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91st Assembly District
Larchmont - Mamaroneck - New Rochelle - Port Chester - Rye Brook and Rye

February 1, 2021

Dear Friends,

The last week brought news on a number of fronts. A drop in the Covid-19 infection rate and a stabilization in hospital and ICU capacity percentages allowed a number of changes in policies tied to these trends.

- Almost all of the Covid-19 Cluster Zones were lifted throughout NYS, including all six Westchester zones. This is good news for small businesses and restaurants in the previously zoned areas.
• School and non-school organized sports were given the green light to proceed by state and county health authorities, leaving the final decisions to school district and sports organizations.
• NYC restaurants, which have been closed for indoor dining, will be allowed to reopen February 14, if the health statistics remain stable.

Joint State Budget Hearings have begun. Last Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, I participated in three 10-12-hour marathon hearings covering Transportation, Environmental Conservation and Education. The hearings began with agency Commissioners followed by advocates covering a wide variety of issues, programs and agency topics with questions posed by members of the Assembly and the Senate.

On Saturday, February 6th we will hold our annual Westchester Assembly Delegation State Budget Forum on Zoom. If you would like to testify or even just submit a written statement please CLICK HERE to register.

The Westchester hearing is very important in capturing the specifics on how the Governor's proposed budget will impact Westchester schools, local governments and not-for-profits.

Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie has appointed me as Chair of a new Assembly Standing Committee on Science and Technology. The committee is going to be working on a number of new technology issues, including a focus on online technologies. I have also been appointed to an Assembly Working Group on Transitioning N.Y. Economy Toward COVID-19 Recovery.

There are more details and links for a number of these topics and others in this update.

Below you will find:

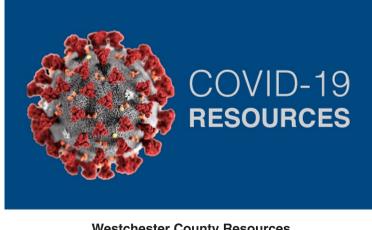
- Covid-19 Resources & Testing
• Winter Storm Resource
• Update on Youth Sports
• Update for area restaurants
• New Working Group Announced on NY Economic Recovery Assembly
• Westchester Delegation Budget Forum registration & State Budget link
• NYS Parks are open

Every year I support the Rye YMCA's poster contest event done by Rye High School digital arts students. This year's contest and online exhibit 'Heads Up! Distracted Driving and Walking' submissions are viewable HERE.

As always, if I can be of any assistance as we navigate the change landscape and issues related to Covid-19, please do not hesitate to contact me at 914-939-7028.

Warm regards,

Steve Otis



Westchester County Resources

NY State Vaccine Eligibility & Appointments HERE
State's vaccine distribution plan website.
Westchester Vaccine Allocation and Sites HERE

NYS Covid Vaccine Tracker dashboard HERE

Statewide guidelines for businesses and gatherings HERE

Testing:

To find a testing site near you and to make an appointment, visit: NYS Health Department or call the NYS Covid-19 Hotline at 1-888-364-3065. For help with quarantine and isolation: 866-588-0195

Find a Test Site Near You

(Testing is free at all NY run test sites)

Local Covid-19 Statistics:

- Westchester Covid-19 Stats by Municipality HERE
• School and University Covid-19 Statewide Tracker HERE
• Covid-19 hot spot address lookup HERE

Winter Storm Resources
Important Phone Numbers

Con Edison

To report a power outage call 1-800-75-Coned (1-800-752-6633) or online.

Signup up to receive notifications by texting REG to OUTAGE (688243)

Alice/ Optimum Cable

To report a service disruption contact Alice/ Optimum at 855-267-8468

Contacting Optimum via any of these channels will result in a trouble ticket being created that will direct a repair team to assess and address the issue:

Visit optimum.net/support/outage

Message Optimum at optimum.net/chat

Send Tweet to @Optimumhelp

Verizon Fios

To report a disruption with your cable service, contact Verizon at 800-837-4966

Message from Con Ed For Seniors and Medical High Risk Customers.

We encourage residents who use medical equipment to register with ConEdison in case of power outages. This includes those residents who do not receive a bill directly from Con Edison. For more information or to fill out a Life-Support Equipment survey, residents can CLICK HERE.

Good News for Youth Sports

School and youth sports activities previously paused under Covid-19 rules now have a green light to proceed effective February 1st, pending their own school or athletic organization deciding to go forward. On Friday the New York State delegated to County health departments the authority to allow previously designated "Higher-Risk" sports to proceed. These activities include, but are not limited to, football, wrestling, ice hockey, rugby, basketball, contact lacrosse, volleyball, martial arts, and competitive cheer/dance.

On Wednesday the Westchester Department of Health, along with six other county departments of health in our region, determined that these "high risk" sports can go forward at the discretion of the governing school district or non-scholastic athletic organization. Sports will have to follow safety protocols. In accordance with the state guidance, county health departments in the region will also monitor whether there has been a more-transmissible variant of COVID-19 identified in the area, as well as the percent of local residents that test positive. More information is available HERE.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, I have advocated for a variety of sports and recreation activities seeking ways to safely play sports during this public health crisis. I have been in regular discussions with state and county officials on how sports are conducted and may proceed safely. I am very pleased with these decisions by state and county health officials.

