

Capital Region state lawmakers review 2023 session, with some work still outstanding

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WAMC

The bulk of the New York state legislative session is complete.

110th district Assemblyman Phil Steck faults Governor Kathy Hochul, a fellow Democrat, with getting the session off to a slow start.

"The session was delayed for about two months by what are called chapter amendments," said Steck. "And that is when the governor threatens to veto a bill unless you make a change to it. And what happens when the governor does that, is it brings all these bills, which were already debated up for debate and vote again. And there were too many chapter amendments and on too trivial matters and wasted a lot of time."

"Good cause" eviction and an affordable housing program were left unresolved by the end of the session.

Republican Senator Jim Tedisco of the 44th district says Hochul fell short.

"The governor's office couldn't get the job done this year, 33 days late with a budget, the longest delay in 10 years," Tedisco said. "Didn't do anything meaningful, just window dressing about public safety. Affordability, as you see, couldn't get that housing program in place."

Tedisco opposes a bill sent to Hochul's desk moving local

elections to even-numbered years.

"I don't know how they're gonna get a big enough voting machine to put all local elections, supervisors and mayors, council members on the on the ballot there," said Tedisco. "And it's just a sad effort to politicize elections and people are gonna go in, they're gonna be confused."

Democratic Assemblymember Didi Barrett of the 106th district says lawmakers did pass Clean Slate, which would seal criminal records of people who manage to stay out of trouble after being convicted, but failed to pass a climate bill.

"New York Heat is a bill of 13 plus pages, the one part that has to do with the discontinuing the gas lines, is something that everybody agreed on," Barrett said. "But there were another probably 12 pages of legislation in that bill that everybody didn't agree on."

Unfinished business gets a second chance: 112th district Republican Assemblymember Mary Beth Walsh says Assembly members and staff have been told to return next week.

"Tuesday, the 20th and Wednesday the 21st. And we're going to take up hopefully some local bills that weren't passed, those are important to the localities that are affected," Walsh said. "And then anything that the Senate

passed that we didn't is fair game and we just we haven't seen a list yet of what those bills are going to be. But the fact that they're making it two days rather than just one indicates to me that there's going to be some significant work done."

103rd district Democratic Assemblymember Sarahana Shrestha has a couple of priorities:

"I'm really looking to pass the LLC Transparency Act, which is on the debate list. There's also a bill to stop the dumping of toxic waste from the Indian Point power plant that Holtec is overseeing into the Hudson River," Shrestha said.

Democratic Assemblymember Pat Fahy of the 109th district is keeping tabs on a gaming deal she says was struck with a no disclosure agreement between the Seneca Nation and the Hochul administration that would put a casino in downtown Rochester.

"None of the Rochester members nor any of the Rochester local electeds were given heads up about a bill that could severely impact their city and their region," said Fahy. "I knew that was one of the primary reasons that we were supposed to be coming back for this deal with the Seneca Nation. It passed 62-1 in the Senate."

The Buffalo News [reports](#) the deal, negotiated by Hochul's top aides, authorizes a Seneca-owned casino to be built in

the Rochester market and that during its first year of operation the gaming house would pay 9.75% of revenue on slot machines and other devices to the state, and pay 19.5% the 19 following years. The paper says Hochul "has recused herself from the negotiations because of a potential conflict of interest."