



Dear Constituent,

The Legislature is back in session, and budget season is upon us. Below is my latest e-news, with updates regarding the Governor's budget proposal, roads, pending legislation and other goings-on around the district.

Best,

Assemblywoman Dana Levenberg

## Budget Season Begins



*With Assembly & Senate colleagues awaiting the Governor's State of the State address.*

The Governor delivered her State of the State address on January 9 and released her budget proposal a week later, so I am now digging into the details of her proposal with my colleagues. I

am also continuing to meet with stakeholders and gather information about their needs so that I can advocate for those priorities to be included in the Assembly's response, called our "one-house" budget. I encourage you to weigh in as budget discussions continue. Click [here](#) to visit my Upcoming Events page for more details on upcoming Town Halls. My staff also continues to log constituent comments on the budget and other issues. My contact form is the best place to submit comments; [click here to access it](#).

My colleagues and I are currently discussing areas where we differ from the Governor in preparation for negotiations. A particular area of concern for me relates to education. I have been fighting for fully funded schools since I was a school board member in Ossining. Last year's historic win bringing us up to full funding of Foundation Aid was a big deal for me and so many school districts and students throughout AD95, and the entire state. Though the Governor's proposed budget nominally increases school aid, the details of the proposal reveal it to be a step backward from where we are today. This is a non-starter for me and many in the Legislature. [Read my full statement here](#).

Affordability and sustainability are top priorities of mine, and we will need to do more work to create a budget that puts us on a path toward making New York more affordable for working and middle income families. Along with education, many other programs and services do not get the funding they deserve in the Executive's budget proposal. These budget gaps could be filled by raising taxes on the ultra-rich and highly profitable corporations that do business in New York State (regardless of where they are headquartered). New York's corporate and personal income tax rates for those earning upwards of seven and eight figures annually are lower than that of comparable states; given that, and the intrinsic value of being in New York, we have room to increase these rates before reaching a point where we would become uncompetitive.

As the Governor herself pointed out during the State of the State, the majority of people who leave New York are working- and middle-class families who move to neighboring states where housing and other necessities are more affordable. Continued outmigration has the potential to hurt our economy, taking dollars away from our local businesses and creating labor shortages in some areas. I will be advocating for a final budget that asks for more from those who have benefited the most from New York's advantages, so that we can reduce costs for everyone else. This is how we can retain more of the residents whose hard work and spending make New York such a powerful economic, social and cultural force.

## Roads Update



*Touring the culvert project at the intersection of Routes 9A and 134.*

My work to ensure that our roads get the attention and resources they deserve continues through budget season. The Governor's budget proposal does not include the 20% increase in funding for the NYSDOT's core highway and bridge program that many of my colleagues and I are seeking, and we would also like to see more funding for local roads, in the CHIPS program and related initiatives. This is another area of the budget for which I will be advocating for more funding.

In other news closer to home, the Route 9A study has reached an important milestone. The first draft of the final report is now available for review. [Click here to visit the study website](#), where you can access the [draft report](#). The study team is collecting feedback on the draft, which will be used to inform the final report; comments are due on **Friday, February 9**. You can send your comments in writing to Sandra Jobson via email at [Sandra.Jobson@dot.ny.gov](mailto:Sandra.Jobson@dot.ny.gov) or via regular mail to Ms. Sandra D. Jobson, NYS Department of Transportation, 4 Burnett Boulevard, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603. As before, please include the project number **810355** with any comments related to this study. This is the beginning of the process to substantially improve Route 9A, so your feedback is critically important at this stage.

Those who follow me on social media already know that I had a meeting with Lance McMillan, Regional Director for NYSDOT Region 8, last month. [I brought him and his deputy on a tour of some of our troubled state roads here in AD95](#). They are aware of the issues, and shared a progress report on some of the projects going on in the area. One of our tour stops was the culvert project at the intersection of Routes 134 and 9A in Ossining, undertaken in response to constituent concerns about flooding. I have been advocating for this work since I was Ossining Town Supervisor. The DOT has replaced the old pipe with a new one that has nearly twice the capacity for water to flow under 9A during a storm. This will help mitigate the impacts of severe

flooding at this intersection, which has become more common in recent years. I will continue to advocate for projects like this which improve our resiliency in the face of climate change.

I have also joined a group of colleagues in the Legislature who are lobbying members of Congress to support legislation creating a National Infrastructure Bank, which would enable states to get funding for critical infrastructure projects without having to go through the annual congressional appropriations process. Click on their Web site to learn more about the National Infrastructure Bank proposal, and ways you can get involved if you are so inclined.

