



Assemblymember **WILLIAM CONRAD**

END OF YEAR 2021

Dear Neighbors,

It's hard to believe we're at the end of another year. Of course, this was a particularly eventful one for me, as I experienced a lot of firsts: my first time on the Assembly floor, my first vote in chamber, my first state budget process, the passage of my first bill. We have begun to work through a pandemic recovery that no doubt will remain a priority in 2022. We also witnessed a transition in our state's executive leadership, enduring the upset and upheaval that came with it, and finding hope with the installment of our current Governor, Western New York's own, Kathy Hochul.

I've learned a great deal since taking office on Jan. 1. As a former Tonawanda Town Board member, I knew heading into this job that good government can be an agent of meaningful change. The representatives we elect, they take our seats "at the table" of policy-setting and lawmaking. The more civically engaged a community and its electorate are, the better their representation can be.

I have seen here in the 140th District that residents are indeed invested in their communities and the future of New York State. You are well-informed, inquisitive, and tenacious in your adherence to the values you hold most dear. I've had the pleasure of speaking to a few classes over this current semester, and I always make a point to encourage students' interest in government and the democratic process. Government is meant to serve. It is meant to direct funding, facilitate projects, and offer solutions, all for the enhancement of people's lives. Elected service is a tremendous privilege and responsibility, and it can't be performed in a vacuum. Constituents provide the broader context we legislators need to focus our work and deliver the results they deserve.

While the purpose of the roles is much the same, I've learned that state government is a bit different than local government. I'm one of 150 members of the Assembly, and my colleagues come to Albany with the perspectives and wishes of their own constituents – people who may live in, say, the North Country, Central New York or the Capital, or many miles downstate. I've learned that a bill may make good sense for the residents of one region, but not for ours. I've learned that the best intentions don't always make for the best legislation. I've learned that doing what you, the constituents of the 140th, have asked me to do, is always the right course.

I've learned, too, that state government is a labyrinth of agencies and offices, each with its own structure, management, and culture. In town government, I could directly assist a resident with his or her concern. A phone call, or an in-person stop by the Municipal Building, and problem solved. Now, my staff and I often function as liaisons. We are learning how to address certain questions, and to whom we ought to direct people for answers. We share your frustration when the connections we've made for you don't yield the results you needed, or in a timely enough fashion – and I've made that frustration known, pushing for improvements in the state's overall efficiency and responsiveness to the public. (I should add, I have already seen much positive change on this front under the Hochul administration.)

What I can promise you is, you will hear back from my office. A human being will pick up the phone – and if you happen to get our answering machine, we will return your call in short order. Your email will be acknowledged. Our door will be open.

May you and your loved ones enjoy the holiday season, and have a blessed new year.

Warmly,

Bill Conrad



THE LATEST FROM ALBANY



JULY 1, 2021 – Here I am back at my alma mater, Buffalo State College, where I highlighted the passage of A.7288, my bill to continue through 2023 the state’s Self-Employment Assistance Program, which grants unemployment insurance pay to those who’ve lost their jobs but are working full time to launch businesses in New York. Pictured with me are the great people of the college’s Small Business Development Center: Mauricio Canton Diaz, senior minority- and women-owned business enterprise advisor; Susan McCartney, director; Olivia Harbol, business services coordinator; and Andrea Lizak, associate director/business advisor. They, too, are big fans of the SEAP!



JULY 26, 2021 – I visited 26 Shirts in Buffalo to present owners Del Reid, center, and Dan Gigante with a keepsake copy of K.197, a resolution I put forth this year in honor of the T-shirt company’s well-known philanthropy. 26 Shirts sells limited-edition designs and shares the profits from each two-week run with select local families and organizations in need – more than \$1 million in proceeds at the time of this resolution! Reid, who also co-founded the “Bills Mafia” fan movement, is a resident of our 140th Assembly District, and 26 Shirts is based in Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes’ 141st District. We were both eager to share with our colleagues in Albany the story of 26 Shirts’ generosity and hometown pride.



SEPT. 17, 2021 – This was a celebratory visit to the Kenilworth Fire Station on Hawthorne Avenue in the town. My bill, A.7377, had been signed into law, establishing the Kenilworth Volunteer Fire Co. #1 Benevolent Association. This gave members of the 102-year-old company a way of financially supporting one another through medical leaves and other hardships. It was my pleasure to assist them with this effort, and I did so with gratitude for all that our firefighters do, every day, to keep us safe and whole. I’m pictured with Kenilworth Volunteer Fire Co. #1 President John Becker Jr., second from left, and some of his team, as well as Sen. Sean Ryan, who carried the bill in his house.

State laws that have taken effect since July 2021

A.7122: Authorizes the Department of Agriculture and Markets to enter into agreements with animal welfare organizations to provide care for animals during emergencies and disasters

A.4063-A: Prohibits public employers from taking retaliatory adverse personnel actions against employees who use sick leave or compensatory time to quarantine, seek medical treatment, or for other absences related to COVID-19

A.7634: Establishes an elder abuse enhanced multidisciplinary team program under the Office for the Aging to combat financial exploitation, physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse and neglect

A.4652: Authorizes forest rangers, park rangers and environmental conservation police officers to possess and administer epinephrine by use of an epinephrine auto-injector device

A.7680: Allows the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision to electronically notify a victim of a crime when their assailant is no longer incarcerated

