



Dear Friends,

A few weeks ago, I mentioned that in the six months before the legislative session starts up again in January, one of my main focuses will be on legislation.

There are several sources for legislation, including bills that I introduced earlier this year but need further work, proposals from residents and advocacy groups, and concerns that arose from my days as Bedford Supervisor. During this time, I also will review bills that my colleagues have introduced and asked me to co-sponsor.

I thought I'd use today's newsletter to share with you some of the areas of concern and/or legislation that I am working on. **I would also like to use this opportunity to remind you that I am always open to hearing your concerns and suggestions.** Please don't hesitate to reach out if there is a specific issue or piece of legislation you would like to see us working on.

Before getting to the discussion of legislation...

[Expanded Child Tax Credit Payments Have Begun!](#)

I was pleased to have the opportunity this past Friday to join my colleagues in government – Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Congressman Mondaire Jones, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, White Plains Mayor Tom Roach, and White Plains Councilman Justin Brasch – along with Cindy Delfino (President/CEO of the YMCA of Central & Northern Westchester) and Kathy Halas (Executive Director of the Child Care Council of Westchester), for a [press conference](#) to discuss the new temporarily-expanded federal child tax credit.



Households representing more than 65 million children (88% of U.S. children) will qualify for this expanded refundable tax credit, including the families of more than 3.5 million children in New York. **Eligible families will receive a payment of up to \$300 per month for each child under age 6 and up to \$250 per month for each child between ages 6 to 17.** The benefit begins to phase out beginning at incomes of \$150,000 for married couples, \$112,500 for a Head of Household single parent, and \$75,000 for single filers.

IMPORTANT:

- If you are eligible for the expanded tax credit and **you have had a child since you last filed your taxes** – and therefore are not receiving the credit – [please click here to update this information with the government.](#)
- Not required to file a tax return and therefore not receiving the tax credit? [Click here to use the Child Tax Credit Non-filer Sign-up Tool](#)

Please visit childtaxcredit.gov for more information, including eligibility and FAQ's.

My thanks to Senators Gillibrand and Schumer, and the New York Delegation, for ensuring that families with children are getting this needed relief. The pandemic has wreaked havoc on so many lives and this tax credit serves as a lifeline to working families who have been struggling. A special thank you to Margarita Pineiro, Childcare Director at the YMCA, who spoke at the press conference about how important the credit was and will be for her family.

I personally would like to see this expanded tax credit made permanent and am very pleased that President Biden and so many of my colleagues at the federal level are working hard to make that happen.

Issues & Legislation On the Docket

There are thousands of bills introduced every year, the vast majority of which do not see the light of day. There are many reasons for this, but one of them is simply that not every problem has an effective legislative solution. While my focus is of course the communities within the 93rd Assembly District, as a member of the New York State Assembly I also have a duty to consider the needs of the entire state. In evaluating whether to sponsor or co-sponsor legislation, I consider whether a legislative solution is the right course of action, or if we should be advocating for another course. For instance, can the issue be solved more easily at the state agency level through a policy or regulation? Or is the issue something more appropriately dealt with at the local level? Or by Executive Order? Some problems, of course, only can be solved by legislation.

Wastewater and Water Quality

Some may know that prior to being elected to the Assembly, I served for seven years as Supervisor of Bedford and worked to bring municipal sewers to the town. In my short time in the Assembly, I have spoken to many of my colleagues, Environmental Conservation Committee (on which I serve) staff, and outside engineers. It's clear that one of the greatest infrastructure deficiencies in the state is the lack of modern wastewater facilities, with aging wastewater facilities failing or being held together by baling wire and

spit. This is a problem that will take years to fix, but the environmental impacts are severe. It also stifles, if not prevents, economic growth in both our suburban and urban communities.

I am not sure how to solve this problem – at least not yet. But working to find a solution is one of my top priorities.

Toxic Herbicides and Pesticides – Wetlands and Watershed Protection

Prior to my election to the Bedford Town Board (where I served prior to becoming Supervisor), I served as Chair of its Wetlands Control Commission. Wetlands serve many critical functions. They are highly productive and biologically diverse systems that protect and enhance water quality, control erosion, maintain stream flows, sequester carbon, and provide a home to at least one-third of all threatened and endangered species. Toxic herbicides, pesticides and other chemicals can destroy wetlands. At the local level, many municipalities have been working to try to persuade residents to discontinue the use of herbicides and pesticides for lawn management.



Watershed (an area of land that drains water into our waterways) is critical to protecting reservoirs – and we have a lot of them, not just in our area but dotted throughout the state. The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) licenses lawn management firms to use certain strong herbicides and pesticides on residential lawns, regardless of whether they happen to be in wetlands or a watershed. Those chemicals not only find their way to neighboring properties but also find their way into stormwater which flows into wetlands and watersheds. And municipalities have no say in the matter.

