



As I travel throughout the district, I'm reminded every day of how much we can accomplish when government, community organizations, and residents work together. Real progress happens when we focus on results that make a difference in people's lives.

This month's newsletter highlights that collaboration in action. You'll find updates on my legislation to address gambling addiction and regulate kratom, along with community investments I have supported like the Albany International Airport expansion and SEAT Center's YouthBuild Schenectady program.

We're also spotlighting local organizations that make our region stronger, including Bring on the Spectrum and the Niskayuna Baseball League, and sharing helpful resources for families and small businesses. Be sure to check out details about our upcoming Mobile Office Hours in Schenectady as well.

Please feel free to reach out to my office with any questions or concerns at [518-377-0902](tel:518-377-0902) or SteckP@nyassembly.gov.

Best,
Phil Steck

Legislative Updates

Protecting New Yorkers from the Dangers of Online Sports Betting

Last week, I held a joint hearing with Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner, Chair of the Assembly Racing and Wagering Committee, to examine the dramatic rise in

gambling addiction due to the proliferation of online sports betting. Following the legalization of mobile sports betting in 2022, the New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) reported the largest single-year increase in gambling treatment services. Additionally, mobile sports betting has now surpassed casino gambling as the primary reason for gambling-related helpline calls made by New Yorkers.

At the hearing, we heard expert testimony from multiple professors who have studied this issue, individuals with lived experiences of gambling addiction, and organizations pursuing policy changes. The Executive Director of the New York State Gaming Commission also provided testimony regarding the legal and regulatory process that sports wagering operators must go through to operate in New York State.

While I review the testimony of each witness and introduce legislation based on their recommendations in the coming months, I will continue to advance common-sense measures to increase accessibility to problem gambling services and establish guardrails on sports betting platforms to protect users, including legislation that:

- Increases the distribution for problem gambling education and treatment from \$6 million to \$12 million (A7629)
- Requires insurance companies to cover outpatient problem gambling services (A8518)
- Prohibits mobile sports wagering operators from allowing users to use gift certificates or e-wallets to deposit or withdraw funds (A8724)
- Requires health education to include gambling awareness in addition to mental health, alcohol, drug, and tobacco abuse, and the detection/prevention of certain cancers (A8912)
- Prohibits mobile sports betting platforms from using AI for advertising, tracking user activity, or offering personalized incentives (A8916)
- Prohibits mobile sports wagering advertisements during live sporting events (A8925)
- Prohibits mobile sports wagering operators from allowing more than five deposits from an authorized sports bettor within a 24-hour period (A8928)

I want to thank each witness for providing incredibly insightful testimony to the joint committee. I would also like to thank Chair Woerner and all the members

who participated in the hearing for their commitment to addressing the rise in gambling addiction related to sports betting.

To watch the hearing, [click here](#).



Kratom Regulation

Earlier this year, I introduced legislation to regulate the sale and labeling of kratom products in New York State. Kratom is an unregulated, mind-altering substance that can currently be purchased online or in stores with little to no oversight.

The goal of this legislation is straightforward: to protect consumers by ensuring transparency and safety. New Yorkers deserve to know exactly what they are putting into their bodies.

Thank you to Spectrum News for helping raise awareness about this important issue. You can learn more about the legislation and the growing push for regulation below.



In the Community

Albany International Airport Improvements

I recently joined New York State Department of Transportation Commissioner Marie Therese Dominguez at Albany International Airport to celebrate the opening of the airport's new children's play area, sensory room, and business center.

These improvements are part of a \$100 million terminal expansion made possible with \$60 million in state funding through the Upstate Airport Economic Development and Revitalization Competition—an excellent investment in the Capital Region's infrastructure, economy, and accessibility.

It was inspiring to see the creativity and collaboration behind these new spaces, including contributions from the Adirondack Wild Center and sculptor Gracelee Lawrence. The sensory room will provide a calming environment for travelers with disabilities or sensory needs, while the play area will make flying more enjoyable for families.

Thank you to Commissioner Dominguez, airport leadership, and all the partners who helped bring this project to life. I look forward to seeing the full terminal expansion completed and continuing to support smart investments that strengthen our region.



Empowering the Next Generation at the SEAT Center

At SEAT Center in Schenectady, I presented \$75,000 in state funding to support their impactful YouthBuild Schenectady program.