Level Playing Field for Restaurants in Westchester with Covid-19 Zones Lifted

Based upon a statewide reduction in infection rates and hospitalizations, Governor Cuomo announced Wednesday that pandemic Orange and Yellow restrictions have now been lifted throughout all of Westchester and most of New York State.

The Cluster Zone Strategy was initiated in October to limit restrictions to areas where Covid-19 infection rates were on the rise. In Westchester six zones were established, including an Orange Zone in Port Chester and Yellow Zone in New Rochelle. Zone restrictions impacted businesses, restaurants and testing requirements in schools.

Previously, the rules imposed tighter restrictions on restaurants in zone areas than the statewide restaurant rules in non-zone communities. Now all Westchester restaurants will operate under the same Covid-19 rules.

Under the new announcement, the only zones that remain Yellow Zones are in Newburgh and New York City. NYC restaurants remain closed to indoor dining regardless of zone.

This is good news for Westchester business. Port Chester restaurants had been covered by more restrictive Orange Zone rules until last week when they transitioned to Yellow Zone rules. Now all restaurants in Westchester, including those that had been in the previous six Cluster Zones, will operate under the same rules as competing businesses in nearby communities.

This will allow restaurants and other small businesses to operate under the statewide guidelines, including a 33 percent cap on gym occupancy, a limit on private gatherings of 10 people and a 50 percent cap on occupancy in retail establishments and restaurants. Masks are still required in public when social distancing is impossible to maintain.

Throughout the pandemic, I have worked with local businesses and municipal officials to advocate for adjustment of restrictions based upon changing health statistics. The state eventually moved away from infection rates as the primary metric for making these decisions by shifting priority to hospital capacity. Both infection and hospital capacity statistics have improved, thereby making it possible for the state to make this change.

Despite these changes, the virus remains a real threat with cold weather limiting outdoor activity and new strains of the virus appearing in the United States. Please exercise care and follow the safety protocols as instructed by local businesses.

For restaurant guidelines please visiti HERE.

Speaker Heastie Announces Assembly Working Group on Transitioning N.Y. Economy Toward COVID-19 Recovery

Last Thursday, Speaker Carl Heastie announced the appointment of an Assembly internal working group to focus on transitioning New York State's economy toward a COVID-19 recovery. The working group will continue the Assembly Majority's efforts to assist workers and the business community in responding to and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic at both the local and the state level. In New York State, small businesses make up 98 percent of the state's businesses and employ 54 percent of the state's workforce. At the peak of the pandemic, almost two million New Yorkers lost their jobs.

As Chair of the standing committee on Science and Technology, I will be serving on the working group alongside several Assembly committee chairs, who will work with the Majority members of their committees to develop a comprehensive approach to help New York recover from this terrible pandemic. Recovering from the many economic challenges facing New York as a result of this ongoing pandemic will require a sustained and focused effort by every level of government and all sectors of our diverse economy. This working group will provide us with an opportunity to better understand the scope and scale of those challenges across industries as we work to develop strategies and devise solutions to address them.

Given the fact that no industry or part of the state's economy was untouched by the pandemic and response, the working group may also explore critical issues covered by other committees in the Assembly and request the participation of such appropriate committees to make recommendations in order to assist struggling businesses and workers.

Assembly Westchester Delegation Budget Forum

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
WESTCHESTER DELEGATION
Notice of Virtual Public Forum



2021-2022 State Budget Forum

SUBJECT: Virtual budget forum for local organizations, elected officials, residents, and constituents of Westchester County to share their views on the Governor's Executive Budget for SFY 2021-2022.

Saturday, February 6, 2021
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Via Zoom

NY State Assembly Westchester Delegation
Gary Prefore, Chair, District 89; Amy Paulin, District 88; Nadia Sayagh, District 90; Steve Chu, District 91; Thomas Altomelli, District 92; Chris Brinkley, District 93; Kevin Byrne, District 94; Sandy Galof, District 95.

Testimony welcome at our annual budget forum.
• Please register in advance to receive a time slot.
• Please submit written testimony by 3pm Thursday, February 4, 2021.
• Oral testimony summary of written testimony limited to 3 minutes.
• If you cannot testify on February 6 written testimony is welcome.

The Westchester Delegation will accommodate as many participants as possible. Persons wishing to make a presentation at the forum should complete and return the registration form as soon as possible, but no later than Thursday, February 4 at 3pm.

To RSVP:
https://forms.office.com/e/3d6d47
Zoom instructions will be sent out to registrants.

Send written testimony and questions to:
Lisa Urban at (914) 939-7028; ulurban@nyassembly.gov

Executive Budget briefing book is available here.



Last week the Governor announced that New York State Parks hosted a historic 78 million visitors in 2020! Throughout the pandemic, New Yorkers have turned to parks more than ever seeking safe recreation, nature breaks and education.

New Yorkers can participate in a wide-array of programs at parks and historic sites throughout the state. There are numerous virtual programs and online tours available in each region, as well as in-person events including, moonlight snowshoeing, winter hikes, bird watching and much more.

To learn of upcoming events, visit: https://parks.ny.gov/events/



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