of the issue and how two Rye Brook residents brought the issue to our attention after the lives of their family members were saved because AED devices were present. Incidents of Sudden Cardiac Arrest most often end tragically. Incorporating AED devices in first aid plans will save lives. Governor Hochul signed our legislation Thanksgiving week.

This email also contains information on digital inclusion, Veterans Day ceremonies, the Hudson Park Children's Greenhouse ribbon cutting, and grant funding to an important Sound Shore health care and senior residence facility, United Hebrew in New Rochelle and my annual participation on the Rye Chamber of Commerce Mistletoe Magic Street Fair during the Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend.

Lastly, as we head into the holiday season, it is important to not forget those who are less fortunate. There are many wonderful local not-for-profits and service organizations that provide much needed assistance to Westchester families. One of those is the Sharing Shelf, which provides clothing for children and other important services. A link for their website is included here.

As always, do not hesitate to contact me or my staff on issues in this e-mail or any matter in which we can be helpful. The office number is 914-939-7028.

Warm regards,

Governor Hochul Signs Legislation by Senator Mayer and Assemblyman Otis Requiring Automated External Defibrillator Implementation Plans for Camps and Youth Sports

Senator Shelley B. Mayer and Assemblyman Steve Otis announce their legislation (S.7424/A.366A) to require camps and most youth sports programs to adopt a plan to provide access to an automated external defibrillator (AED) at camps, games, and practices, has been signed into law by Governor Kathy Hochul.

According to the Mayo Clinic, sudden cardiac arrest is the leading cause of death for young athletes — between 1 in 50,000 and 1 in 80,000 young athletes die of sudden cardiac arrest each year. Outcomes of sudden cardiac arrest can be improved when CPR and AED response occur within three minutes of the episode, but this equipment is often not available or easily accessible.

This legislation will build on existing requirements in state law for AED access, by requiring camps and many youth sports programs to establish a plan detailing how AEDs will be made available at every camp, game, or practice and how they will make a best effort to ensure at least one employee, volunteer, coach, or other qualified adult, who has completed an AED training course, will be present.

The issue gained national attention with Damar Hamlin's near-death experience in January during the Buffalo Bills/Cincinnati Bengals game. The goal of the legislative effort is to ensure equipment is available at all youth sports games and practices. Even in school settings, the awareness of the availability of equipment that is already on-site needs to be improved.

Two Rye Brook residents, Dana Colasante and Alice Schoen, brought the issue of AED access to the attention of Senator Mayer and Assemblyman Otis.

Dana's husband and Alice's son both experienced sudden cardiac arrest at a youth sports event, but thankfully survived because they had immediate access to care and an AED. Many families are not as fortunate. Dana and Alice have since co-founded Project ADAM New York, which advocates for cardiac emergency response plans where children learn and play.

Governor Kathy Hochul stated in the Executive Office's press release on this legislation, "We all remember the terrifying moment when Damar Hamlin was injured last February, but young athletes at schools and camps could be exposed to similar risks. By requiring camps and youth sports programs to establish an AED implementation plan, kids will be safer and teams will be prepared. I want every parent in New York to know: we're doing everything we can to keep your kids safe."

State Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, "I am very pleased that New York has taken action to keep children and spectators safe by requiring youth sports programs to develop a plan for AED access at youth sports practices, games,

and other events. This legislation will make these programs safer and provide parents and young athletes with peace of mind. I thank Dana Colasante and Alice Schoen for their advocacy on this personal issue and their continued work to ensure children at play are safe. I am proud to have fought for this legislation alongside them and Assemblyman Otis to ensure other lives can be saved. I want to thank Governor Kathy Hochul for signing this life-saving legislation.”