YouthBuild provides young people ages 16–24 with the education, job training, and leadership development they need to build successful futures while giving back to their communities. This latest funding will enhance wraparound services, workforce development, and leadership training that prepare students for high-demand careers.

It was inspiring to hear directly from students about how YouthBuild has transformed their lives and set them on a path to success. Their stories reflect the power of opportunity, mentorship, and perseverance.

Since 2022, my office has secured a total of \$350,000 for SEAT Center through state budget allocations and grants, investments that continue to strengthen their mission and expand opportunities for local youth.

Thank you to Jennifer Lawrence and the entire SEAT Center team for your unwavering dedication to empowering young people and building a stronger community.



Supporting Inclusion Through Bring on the Spectrum

I recently visited Bring on the Spectrum to see firsthand the impact of their incredible work in our community. Earlier this year, I secured \$30,000 in state funding to support their new A.D.A.P.T. program, which helps youth and community groups learn about neurodiversity and take meaningful steps toward building more inclusive spaces for everyone.

It was inspiring to sit in on one of their classes and see how this program brings people together through understanding and collaboration. I'm proud to continue

supporting Bring on the Spectrum as they lead the way in fostering a community where every individual feels valued, respected, and included.



Investing in Niskayuna's Parks and Youth Program

At Blatnick Park, I stood alongside Town Supervisor Erin Cassady-Dorion, Niskayuna Baseball League President Phil Sidoti, members of the Nisky Baseball League board, and the Town Board to announce \$150,000 in state funding to upgrade the baseball fields.

The improvements will address drainage issues and provide new turf, lighting, and safety enhancements to make the fields more accessible and enjoyable for the many youth leagues that play there each season.

Investing in our local parks and recreation spaces is an investment in our children, families, and the future of our community. I'm proud to continue supporting projects that help Niskayuna grow and thrive.



Honoring 250 Years of the United States Navy

The USS Slater recently hosted a celebration marking the 250th birthday of the United States Navy. On October 13, 1775, the Continental Congress authorized the creation of the Continental Navy, establishing a proud tradition of service and sacrifice that continues to this day.

This event held special meaning for me, as my Legislative Director's father, Captain Alan MacQuoid, served in the Navy for 30 years. His distinguished career included flying P-3 surveillance planes during Operation Desert Storm aboard the USS Kitty Hawk and later planning tactical missions during the Afghanistan War and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

My deepest thanks go to Captain MacQuoid, the volunteers of the USS Slater, and all members and veterans of the United States Navy for their enduring dedication and service to our nation.



Celebrating The Murray Group's Grand Opening and Community Giving

My Chief of Staff, Thad Rutherford, joined The Murray Group Insurance Services, Inc. to celebrate the grand opening of their new office at 43 British American Boulevard.

The Murray Group has been a valued part of our community for many years, known not only for their professional excellence but also for their generosity and community spirit. As part of their celebration, they donated \$17,500 to the American Cancer Society HopeClub to support individuals and families affected by cancer.

Thank you to The Murray Group for your continued commitment to making a difference and for helping strengthen our community through both your work and your compassion.



Supporting Students and Families in Menands

I visited the Menands Union Free School District to present a \$50,000 state grant that will help strengthen the partnership between families and schools while supporting student success.

This funding will allow the district to continue its Parent Liaison program, host family engagement events like Literacy and STEM Nights, and celebrate the rich diversity of its community through cultural and heritage events.

I'm proud to have a long history of supporting Menands School, including \$250,000 for paving improvements in 2023 and two additional grants totaling \$65,000 in 2024 to expand family and educational programs.

Investing in our schools ensures that students, families, and educators have the resources they need to succeed and grow together.



Honoring President Chester A. Arthur

My team joined community members, historians, and the New York National Guard at Albany Rural Cemetery to honor Chester A. Arthur, the 21st President of the United States, on his birthday. Each year, a wreath is placed at his gravesite on behalf of the President of the United States, continuing a national tradition that celebrates the legacy of every former president.

Born and raised in upstate New York and a graduate of Union College, Arthur went on to serve as Quartermaster General during the Civil War before becoming President in 1881. His leadership in civil service reform and modernization of the U.S. Navy earned him a lasting reputation as a principled and forward-thinking leader.



