



Dear Neighbors,

Like many of you, my heart is heavy this week as I watch events unfold in Ukraine. I have called on our national leaders to prepare to provide aid to the Ukrainian people and open our doors to those displaced by the horrors of war. I was heartened to see Governor Hochul invitation to the Ukrainian people, "Just as the Statue of Liberty stands tall in our harbor, New York stands ready to welcome Ukrainian refugees. We remain engaged with the Biden Administration and we will be prepared to accept and support those who seek shelter in our state ([press release](#))." We stand with the people of Ukraine against Putin's illegal and unprovoked war of aggression.

Legislative Update

In Case You Missed It: Town Hall on the New York Health Act

Yesterday, I hosted a Town Hall on the New York Health Act with the Institute for Civic Engagement, SUNY Cortland. My thanks to host John Suarez and moderator Hailie Anderson for an engaging conversation!

[Watch the Town Hall Here!](#)

In Case You Missed It: Town Hall on Aging in Place with AARP

Earlier this week, I hosted a Town Hall on Aging in Place with AARP. We were joined by my colleague, Assemblymember Harvey Epstein, who introduced the Accessory Homes Enabling Act (A4854A/S4547A). This legislation would legalize Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), smaller, independent residential dwelling units located on the same lot as stand-alone single-family homes. ADUs can enable homeowners to provide needed housing for their parents, adult children, grandchildren, or other loved ones. Speakers included AARP Associate State Director Kristen McManus, AARP Senior Legislative Representative Samar Jha, Marcel Negret, Senior Planner with the Regional Plan Association (RPA), Rob Cantelmo, Alderperson on the City of Ithaca's Common Council, and Alex Lawson, Housing Policy Coordinator with CNY Fair Housing.

[Watch the Town Hall Here!](#)



ADU-Advocacy, Trends, and Opportunities

**Town Hall on Aging in Place with
Assemblymember Anna Kelles & AARP**

Kristen McManus
Associate State Director
AARP New York

Samar Jha
Senior Legislative Representative
Government Affairs, AARP

FEBRUARY 22, 2022

Community Resources

New Yorkers are struggling with unexpected rising energy costs. There is help available to control costs now. The Energy Affordability Policy helps New Yorkers reduce their energy bills and even more families are now eligible. To learn more, contact your local utility company.

The Energy Affordability Policy (EAP)



provides income-eligible households with a **monthly credit** on their energy bills.

Heating Utility Arrears Assistance:

New Yorkers are seeing their heating bills rise, but help is available. To learn more and see if you're eligible,

visit: www.otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/#regular-arrears-supplement-benefit.

Do you have unpaid heating utility bills?
The Regular Arrears Supplement Benefit may help!

The program provides **up to \$10,000 for eligible families** who are behind on their heating bills. The benefit is delivered in the form of a one-time payment made directly to the utility provider.

Heap:

Heating bills are soaring and I know families are struggling to deal with these unexpected costs, but help is available. HEAP and Emergency HEAP are important lifelines for income-eligible households and it's critical that all who are eligible take advantage of this benefit while there is still funding. To learn more, visit: www.otda.ny.gov/programs/heap.

HEAP

is here to help!

Call 1-800-342-3009 to find out how you can get help with high heating bills.



NYSEG Billing Issues:

We are hearing of widespread concerns with increases on NYSEG bills for local customers. If this issue is affecting you, please complete the following survey:

[**CLICK HERE TO COMPLETE NYSEG BILLING SURVEY**](#)

NYSEG Customers - Know Your Rights Webinar 3/16:

Join the [Public Utility Law Project \(PULP\)](#) for a Zoom webinar Wed March 16th, 6:30pm to learn more about the utility debt crisis, why your bills have been so high this past winter, and most important - learn about your rights as a utility customer and what you can do to manage your payments! [**REGISTER HERE**](#)

Have a safe and restful weekend!

In good health,

Anna R. Kelles

Anna Kelles, Ph.D.

Assemblymember, 125th A.D.

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