

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

SOME OF THE SIGNIFICANT RESOLUTIONS I HELPED PASS THIS YEAR:

DOWN SYNDROME AWARENESS DAY (MARCH 21, 2024): Raises awareness about Down syndrome and promotes public education and acceptance, coinciding with World Down Syndrome Day to highlight the contributions and capabilities of individuals with Down syndrome (K01003).

PURPLE DAY (MARCH 26, 2024): Raises awareness about epilepsy, educates the public and reduces the stigma surrounding the condition, aligning with national Purple Day to support the more than 3.5 million people in the U.S. living with epilepsy (K01023).

YELLOW RIBBON DAY (APRIL 9, 2024): Honors and supports members of the United States Armed Forces, recognizing their dedication and sacrifices, particularly those who are prisoners of war or missing in action (K01002).

PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS WEEK (APRIL 14-20, 2024): Honors and recognizes the essential role of dispatchers in emergency response, highlighting their critical support to police, firefighters and medical personnel through dedicated, round-the-clock service (K02046).

REUNIFICATION MONTH (JUNE 2024): Highlights the importance of reuniting children in foster care with their families, emphasizing strategies such as family engagement, maintaining cultural connections and encouraging partnerships between birth parents and foster caregivers (K02409).

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DEAR NEIGHBOR,

During this Session (2023-24), more than 10,000 bills were introduced in the Assembly and I worked hard to pass meaningful legislation that benefits both our communities and the entire state. Now, my focus returns to my district. I am meeting with constituents, attending community events and listening to the people of the 112th Assembly District to better advocate for practical solutions that meet your needs.

Please know that I am always here for you! If you have any questions, comments or concerns please feel free to reach out:

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2024 IN REVIEW

MY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES THIS SESSION:



SCHOOL AID

On Jan. 22, I led a press conference to call for the reinstatement of school aid. Joining me were Wells Central School District Superintendent Thomas Sincavage, Berne-Knox-Westerlo Central School District Superintendent Timothy Mundell, Averill Park School Board of Education member Michelle Garofolo and my Assembly colleagues. We expressed serious reservations about the governor's Executive Budget proposal to discontinue the "hold harmless" provision. This change would reduce school aid for certain districts across the state, with rural and small suburban school districts being particularly affected. In Saratoga County alone, six schools would face funding cuts.⁹

Accomplishment: In this year's state budget, school aid was restored



CHIPS

On March 1, I invited local highway superintendents to join me in Halfmoon to reject the governor's proposed cuts to critical state funding for local roads and bridges in the 2024-25 state budget. The \$60 million cut to the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) would directly impact the safety and functionality of local roads and bridges. Our highway superintendents and their crews do a fantastic job, but asking all of them to do more with less is not fair or equitable.¹⁰

Accomplishment: CHIPS was fully funded in this year's state budget



EV BUSES

On February 12, my colleagues and I joined together to call for a delay to the all-electric school bus mandate. As schools face existing challenges, mandating the purchase of expensive EV buses only exacerbates the financial strain. The EV bus goal is unrealistic and impractical¹¹ for most school districts across the state. I support legislation that would push this mandate until 2045 or until all state agencies convert their fleets. While the transition to EV may happen eventually, our schools should not be the test case for such a costly objective, and decisions of this magnitude must be made with the best interests of our students in mind.¹²

I will continue to advocate for this cause next year.



VETERANS' FUNDS

In May, New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli released a report disclosing that millions of dollars in taxpayer-donated funds meant for veterans are being held back. This money has languished unused for years—an unacceptable oversight that deprives veterans of critical assistance.¹³

I spoke alongside my colleagues and veterans at the American Legion Post #1520 to push for the passage of my bill, A.9900, which would streamline the process of getting funds out, promote transparency and create accountability by making sure all veteran-related tax check-off programs are administered by the Department of Veterans' Services instead of multiple agencies, eliminating miles of bureaucratic red tape to ensure veterans get what they deserve. I appreciate the sacrifice of all the men and women who have served or are currently serving our nation and will not stop advocating for their needs on a state level.¹

I will continue to advocate for this cause next year.

BILLS I INTRODUCED FOR THE BETTERMENT OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES:

- ✓ Exempting some assistant district attorneys in Saratoga County from the residency requirement, allowing the county to broaden its options for hiring qualified candidates by considering individuals from neighboring counties.² This bill passed.
- ✓ Allowing the Woods Hollow Nature Preserve to change ownership from the Village of Ballston Spa to the Town of Milton. The town will now manage the preserve, ensuring it remains open to the public as it is now. Both the town and the village agree this transfer is beneficial for them and their residents.³ This bill passed.
- ✓ Addressing New York's high tax burden and outmigration by increasing property tax relief for seniors, providing the Property Tax Freeze Credit and boosting AIM funding for tax-compliant municipalities.⁴
- ✓ Establishing a property tax credit for individuals aged 65 and older, equal to 50% of their real property taxes paid, up to \$6,500, to address the high property tax burden faced by retirees and encourage them to remain in the state and maintain their retirement plans.⁵

I HELPED PASS MEASURES THAT WILL:

- » Prevent dangerous, low bridge strikes in Glenville and across the state by requiring navigation systems that utilize GPS technology to provide the legal clearance of bridges or elevated structures along proposed routes.⁶
- » Prohibit addictive social media feeds to children with the Stop Addictive Feeds Exploitation (SAFE) for Kids Act.⁷
- » Protect children's data from being collected by online sites with the Child Data Protection Act.⁸

1. A.9900 | 2. A.9284 | 3. A.10037-A | 4. A.8313-A | 5. A.8308 | 6. A.8582-B | 7. A.8148-A | 8. A.8149-A

9. <https://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/Mary-Beth-Walsh/story/108904> | 10. <https://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/Mary-Beth-Walsh/story/109377>

11. <https://www.schoolbusfleet.com/10215721/new-york-electric-school-bus-mandate-blowing-fuses>

12. <https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2024/james-tedisco/tedisco-walsh-and-shen-and-burnt-hills-school-officials#:~:text=%E2%80%99CAs%20schools%20face%20existing%20challenges,inability%20to%20meet%20this%20requirement>

13. <https://www.timesunion.com/state/article/n-y-tax-check-off-funds-not-dispersed-required-18620000.php>