Nigeria Independence Day Celebration in the Capital District

I had the pleasure of joining members of the African Network of Capital District at their annual Nigeria Independence Day Celebration. It was a vibrant evening filled with music, culture, food, and community spirit, a true celebration of Nigeria's 65th Independence Anniversary and ANCD's 32nd Anniversary. The Capital Region is stronger because of organizations like ANCD that bring people together to share culture, history, and friendship.



Tips & Information

Food Assistance Resources

If you or someone you know is affected by the federal government shutdown and are not receiving SNAP benefits, local resources are available to help. No one in our community should go hungry or be left without support during this time.

Below are several food pantries and community organizations offering assistance. If you have questions or need help connecting with resources, please don't hesitate to contact my office at **518-377-0902**. We're here to help.



Meet Us in Your Neighborhood: Mobile Office Hours in Schenectady

My team will be hosting Mobile Office Hours on Tuesday, November 18, from 12–3 p.m. at the Woodlawn Branch Library (2 Sanford Street, Schenectady).

This is a great opportunity to meet with a representative from our office to ask questions, share concerns, or get help with state-related issues. We're here to help.

Location: Woodlawn Branch Library, 2 Sanford St., Schenectady

Time: Tuesday, Nov. 18 | 12–3 p.m.



Assemblymember
Phil Steck's



Mobile Office Hours

Meet with a representative to have your questions answered or share concerns.

We're here to help!

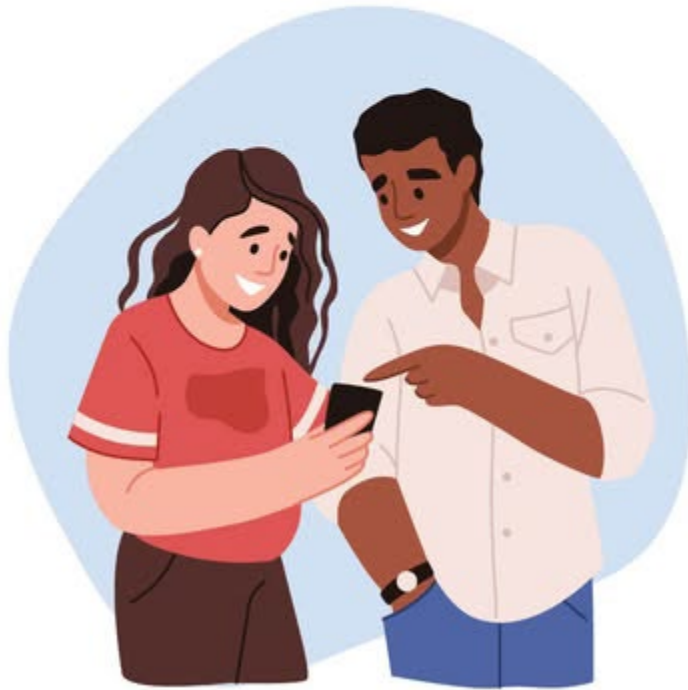
Tuesday, Nov. 18
12-3pm

Woodlawn Branch Library
2 Sanford St, Schenectady

Building a Stronger Financial Future with the Secure Choice Savings Program

Working at a job that doesn't have a pension or 401k? The Secure Choice Savings Program can help New Yorkers save for the future! Through automatic payroll deductions, and at no cost to employers, this simple program helps New Yorkers build long-term financial security and keep more of what they earn. To learn more, [click here](#).

New retirement savings program helps New Yorkers *invest in their FUTURE*



Plan Ahead and Travel Smart with 511NY

Want to avoid construction zones and get real-time traffic updates? Visit 511ny.org for the latest travel information before you hit the road!



Share Your Voice: New York State Small Business Survey

Small businesses are the backbone of our communities, yet many face challenges such as tariffs, regulations, limited access to capital, and workforce shortages that make it difficult to compete.

To better understand these challenges, Chair Buttenschon of the Assembly Committee on Small Business is conducting a Small Business Survey to ensure that future discussions and resources reflect the real needs of small business owners.

If you own or operate a small business, I encourage you to take a few minutes to share your experiences and insights. Your feedback will help shape upcoming legislative priorities and programs that support small businesses across the state.

To take the survey, [click here](#).