## Legislative Update



*Advocating for my legislation streamlining solar canopy construction, joined by legislative colleagues and advocates.*

I have been very focused on legislation that promotes affordability and sustainability. In collaboration with Assemblymember Chris Burdick, I am working on a package of housing bills to stimulate smart, climate-conscious development. Our plans to increase our housing stock originated in ideas generated locally at [our housing summit last year](#), and will empower municipalities to grow in practical and sustainable ways. I look forward to introducing this legislation soon.

I am also keen to pass legislation that will get more renewable energy into the grid. New York is missing out on hundreds of kilowatts of solar energy because of a well-intentioned law that creates an obstacle to the construction of solar canopies above the parking lots of parks. A bill I sponsor, [A.7269](#), would remove this obstacle, enabling municipalities to bring more solar canopy projects online in optimal locations. Solar canopies in parking lots present the opportunity to put infrastructure generating clean, renewable power close to existing utility distribution systems, avoiding the high costs and other obstacles that typically exist for the

construction of new transmission systems. Additionally, because the land has already been cleared for parking, there is usually no need to cut down trees.

The canopies can also create new revenue streams for local municipalities at no cost through initiatives like [New York State's Build-Ready program](#), and can save local residents and businesses money. We now have several such canopies in Ossining, which became home to the largest solar canopy in Westchester County during my tenure as Town Supervisor. This canopy, sited at Maryknoll, provides community solar for more than 100 households, which receive credits on their energy bills because of their enrollment in the community solar program.

In December, I held a [press conference](#) to kick off this year's effort to get the bill through the Assembly. I was joined by Senator Pete Harckham, who is the sponsor of the Senate companion bill, S.1179, along with other state and local legislators and environmental advocates. [Click here to learn more about A.7269](#) and sign a petition if you would like to show your support for the bill.

## In Other News



Office of Assemblywoman  
Dana Levenberg

# WINTER FOOD DRIVE

January 25, 2024 - February 29, 2024

DONATIONS TO BENEFIT 

**Collection box locations:**

-  **District Office**  
8 Revolutionary Road, Ossining, NY 10562
-  **Town Hall Events**  
Dates and locations viewable online at <https://bit.ly/AD95Events>.
-  **Mobile Office Hours**  
Dates and locations viewable online at <https://bit.ly/AD95Events>.

(914) 941-1111 | [levenbergd@nyassembly.gov](mailto:levenbergd@nyassembly.gov)

   @AMDanaLevenberg



## MOST-NEEDED ITEMS

- Brown or White Rice
- Whole Grain Pasta
- Shelf-Stable Milk
- Canned Meat/Fish
- Canned Vegetables
- Peanut Butter
- Whole Grain Cereal
- Canned or Dried Fruit
- Canned Meals

When choosing items for donation, please look for labels that read:

- Low Sodium
- No Salt Added
- No Sugar Added
- Unsweetened
- Reduced Sodium
- 100% Fruit Juice
- Lite

Please donate non-perishable items only.  
No glass containers, pre-opened or out-of-date items please.

 TOGETHER WE ARE FEEDING WESTCHESTER

200 Clearbrook Road, Elmsford, NY 10523 | 914-923.1100 | [www.feedingwestchester.org](http://www.feedingwestchester.org)



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## Food Drive

My office is holding a food drive to benefit Feeding Westchester, running now through Thursday, February 29. We have collection boxes at my district office (8 Revolutionary Road, Ossining, NY 10562) and will also bring them to each of our Town Hall events. We will also have a box at our mobile office hours, which will return in February. Visit my [Upcoming Events](#) page for the dates, times and locations of these events.

## “Old Traditions, New Beginnings”

My office is collaborating with two local seniors, Cora Silvestri and Judith Shangold, on a not-for-profit project called “Old Traditions, New Beginnings.” The project aims to give seniors the opportunity to connect with others by sharing their stories, memories, recipes, or whatever legacy they would like to impart to the generations that follow. The contributions will be collected for sharing online and possible print publication in an anthology. The deadline for inclusion in the first volume of the project is **Sunday, June 30, 2024**. If you are interested in contributing your own writing or volunteering to help others share their contributions, please email [district95@nyassembly.gov](mailto:district95@nyassembly.gov). Please feel free to share the attached flyer with anyone who may be interested in the project.

## Follow Me On Social Media

If you are not already following @AMDanaLevenberg on social media, I encourage you to do so. My [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) feeds complement the news and resources I share in my e-blasts with daily updates on my activities and information from the State and other partners.