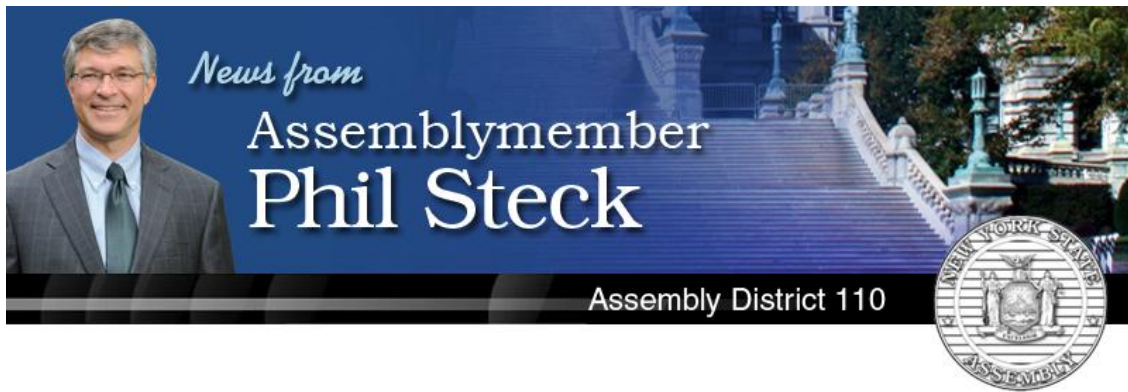




As we begin 2026, I hope you and your loved ones enjoyed time together over the holidays and are starting the year with a sense of optimism. A new year brings an opportunity to reflect on the progress we have made together and to recommit to the work ahead on behalf of our community.

Over the past year, we took meaningful steps at the State Capitol to protect public health, strengthen consumer protections, and expand access to critical care. From new safeguards around kratom products, to expanded insurance coverage for breast cancer screenings and lifesaving EpiPens, to the passage of the Medical Aid in Dying Act, these efforts reflect a shared belief that government should act with compassion, responsibility, and respect for personal dignity. In many cases, these policies were shaped directly by constituents who came forward with their stories, reminding me why listening closely to the people we serve is so essential.

Equally important to the work in Albany is staying connected here at home. Whether visiting students in our schools, gathering for a town hall, celebrating cultural and religious traditions, or welcoming young people into our office through internships, these moments strengthen our community and guide my work every day. My team and I remain committed to being accessible, responsive, and helpful, and we are always here if you need assistance navigating state government or accessing resources.

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

New Kratom Labeling Law

I was proud to see my kratom labeling legislation signed into law, strengthening consumer protections and helping keep New Yorkers safe. The new law requires kratom products sold in New York to include clear warning labels stating that kratom may be addictive, list all ingredients, and prohibits marketing these products as all natural.

As Chair of the Assembly Committee on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, I have long been concerned about the lack of oversight surrounding herbal supplements. While kratom is derived from a leaf traditionally used in Southeast Asia, the highly concentrated products commonly sold in the United States can carry serious health risks and have been linked to addiction, severe side effects, and fatalities.

This legislation was inspired by the tragic death of Nick Scribner, a 27 year-old Ballston Spa resident. His mother, Cari Scribner, bravely shared her story and worked closely with lawmakers to help prevent similar tragedies. I want to thank Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh for working across the aisle with me on this bill. While this law represents meaningful progress, I will continue working to ensure New Yorkers are fully informed about the risks associated with kratom.



Medical Aid in Dying Act Signed Into Law

This year, New York took an important step forward when the Legislature passed the Medical Aid in Dying Act, a compassionate and evidence based law that gives terminally ill New Yorkers the ability to make their own end of life decisions. I was proud to support this legislation and am grateful that Governor Kathy Hochul has now signed it into law.

My support for this measure was strengthened after a constituent came to me and shared that they are suffering from stage IV cancer and would be directly impacted by this legislation. Their experience underscored how meaningful it is for people to have the ability to make their own choices during an incredibly hard and personal time.

This law is the result of years of advocacy from patients, families, caregivers, and health care professionals who bravely shared their stories. With its passage, New York affirms that compassion, dignity, and personal autonomy belong at the center of end of life care.