Assemblyman Steve Otis said, “Sudden cardiac arrest has a 90% fatality rate, but those outcomes can be improved when CPR and AED response occurs within three minutes of an episode. It is estimated that between 7,000 and 14,000 youth sudden cardiac arrests occur nationwide each year. This legislation will save lives by having youth sports groups and camps include AED coverage as part of their first aid plans. This important legislation was made possible through the advocacy of Dana Colasante and Alice Schoen, whose husband and son were saved by the presence of an AED at youth sports events. Tremendous thanks go to Governor Hochul, Project Adam, Saving Active Hearts, the American Heart Association, American Red Cross-NYS, Westchester Medical Center’s Maria Fareri Children's Hospital, other groups supporting this legislation, and my Senate colleague Shelley Mayer for supporting this life-saving reform.”

“We know that when sudden cardiac events strike, the odds for survival are greatly improved when CPR is deployed and automated external defibrillators (AEDs) are nearby,” said Michael D. Israel, President and CEO of WMCHHealth Network. “As the founders of Project ADAM in New York where we work with area schools and sports teams on sudden cardiac arrest preparedness, we are delighted to partner on this bill with Gov. Kathy Hochul, Senator Shelley Mayer, Assemblyman Steve Otis, the American Heart Association and Damar Hamlin to make AEDs more widely available as well as equip, train and prepare others to join our cause of saving lives. The progress we’re making to raise awareness

about sudden cardiac events in children is a testament to Alice Schoen and Dana Colasante, who co-founded Project ADAM here at the Maria Fareri Children's Hospital."

Dana Colasante, Co-founder of Project ADAM New York at Maria Fareri Children's Hospital said, "Governor Hochul signing Bill S7424 into law will strengthen the cardiac chain of survival to save lives. My husband had a sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) during our son's soccer practice 10 years ago. He survived because there happened to be an ER doctor with his daughter's team on an adjacent field and a parent was able to retrieve an automated external defibrillator (AED) from a nearby school that happened to be open on the weekend. The league was not prepared. I wanted to take the luck out of survival and joined forces with Alice Schoen after her son's SCA to spread awareness on the signs and risks of SCA in children and how youth sports, schools, and camps can prepare with accessible AEDs and CPR/AED training. I am so grateful to Assemblyman Steve Otis and Senator Shelley Mayer for championing this life-saving legislation."

Alice Schoen, Co-founder of Project ADAM New York at Maria Fareri Children's Hospital said, "I am grateful to Governor Hochul for signing Bill S7424 and to Senator Shelley Mayer and Assemblyman Steve Otis for sponsoring it. My son had a sudden cardiac arrest almost six years ago during a high school varsity basketball game and he is alive today because of a spectator who performed CPR and an off-duty officer who ran to his police car to retrieve the AED that was used to save his life, despite the fact the school's AED was located immediately outside the school gym. He was incredibly lucky. This family experience ignited my passion to educate communities about sudden cardiac arrest. Since Dana Colasante and I partnered together, we have been spreading awareness of the needed protocols, tools, and training to

increase the likelihood that someone who experiences a sudden cardiac arrest will survive. This important legislation will help save lives.”

The American Heart Association (AHA) reported in 2018 that there are more than 356,000 out- of-hospital cardiac arrests annually in the United States, nearly 90 percent of which are fatal. Death can result within minutes from cardiac arrest if proper steps-such as performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and using an automated external defibrillator (AED) to shock the heart and restore a normal heart rhythm are not taken immediately. Data from 2019 shows that 38.3% of cases are witnessed by a layperson, and 12.7% by an EMS provider. Trained non-medical personnel can use AEDs, which are simplified and portable electronic medical devices, to treat a person in cardiac arrest using voice prompts, lights, and text messages to walk the responder through the steps. Sports-related SCAs account for 39% of SCAs in children ages 18 years old or younger.

This legislation went into effect immediately upon Governor Hochul’s signature on November 24, 2023.

New Children's Greenhouse at Hudson Park in New Rochelle



In November I was very excited to attend the ribbon cutting of the Hudson Park Children’s Greenhouse to congratulate Millie Radonjic-Ilich on what can only be described as an outstanding project. Millie is president of the HPCG not-for-profit committee and has provided the vision for the new greenhouse and other improvements to New Rochelle’s Hudson Park. The committee and the City of New Rochelle have worked for years to make this project a reality.

