



Hi <<First Name>>.

I hope you and your family have enjoyed your summer and were able to spend quality time with your family and friends! As we head into September, I wanted to share what I've been up to over the past month and highlight some legislative accomplishments and helpful resources. Our communities have recently seen many positive developments, from securing funding to construct an affordable senior housing facility to opening the Capital Region BOCES Career and Tech Education Center. On the heels of Overdose Awareness Week, it's also crucial to remember that there is still much more work to be done to support those struggling with substance abuse and addiction. The opioid epidemic that has torn families apart and taken too many lives across our state and nation, and I'll continue fighting to combat this public health crisis and help ensure those who are struggling or in recovery can access the support they need.

If you have questions or concerns about any community issue, please don't hesitate to contact my office at 518-377-0902 or SteckP@nyassembly.gov.

All the Best,
Phil Steck

Legislative Updates

I sponsored and passed a law expanding the scope of the Community Health Access to Addiction and Mental Health Project (CHAMP) initiative (Ch. 517 of 2022). In 2018, the CHAMP ombudsman program was established to help individuals access treatment and insurance coverage as well as investigate and resolve complaints and violations of rights. The program also advocates for a host of issues, including access to treatment, denial of services, discrimination issues and legal assistance for insurance appeals. This new law expands the scope of CHAMP by allowing the program to coordinate with other state agencies to better help New Yorkers address mental and behavioral health challenges.

Another law I co-sponsored and helped pass allows a nursing home patient's legal representative or estate to sue for injuries (Ch. 502 of 2022). Unfortunately, our state has an ugly history of elder neglect and abuse. This measure helps ensure nursing homes are held accountable for mistreatment and prevents bad actors from escaping liability if a patient passes away or is unable to initiate a suit on their own. I'll continue working to protect our loved ones living in these facilities.



In The Community

Supporting Seniors

I was joined by Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie at the Colonie Senior Service Center on Aug. 15 to announce a \$2 million investment to support the King Thiel II affordable senior housing facility. I helped secure this crucial grant funding to assist with constructing the new three-story building, which will provide housing for up to 162 seniors. This affordable housing facility is scheduled to be completed in 2024 and will address the limited competition and large waitlist at King Thiel I.



I also partnered with the Colonie Senior Services Center to host a Home Safety and Fall Prevention Luncheon, which had a great turnout of more than 150 people. Colonie EMS responds to fall-related calls more than anything else, so sharing information on this widespread safety issue is vital in our community. Colonie EMS Outreach Coordinator David Plouff discussed how seniors can stay safe in their homes and avoid falls.



Grant Funding

I had the distinct honor of presenting Dr. Robert Worden, Executive Director of the John F. Finn Institute, with a ceremonial check for \$75,000 to help finance studies of local police departments' use of force and how they investigate violent crimes. The Institute's work is intended to help decrease violence instead of increase prosecution. John Finn was not only a dedicated public servant and an innovator in policing, but also a dear friend of mine. The Institute has carried out their mission with integrity since its foundation by helping our local police departments engage in innovate policing programs. This grant will ensure they have the necessary funding to further their important work and continue helping our communities.



Last week I secured a grant for \$25,000 to support the Shaker Heritage Society in honor of its upcoming 50th anniversary. The funding will help bolster several initiatives to increase community engagement and historical education. From developing gender- and racially-inclusive communities to sheltering fugitive slaves, the Shakers were early trailblazers in our state's long tradition of fostering an equal, inclusive society. Historical sites offer valuable insight into the lives of those who came before us, and the Shaker Heritage Society provides educational programs to help New Yorkers of all ages get to know some of our region's early residents. This funding will help the society continue preserving the legacy of some of New York's most innovative and influential thinkers for years to come.



Story Time with the William K. Stafford Library

The Colonie Farmer's Market is one of my favorite weekend activities, so I was excited when the William K. Stafford Library invited me to join Story Time and read a childhood classic to the kids. Reading is fundamental for kids to learn, allowing them to explore a range of history, arts and science. Encouraging children to read can also help instill a greater sense of creativity that inspires them throughout their lives.



BOCES Career and Tech Education Center Grand Opening

I attended the grand opening for 25 workforce training programs in eight high-demand career fields. The new state-of-the-art labs and learning spaces and on-site daycare are a much-needed upgrade from the previous antiquated buildings. Training will also be consolidated at the new center that supports the creation of a skilled regional workforce.



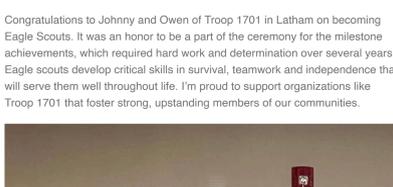
Standing with Union Workers

I stood in support of unionized Capital Roots workers as they rallied against the nonprofit for allegedly retaliating against employees and fostering a toxic workplace. The union has filed 15 unfair labor practice complaints against Capital Roots. The nonprofit has several vital programs, from community gardens to its Veggie Mobile, but the needs of its dedicated employees cannot be ignored as they work to uplift families in our communities.



Troop 1701 Inducts Eagle Scouts

Congratulations to Johnny and Owen of Troop 1701 in Latham on becoming Eagle Scouts. It was an honor to be a part of the ceremony for the milestone achievements, which required hard work and determination over several years. Eagle scouts develop critical skills in survival, teamwork and independence that will serve them well throughout life. I'm proud to support organizations like Troop 1701 that foster strong, upstanding members of our communities.



Useful Information & Tips

Repaying Student Loans

The New York State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) helps eligible residents pay tuition at approved schools in New York State. An annual TAP award can help pay up to \$5,665 in tuition costs. Unlike a loan, TAP grants do not have to be paid back. For eligibility information, click [here](#).

Overdose Awareness Week

This year, we recognized Overdose Awareness Week from Aug. 28 through Sept. 3. As chair of the Assembly's Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Committee, I'm committed to working with government and community partners to help combat this ongoing epidemic. Spreading awareness on this community and nationwide issue helps reduce stigma and lets those impacted by addiction and drug abuse know they are not alone. To find an Opioid Overdose Prevention Training program near you, click [here](#).

911 Good Samaritan Law

The 911 Good Samaritan Law allows people to call 911 without fear of arrest if they are having a drug or alcohol overdose that requires emergency medical care or if they witness someone overdosing. Call 911 immediately if someone experiences the signs of a drug or alcohol overdose, which includes someone being unconscious and unable to be woken up, not breathing or breathing very slowly and having lips that are blue or grayish in color. For information on these protections, click [here](#).

Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Grants

The state Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) has announced that it is accepting funding applications for the \$20 million supplemental Federal Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant funds. Grants can be used to support substance use disorders program costs incurred after March 15, 2021, that were not previously and will not be reimbursed by other funding or programs. For information on applying for this grant, click [here](#).