Expanded Breast Cancer Screening Coverage

Early detection is one of the most powerful tools we have in the fight against breast cancer. A new law now in effect requires insurance companies to cover additional breast cancer screenings when they are medically necessary, removing financial barriers that have prevented some high risk patients from accessing care.

This change ensures more patients receive timely screenings and the support they need to protect their health and well being.

Prioritizing women's health by expanding access to

Breast Cancer Screenings



Insurance Coverage for EpiPens

When an allergic reaction strikes, every second counts. That is why I helped pass a new law requiring insurance coverage for EpiPens and capping costs at \$100 per year.

Emergency medication should always be accessible when it is needed most. This law helps ensure that lifesaving treatment is a right for everyone, not a financial burden.



In the Community

Visiting Hillside Elementary School

I had such a great time speaking with the students at Hillside Elementary School in Niskayuna and talking about how the New York State Legislature works. The questions they asked were thoughtful and curious, and showed just how engaged this group of students is.

We even found time for a very spirited and surprisingly deep discussion about the current state of the New York Giants with two students proudly sporting their Giants gear. Thank you to the students and staff at Hillside for such a warm welcome and a fun, memorable visit.



Year End Town Hall

Thank you to everyone who joined me for our End of Year Town Hall. I truly appreciate you taking the time to be part of the conversation.

The thoughtful questions and meaningful discussion helped shape a productive and engaging evening, and they play an important role in guiding my work on your behalf. Hearing directly from you is one of the most valuable parts of this job.

I am grateful for your engagement and look forward to continuing the conversation as we work together to address the issues facing our community.



Honoring the Legacy of Guru Tegh Bahadar Ji

I joined members of our Sikh community on the 350th anniversary of the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadar Ji. His courage and sacrifice in standing up to an emperor and defending the right of all people to practice their faith freely remain a powerful reminder of the values we must continue to uphold. I am grateful to our Sikh neighbors for welcoming me and for all they contribute to the Capital Region. Learning more about Guru Tegh Bahadar Ji's legacy is a reminder of how important it is for us to keep working toward a community rooted in justice, tolerance, and freedom for everyone.



Celebrating the Holidays

Throughout the holiday season, it was great to celebrate with the community. I especially enjoyed coming together with neighbors to celebrate the Festival of Lights at Chanukah on Jay in Schenectady. I hope everyone enjoyed time with the family and friends at the end of the year.



High School Interns

I want to acknowledge the amazing work that Caleb and Eva, two gifted students from Shaker and South Colonie High School, have been doing over the past few months while interning in our office. They have assisted my Legislative Director in drafting legislation, researching issues that impact the 110th Assembly District, and attending legislative hearings. I look forward to seeing them succeed in their future careers!



Tips & Information

STAR Program Reminder for Homeowners

If you own your home, now is a good time to confirm that you are enrolled in the STAR program and receiving the correct benefit. The STAR program provides property tax relief to eligible New York homeowners. Some homeowners may receive an income verification letter from the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance requesting income information to determine the correct STAR benefit. If you receive a letter, be sure to respond within 45 days.

Residents who need help completing the income verification can attend a STAR Income Verification Assistance Event hosted by the Tax Department on Thursday, January 15 from 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Albany Public Library, 161 Washington Avenue in Albany.

Residents who recently purchased a home, moved, or experienced a change in income should double check their eligibility to ensure they are not missing out on savings. You can learn more by [clicking here](#).



Mental Health Resources Through Jewish Family Services

Mental health is a critical part of our overall well being, and access to quality support can make a meaningful difference for individuals and families at every stage of life. One local option available in our community is Jewish Family Services of Northeastern New York, which offers counseling, youth and family support, and community based mental health programs for people of all ages.

I was proud to recently help support this work through a state grant to strengthen their mental health initiatives. Programs like these ensure that help is available close to home

and that individuals are met with compassion, care, and practical support during challenging times.

Learn more about available services here: <https://www.jfsneny.org>



Constituent Services Assistance

My office is here to help. We assist constituents with a wide range of issues involving state agencies, including unemployment insurance, housing concerns, accessing state programs, and resolving issues with benefits or paperwork. If you are having difficulty navigating state government or need help finding the right resource, please reach out to our Constituent Relations Manager, Sam Stuto, directly at stutos@nyassembly.gov.



ASSEMBLYMEMBER

Phil Steck

AD 110