Assemblywoman Amy Paulin and I combined efforts to secure an early state grant towards the project that will provide horticultural programs for New Rochelle elementary school students and a variety of other programs serving the community.

Support Local Merchants for Holiday Shopping



For many years, I have served as a judge for the chili contest as part of the Rye Chamber of Commerce major holiday event Mistletoe Magic. During this holiday season, I encourage you to shop local, patronize our local merchants, and support our economy. Every local Chamber of Commerce is holding events to celebrate the holiday season and highlight the community businesses that are part of the fabric of each village, town, and city.

I am pictured here with my fellow chili contest judges: Lisa LaRocca, a reporter with News 12 and resident of Harrison, and Fox 5 news reporter and Rye resident Richard Giacovas. We evaluated ten different chili contestants from local restaurants and enjoyed the festive holiday event.

Veteran's Day Ceremonies



I attended meaningful Veterans Day events throughout the Sound Shore to honor the service of the generations who have made our freedom possible. My comments at the City of Rye ceremony are found here.

[Video of Remarks](#)

United Hebrew Receives \$325,000 in New York State Grants for Capital Improvements, Enhancing Care of Westchester's Seniors



I joined my colleagues in the Senate Senator Mayer and Senator Fernandez, to announce that United Hebrew has received \$325,000 in New York State grants for the improvement of the senior living campus' main kitchen and rehabilitation area. As Westchester's aging population continues to grow, we are committed to ensuring senior living facilities meet the wide-ranging needs of today's seniors.

These state funds will be used toward food service enhancements, including new kitchen equipment that will aid in cleaning and infection control and to create an additional state-of-the-art first floor gym to provide much needed rehabilitation space and allow UH to expand service delivery. The rehab gym will incorporate innovative design features to improve outcomes and integrate the latest in assistive technology to augment rehabilitation programming, as well as responding to additional demand.

United Hebrew is one of our region's leading senior care and rehabilitation providers. I am very pleased that we were able to combine efforts to secure state funding for the food services facilities and rehabilitation space to help UH offer the best quality environment to serve residents and rehabilitation clients. This is a great example of Senator Fernandez, Senator Mayer, and I working together to bring state resources for projects to serve the community. Congratulations to CEO Rita Mabli and the entire staff at UH for their dedicated work.

Pictured above with Senator Natalia Fernandez, Executive Director of United Hebrew President and CEO Rita Mabli and Senator Shelley Mayer.

State Digital Equity Plan

Empire State Development's [ConnectALL Office](#) has published drafts of its State Digital Equity Plan and Broadband Deployment Initial Proposal. These plans are required for NYS to access federal funds to support digital equity and broadband accessibility work that is vitally important to expanding access for all New Yorkers.

The comment period ends this week. I have been a leading advocate for digital inclusion programs and work closely with the NYS Digital Equity Network (NYSDEN), a statewide group of digital inclusion providers that have been offering these programs for many years.

The comment period will close on December 6th, 5PM ET.

- [Read the draft State Digital Equity Plan.](#)

- [Read the draft Broadband Deployment Initial Proposal.](#)
 - [Read the press release.](#)
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The Sharing Shelf

Childhood poverty is on the rise and that is reflected in demand for our services. There has been a 36% increase in clothing requests this year.

Clothing insecurity impacts a child's mental health, their physical and social well-being, and school attendance. The Sharing Shelf reduces economic stress on struggling families and frees income for rent, health care, and food.

2023 Year to Date

5,116 REQUESTS FOR CLOTHING
(AND CLIMBING)

189% INCREASE IN DEMAND IN
LAST 2 YEARS

1,301 ADDITIONAL CHILDREN AND TEENS
REQUESTING OUR SERVICES

1,874 BACKPACKS FILLED AND
DISTRIBUTED

99,471 PERIOD PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTED

As of November 24, 2023