A.3891: Increases the age of consent for purposes of marriage to 18

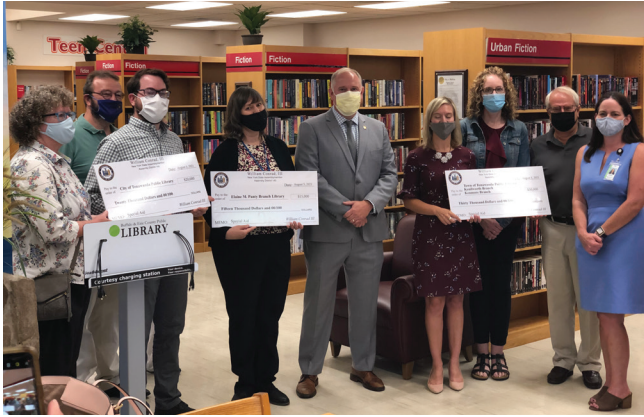
A.6155-A: Permits signs, placards or other displays to provide notice that school bus photo violation monitoring systems are in use

A.7181*: Authorizes the New York State Teachers’ Retirement System to accept alternate methods of postal mail for submittal of forms and application

A.6740*: Relates to the operation of Amigone Funeral Home’s Sheridan Park Crematory, allowing its relocation out of a residential neighborhood

**I was the primary sponsor of this bill*

GOOD NEWS CORNER



AUG. 5, 2021 – I was thrilled to secure \$75,000 in new state funding for the five public libraries in our district. I made the announcement at the Elaine M. Panty Branch in Riverside, where I was joined by Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries board and staff members, including Interim Director Jeannine Doyle, far right, and my fellow elected officials, Buffalo Councilman Joe Golombek Jr., second from left, and Tonawanda Town Councilwoman Shannon Patch, to my right. The other grant recipients were the City of Tonawanda Public Library, the Kenilworth Branch, the Kenmore Branch, and the North Tonawanda Public Library. Each will use its grant for capital improvements.

In economic development news, Gear Motions, Inc. celebrated its groundbreaking in late summer at the North Youngmann Commerce Center in the Town of Tonawanda. The manufacturing company's new, 56,000-square-foot facility will allow for consolidation of its Buffalo operations.



AUG. 25, 2021 – This was a presentation of Assembly proclamations I had printed for Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 77, in recognition of its members' efforts to host The Wall That Heals in the City of Tonawanda. The world's premier touring replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial visited Tonawanda in July. I specifically thanked organizing committeemen Joe Pasek, Norm Murray, Bill Paton, Paul Pietrowski and Tom Thompson, who secured the wall's local stop, and who along with a corps of dedicated volunteers greeted an estimated 12,000 spectators over four deeply meaningful days at Vets Park.

A tip for your next outdoor adventure: A ribbon-cutting was held Oct. 18 for Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper's "living shoreline" project at the North Tonawanda Botanical Garden on Sweeney Street. The project addressed erosion concerns and enhanced public access at the creekside site, while creating much-needed habitats for native plants, pollinators and other animals.



OCT. 8, 2021 – Back in the classroom! Riverview Elementary third-grade teacher Patricia Hilbert and Tonawanda City Schools Superintendent Tim Oldenburg welcomed me in to deliver \$25,000 in state aid for the district, for its purchase of 70 new Google Chromebooks for students' classroom and at-home use. Laptops are provided on a 1:1 basis for students in UPK through grade 12, to help them gain technological proficiency, increase their engagement with the curriculum, and encourage their creativity. While devices like these kept children connected to the classroom over many months of remote and hybrid instruction, students were using them well before the pandemic began.



OCT. 28, 2021 – A happy occasion in Riverside! The Buffalo Erie Niagara Land Improvement Corporation unveiled two new homes on Crowley Avenue, where the Land Bank and its partners worked their usual magic, using private settlement funds to rehab vacant lots and combat neighborhood blight. Appearing in this photo are Buffalo Councilman Joe Golombek Jr., left, BENLIC Executive Director Jocelyn Gordon, Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown, and Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz.

SCENES FROM THE 140TH

AUG. 3, 2021 – Our community gathered to publicly thank the City of Tonawanda police officers who were ambushed by a gunman in May 2020. Chief William Strassburg, pictured with me and my son, presented Detective David Ljiljanich, Lt. Brian Scarpena, Capt. Jamin Butcher, Capt. Fred Foels, Detective Lt. Scott Sheehan and Officer Eric Foels with the department's highest honor, its Commendation of Valor. Later, in November, I attended a Kiwanis Club luncheon for the men, giving each a framed Assembly proclamation.



SEPT. 17, 2021 – Just ahead of National Thank A Police Officer Day, I visited each of the precincts in the 140th to leave treats for the overnight shift. I stopped by the stations in the City of Tonawanda, Kenmore, North Tonawanda, the Town of Tonawanda and Riverside, which is where I am in this photo.

New York State Assembly • Albany, New York 12248



Assemblymember
**WILLIAM
CONRAD**

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Fall 2021



OCT. 13, 2021 – I had the privilege of helping FeedMore WNY as it distributed food as part of its mobile pantry program, this time at the North Tonawanda Community Hub, an organization that holds resource events at Payne Avenue and Robinson Street.



OCT. 28, 2021 – Erie 1 BOCES' Ken-Ton Career & Technical Center on Two Mile Creek Road offered me a wonderful tour. Here, students pursue any of 14 CTE programs while attending traditional class for part of each day. The center's graduation rate is 98%, and students leave with college credits and ready to work.