I think we need to examine the underlying law or at the very least the DEC regulations – which I understand haven't been reviewed for well over a decade – to see what steps we can take to help protect our wetlands and watershed from these chemicals.

Purple Star School Program – Helping Armed Service Families



As I mentioned [previously](#), I am working to establish a Purple Star School Program in New York State.

New York is home to 16,494 active-duty children and 22,650 National Guard and reserve children. Military-connected children often move every 2-3 years, which can be a real challenge for students on a social, academic and emotional level.

With each move, military service members and their families face many challenges as they settle into new communities and schools. Students in particular face many hurdles, including gaps and overlaps in curriculum, course disruption and differing graduation requirements. Additionally, they face the loss of social networks and activities, which they then need to establish in their new schools.

In order to help ease the transition for these students (and their parents), the Department of Defense recommends states create the **Purple Star School Program**. Purple Star Schools are military-friendly schools that have demonstrated a major commitment to students and families connected to our nation's military. These schools have met specific state-designed requirements to support the unique situations facing military students and their families. The program allows schools to make assessments so that critical information is easily accessible to military-connected students, military families and schools. **This legislation would help make the transition to and from schools in New York just that much easier, and give their parents – who already sacrifice so much on behalf of our country – some much-deserved peace of mind.**

Although there was not enough time to get the legislation passed in the last session, I am working with State Senator Brooks, the NYS Education Department, and Christopher Arnold (Northeast Regional Liaison to the Department of Defense, Military Community and Family Policy) to develop the legislation to launch the program.

For more information on the Purple School Star Program please visit the websites of the [Defense-State Liaison Office](#) and [Military Child Education Coalition](#). Please also feel free to reach to me directly with any questions.

Unfunded Mandates

I am working with Senator Pete Harckham on a bill to require that legislators include in their explanation of bills a statement of fiscal impact affecting political subdivisions. The idea is that we need to know what obligations, i.e., costs, we are imposing on counties, cities, towns, school districts and villages. At present, there is only a requirement for a statement of fiscal impact on state operations.

We need to consider the economic impact of our laws on the local political subdivisions and craft our legislation accordingly, ensuring we are not passing on obligations that place an undue financial burden on them without also providing the funds necessary to meet those obligations.

These are just some of the areas of legislation I intend to work on. I will keep you posted on my progress, as well as other legislation I will be working on as we move forward. **And again, please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any thoughts on legislation or areas of concern you would like to see me working on.**

Help Students in Need By Donating School Supplies



It is hard to believe we are already two-thirds of the way through July. August is coming quickly and soon after, September. Unfortunately, there are many students in our communities whose families do not have sufficient means to provide them with the school supplies they need. To help families alleviate this burden and ensure students have what they need for a successful start to the year, **organizations throughout the district are currently collecting school supplies and financial donations for supplies.** If you are in a position to make a donation to one of these school supply drives, we would encourage you to please do so as soon as possible (click on the images below to learn more).

wjcs
Please support our annual
Back-to-School Drive
This year, more than ever before,
our youth deserve a strong start to the school year.
Your generosity makes that happen.
Click here to donate!

Helping Hands for the Homeless and Hungry, Inc.
2021 Mission Backpack Appeal

After a challenging year for many of our Westchester families, we are thrilled to increase our goal to provide over 3,000 new backpacks for underserved kids.

We need your support!

- \$1000 - Can provide scientific calculators for grades 6-12
- \$200 - Can provide sticky notepads for note taking
- \$150 - Can provide 3-subject spiral notebooks
- \$100 - Can provide plastic folders for organizing work
- \$50 - Can provide pencils, erasers, and rulers
- \$25 - Can provide one backpack filled with school supplies

Save the date to volunteer!
Tuesday, August 17 & Wednesday, August 18

Send your donation in the enclosed envelope or visit our website:
www.HelpingHands.org
All donations are 100% tax deductible!
Helping Hands is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, EIN 13-3417139
HelpingHands@Gmail.com PO Box 982 Bay, NY 10506

Community Center of Northern Westchester

**ERASE
THE NEED**
School Supply Drive

On a related note, please **SAVE THE DATE** for our first **Service Saturday**, currently scheduled for Saturday, August 14th. We will be collecting food for the [Community Center of Northern Westchester](#). Stay tuned for the details.

Moving forward, we hope to plan other Service Saturdays with organizations throughout the district, so if you have suggestions – or if you'd like to work with us on coordinating one of our Service Saturdays – please reach out.

As always, if there are any issues that you would like to see covered in a future newsletter, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at burdickc@nyassembly.gov (or simply reply to this email). **Please also follow me on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for the most up-to-date information.**

Miss any of our previous newsletters? You can [find them here](#).

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Burdick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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