



Assemblymember

Anna Kelles

Assembly District 125



July 31, 2023

Dear Neighbors,

I've heard from many of you seeking an update on the status of [A5718](#) related to the insurance needs of Ithaca Carshare and nonprofit carshares. The bill is still awaiting Gov. Hochul's signature into law. I will share with all constituents through this newsletter and my social media accounts when there is an update, as we continue to push for this bill to become law and provide the necessary framework for Ithaca Carshare to resume operations.

New Laws

There are new laws taking effect this August, including access to medication abortion prescription drugs at SUNY and CUNY campuses, which I co-sponsored. In support of volunteer firefighters, a new law authorizes the payment of a training stipend. A full list of new laws can be found [here](#).

Around the District

Mandela Washington Fellows



I had the pleasure this week to speak at Cornell University to the Fellows in the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders program. It is the flagship program of the U.S. Government's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). I shared with them about running for office, key issues in our

district, and legislation I am currently championing. I was amazed and inspired by their stories and determination. The Fellows, between the ages of 25 and 35, are accomplished innovators and leaders in their communities and countries. Since the program was established in 2014, the Mandela Washington Fellowship has engaged nearly 5,800 young leaders from every country in Sub-Saharan Africa through academic and leadership training, and I was honored to be part of their experience in the United States.

TrackChair Dedication at Lime Hollow Nature Center



I was grateful to join Lime Hollow Nature Center in the dedication of their new TrackChair, which will enable visitors with mobility issues to access the nature trails. Engaging with our natural environment is important for our mental health and well-being, and people with disabilities can suffer disproportionately with mental health issues. Ensuring this access is an invaluable resource for visitors. Special thanks to JM Murray Center for

funding the chair and all at Lime Hollow Nature Center for their hard work and dedication to accessibility.

We Are Revolutionary: Summer Experience for Kids



I was able to meet with over 20 kids from the Albany area in Ithaca this weekend for a “Revolutionary Summer Camp” with the organization, We ARE Revolutionary. Its mission is to empower impoverished, young, and misguided individuals by giving them the tools and knowledge necessary to engage in the political processes within their communities and families. I shared insights in the political process and how bills become laws in New York, and the kids were able to envision and plan their own bills. Thanks to Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC) for hosting the group and organizing fun activities for the kids in the Ithaca area - and the treats!

Community Resources

Democracy Fest!


The first annual "Democracy Fest!" will take place at Southside Community Center on **Sunday, August 6, 2023**, celebrating the struggle for voting rights and the signing of the federal Voting Rights Act on August 6, 1965. The event is organized by Jeff Furman, a local social entrepreneur whose organization Rejoice the Vote has been working for years to encourage civic participation and voting, especially among young people.

The event will begin at 2 p.m. at the statue of Martin Luther King on the Ithaca Commons, with a brief march commemorating the marches from Montgomery to Selma, Alabama which led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. The celebration itself will take place at Southside Community Center (305 S. Plain St., Ithaca) from 2:30 - 5 p.m.

For more information about the event, contact the Tompkins County Office of Human Rights at 607-277-4080 or email humanrights@tompkins-co.org.

In addition to the weekly newsletter, you can stay up to date with my work by following my Assembly-related social media accounts. Follow me on Twitter ([@AMKelles](#)), Instagram ([@assemblymemberkelles](#)), and Facebook ([Assemblymember Anna Kelles](#)). I look forward to staying in touch!

In good health,



Anna Kelles, Ph.D.

Assemblymember, 125th A.D.

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