



September 25, 2023

Dear Neighbors,

I've had wonderful opportunities this week to present at a variety of conferences on my legislation as well as connect with the community at events. These presentations allow me to share critical information and educate others on the details of my legislation and garner support, which is vitally important to help move legislation forward. At community events, I was able to learn about new initiatives and celebrate accomplishments within the district. It is so rewarding for me to engage with concerned citizens who are working passionately on issues they care about to make our community stronger. The constituents of the district continuously inspire me and my legislation!

Legislative Update

Climate Week panel presentation with Columbia Climate School

This past week I presented on The Fashion Sustainability and Social Accountability Act ([A4333A](#)) during a Climate Week event hosted by the [Columbia Climate School](#). The fashion industry is a cultural and economic powerhouse that contributes significantly to global greenhouse gas emissions, water pollution, and biodiversity loss. While brands are pledging to adopt more environmentally friendly practices, substantial efforts are still required across the fashion value chain to meet the Paris Agreement targets. You can [watch a recording of the presentation](#); the access password is A+u!nN8@

DUE DILIGENCE



- ❑ Not a one-way street – brands also have responsibility
- ❑ The Act includes detailed language on purchasing practices so that fashion sellers are responsible players and their payment terms with their suppliers can allow for the changes required by the law



Climate Justice and Energy Democracy: Putting Communities First

During the [Climate Justice and Energy Democracy](#) event in New York City on September 20, I shared a video presentation on the Just Energy Transition Act (JETA, [A4866](#)). According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change of the United Nations, we need to reduce our overall greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. That is a short 6 ½ years away. JETA aims to transition the most polluting fossil fuel-generating facilities to renewable energy sources, while prioritizing energy efficiency, environmental justice, and emissions reductions. You can [watch my remarks](#) online.



New York State Association of Conservation Commissions (NYSACC)

I was honored to be the keynote speaker at the in-person [NYSACC Conference Reception](#) at Stewart Park in Ithaca. During the presentation, I was able to share some of my key environmental legislative priorities. Protecting our water remains a critical focus for me, as I sponsor the Open Water Data Act ([A3299](#)) and the PFAS Disclosure bill ([A3296](#)) so that we can collect more accurate data on the health of our water systems and track what chemicals

are being discharged into water. Thank you to the event organizers for a great discussion.



Upcoming Presentation for Circular Shift

I am looking forward to speaking at Circular Shift 2023 on October 10 in New York City. This year's Cradle to Cradle Products Innovation Institute summit is focused on powering innovation for a circular future. The event will unite some of industry's best known leaders to explore approaches and strategies to innovate for a circular future, featuring a diverse program of both inspirational and interactive sessions. As part of the expert interview "Legislation driving the circular shift," I will be sharing insights on the way sustainability is shaping US legislation and New York's Fashion Act. To learn more or to register to attend, visit the [Circular Shift 2023 website](#).



Legislation driving the circular shift



Anna Kelles

New York Assembly Member

10 October 2023 New York City

circular-shift.org

Around the District

United Way of Cortland County Day of Caring

I had a great time visiting various spots around Cortland during the United Way Day of Caring. Thank you to all the volunteers who planted tulips and beautified public landscapes, completed painting projects, and organized food donations for local pantries. Seeing the number of volunteers and projects was truly heartwarming. Strong communities care for each other, and this day embodied care in action. A special thanks to Christella Yonta, Executive Director of the United Way, for her tireless dedication to Cortland County and for all the organization of the day!



William Maxwell Internship Celebration

I celebrated the [launch](#) of the endowed William Maxwell Internship program at the Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC) this week. This new funding will expand paid internship opportunities for students in the fields of education, technology, politics, or the trades. Internships provide exposure to careers and invaluable learning experiences for students, and can help them make professional connections that lead to full time jobs. Accepting unpaid internships in a desired field, though, can be challenging for students if they rely on paid work to cover expenses, which is why this generous funding is so impactful. I am grateful that one of the wonderful interns currently working in my Ithaca district office, Adriana Ramirez, is through a GIAC program. I look forward to welcoming additional interns through this program in the future!



Community Resources

NYS Department of Labor Connecting Work-Eligible Asylum Seekers to Employers

After a year of advocacy by Gov. Hochul and New York leaders, President Biden announced this week that certain asylum seekers from Venezuela will be eligible to apply for Temporary Protected Status, which will allow them to

work legally in the United States. [Gov. Hochul has directed](#) the New York State Department of Labor to connect employers with newly-eligible asylum seekers and migrants who are on the path to receiving work authorizations. Many businesses have shared with my office their difficulty in hiring staff. If your business is interested in connecting with this workforce, you can [complete the form](#) on a newly launched portal to inform the State of your interest. Interested businesses may also contact my office, and we'll help connect you to the Governor's team.

How Healthcare Helps Prevent Suicides: A Community Town Hall Event

The [Tompkins County Suicide Prevention Coalition](#) (TCSPC) is hosting a town hall event at the Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC) at 301 W. Court Street (Ithaca) on Thursday, September 28 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. The town hall will feature panel discussions from a variety of organizations about why suicide is a public health challenge, how the "Zero Suicide" model is used by healthcare systems to prevent suicide deaths, and local efforts to implement the "Zero Suicide" model. This event is free to attend and open to the public!

Cortland County Drug Take Back Event

The Fall 2023 Cortland County Drug Take Back Event will be on Saturday, September 30. Constituents within the district can drop off unused, unneeded, prescription, and/or nonprescription drugs at the Cortlandville Fire Station (999 Route 13, Cortland) from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. without leaving your vehicle. The Cortland County Drug Disposal Program was created to address the [growing concern for unused prescription](#) and over-the-counter medication, in order to ensure they are kept out of the hands of youth and are safely disposed of to protect our water systems. Thank you to Cortland Prevention Resources, law enforcement, CACTC and community volunteers for hosting the event.

New Laws

While other states are restricting voting rights, New York has passed a number of new laws to expand voting access, encourage voter registration,

and to safeguard the integrity of elections. Gov. Hochul recently [signed a legislative package](#) to strengthen democracy and protect voting rights.

- Legislation (S. 6195/A.1177) allows absentee ballots to be counted if they have been taped and show no signs of tampering.
- Legislation (S. 5984-A/A. 6132-A) creates a “Golden Day” on the first day of the early voting period when New Yorkers can register to vote and cast their ballots at their polling place all on the same day.
- Legislation (S. 6519-A/A. 1565-A) establishes a deadline for changing location of a polling place for an early voting period.
- Legislation (S. 7394-A/A. 7632-A) establishes a system for early voting by mail.
- Legislation (S. 5965-A/A. 4009-A) requires local jails to provide voter registration information to individuals of voting age being released from a local correctional facility
- Legislation (S. 587/A.268) requires the New York State Board of Elections to develop and provide a training program for poll workers.
- Legislation (S. 1733-A/A.5180-A) requires local boards of education, BOCES, charter schools and non-public schools to adopt policies to promote student voter registration and pre-registration.
- Legislation (S. 7550/A. 7690) schedules the Presidential Primary Election for April 2, 2024.
- Legislation (S. 438/A. 928) prohibits “faithless electors” from impacting the outcome of a presidential election.



In good health,

Anna R. Kelles

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