



Assemblymember

**Anna Kelles**

Assembly District 125



June 12, 2024

Dear Neighbors,

The legislative session officially concluded for the year, and this past week was intense, with many nights of session going to midnight and sometimes through the night. I'll share the full list of our legislative wins in an upcoming newsletter. I'm proud of what we accomplished, and we have much to build on moving forward. However, there were critical bills important to many constituents that did not cross the finish line, such as the Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act ([A5322](#)) and the NY HEAT Act ([A4592](#)).

I'm still processing the reality that these bills and other important legislative initiatives I carry or champion with my colleagues addressing health, mental health, substance use disorder, criminal justice and public safety, housing, human rights and more did not come to our chamber floor for a debate and a vote. But it is important to remember that government is an iterative process. Nothing that happened this year will prevent this legislation from being a priority in next year's session, and I will continue to advocate for our community and New Yorkers.

# Legislative Update

## **LGBTQ+ Advisory Board Bill Passes the Assembly**

As we celebrate Pride Month, I'm excited to share that my sponsored bill to permanently establish the existing temporary LGBTQ+ Advisory Board ([A1273](#)) passed the Assembly as well as the Senate! The legislation will officially recognize and designate an existing informal committee and give it a permanent voice in Albany to guide research and provide advice to the Executive Office. New York State has a long history as a leader in the LGBTQ+ struggle for rights and equal representation, and I'm proud to continue this legacy of inclusion and protection as much of our country is faced with a growing threat to the freedoms, safety and rights of LGBTQ+ people. I look forward to working with the governor to see this bill over the finish line.



*Assemblymember Kelles and Senator Webb at Ithaca Pride Festival, June 2024.*

## **EMS Treatment in Place (TIP) and Transportation to Alternative Destination (TAD)**

My legislative colleagues and I have been pushing for a legislative package this session to #RescueEMS, and I'm proud that the bill I sponsor and fought so hard for in the package was passed by both houses and was carried by

my colleague Senator Michelle Hinchey. This legislation provides for Medicaid reimbursement to ambulance services when treatment in place is administered or when transportation is provided to alternative health care settings instead of a general hospital in cases when, for example, hospital ERs are too full to see a patient in a timely manner who could be seen effectively at another location like an urgent care center ([A9102](#)). This legislation will help address critical funding gaps, especially in rural and low-income areas, where residents' primary insurers are disproportionately Medicaid, and remove needless logistical burdens facing EMS service providers across the State. Currently EMS providers are only reimbursed if they transport an individual to a hospital. With this bill, patients will still receive the treatment they need, EMS providers will receive reimbursement for their services, we can save millions from unnecessary hospital visits, and we will significantly increase efficiencies in the existing system, allowing EMS providers to be more readily available for incoming 911 calls. I look forward to the Governor swiftly signing the bill into law! Watch [a video of my comments](#) from the Assembly floor.





# Around the District

## East Ithaca Preschool 100 Year Anniversary

I was honored to attend the [East Ithaca Preschool](#) 100 Year Anniversary celebration and celebrate longtime teacher Mrs. Suzanne Foote. Founded in 1924 by parents, East Ithaca Preschool is the nation's oldest cooperative preschool, and the school retains its original organization in which families and teachers share in the education and business operations of the school. Mrs. Foote has served as head teacher for 20 years, nurturing every child and showing unwavering dedication to the school. Quality early education is critical for child development and for our communities, and I'm grateful for the dedication of all at East Ithaca Preschool!



## Dorothy Cotton Mural Ribbon Cutting

Dorothy Cotton remains a legacy and inspiration in our Ithaca community and beyond. Her work spans across states and decades, and she was arguably one of the most important unsung heroes of the Civil Rights Movement. Her work accomplishments are a testament to the essential, but often overlooked, role of women in the struggle for justice and equality. I am delighted that our community is once again celebrating the achievements of Dorothy Cotton through the mural at 415 N. Tioga Street, Ithaca, and I am glad I was able to participate in the ribbon cutting event. The event served as an opportunity to reflect on her selfless actions that have paved the path towards a more equitable world for all.

Everyone who knew Dorothy Cotton has a story to tell of her nobility. My mother worked with her at Cornell when I was a child and described her to me as a strong grounding presence. Sometimes, it is not just the words of a person that lift and inspire but the very nature of who they are that lifts people up and fills them with resolve. This was Dorothy Cotton to so many in our community and the world, and for that, we are forever grateful. When you have a moment, I highly recommend a walk down N. Tioga Street to take in the beauty and inspiration of this mural. A huge thank you as well to PhotoSynthesis Productions for offering the space for this mural and Deborah C. Hoard for the dream and vision for the project! Thank you to Ithaca Murals and mural artist Shawn Dunwoody for the beautiful artwork!



# Community Resources

## Working Rights for Teens

As the school year ends and many teenagers seek summer jobs, the [Department of Labor](#) has published guides to remind potential employees and employers of the labor laws related to minors. Minors must [obtain working papers](#) for any employment. Minors must minimally be 14-years old to be employed, and there are restrictions on the type of labor all minors are permitted to perform. [Watch this helpful video](#) or [review this palm card](#) for more information.



Image from Freepik

## Powerful Tools for Caregivers Class

Caring for someone with a chronic illness and feeling overwhelmed? The Tompkins County Office for the Aging is facilitating a 90 minute, in-person, [Powerful Tools for Caregivers Class](#) at their office, located at 214 W. State St in Ithaca NY. This interactive, evidence-based course is designed to equip caregivers with the tools needed to balance caregiving with self-care. Sessions run on Wednesdays from 2 - 3:30 p.m. from July 24 - August 28. Call 607-274-5484 to register.



## Grant Action News

The Assembly publishes the Grant Actions News monthly, compiling great grant opportunities from state, federal and private agencies, and you can now review the [June 2024 edition](#). All not-for-profit applicants applying for state grants must pre-qualify on the [NYS Grants Management Website](#). Potential not-for-profit applicants are strongly encouraged to begin the process of registering and pre-qualifying immediately, as this is a lengthy process.





In good health,

Anna Kelles, Ph.D.

Assemblymember, 125th A.D.

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