

Westchester County Legislator

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# Westchester County Board of Legislators NEWS

*Voice of the People of Westchester County for over 300 years*



Summer 2023 Newsletter

**James Nolan**

District 15 ~ Yonkers and Bronxville  
Chair, Appointments Committee



*Dear Friends and Neighbors,*

*As I look back at my first year in office, I can't believe all the work we were able to get done! From amending the Westchester Human Rights Housing Laws to protecting a Veteran's right to housing to funding infrastructure projects, I have enjoyed being your representative.*

*While this year has been turbulent for the Board of Legislators with so many scandals, I know we can work together to regain the public's trust. I will work diligently during the remainder of this term to ensure we will again be a pristine governmental organization.*

*Sincerely,*

## Introduction of a Legislative Resolution Opposing The New York Housing Compact Laws

On Monday, March 6, 2023, Legislator Margaret Cunzio and I introduced a legislative resolution against Governor Hochul's New York Housing Compact, which includes two bills, "The New Homes Target and Fast Track Approval Act" and "The Transient-Oriented Development Act of 2023" which would end most instances of local zoning in New York State. "The New Homes Targets and Fast-Track Approval Act" requires the town to meet or exceed a

residential dwelling growth target or enact by local law two of five "preferred actions" to be considered in "safe harbor" status. "The Transit-Oriented Development Act of 2023" would amend local laws to adopt land use regulation within three years for higher density development for areas located within one-half mile of any publicly accessible areas of a Metropolitan Transportation Authority ("MTA") transit station. "The New Homes Target and Fast

Track Approval Act" would have overridden local land use regulations and created an unprecedented burden on local services like fire and police. The impact of these bills would have been especially catastrophic for the Village of Bronxville. I was happy to propose a legislative resolution to help save local zoning.

"The New York Housing Compact" failed to pass during the State's 2023 budget process.

## National Night Out

I was thrilled to help secure over \$7,000 in community funds for the Yonkers, Bronxville, and Eastchester Police Departments for their National Night Out festivals. National Night Out is an important community-building event that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer.

National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer and more caring places to live. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. Furthermore, it provides an excellent opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances.



## Bronxville Footbridge Replacement Project

Heeding the calls of eager residents wanting to take advantage of the County's award-winning parks system, the County announced the full replacement of the Bronxville pedestrian footbridge on the Bronx River Pathway off Pondfield Road. The footbridge was destroyed during the remnants of Hurricane Ida, which passed through Westchester County last year. The bridge's abutments, borings, and deck were washed away during last year's flooding and will need complete replacement. This park's infrastructure upgrade also comes at my behest, who, like the County, heard from residents about the need to repair the footbridge. When my office received numerous correspondence on this issue, I knew we had a partner in the County Executive who was just a phone call away. The use of the County's extensive trail network is vital to the recreation residents enjoy, and I am eager to see this project commence.



**UPDATE:** *The Bronxville Footbridge is expected to finish construction during the Fall. The Contractor has had supply chain issues getting some of the necessary parts. The bridge is being built offsite.*

## Calling for Repairs at Sprain Ridge Pool

I continue to call on my colleagues in County government to replace the Sprain Ridge Park Pool Building, which is falling apart, with a brand new facility. This Summer, I spent a lot of time touring Sprain Ridge Park's Pool Area. I was shocked to see that much of the Pool's infrastructure desperately needs repair. I am calling for a brand new building to be built at the pool. This building would consist of a food court area, bathrooms, locker rooms, a bathhouse, storage, and office space. As someone with a background in construction work, a new facility would complement the pool. Repairs to the building would cost the taxpayers too much money, so instead, a new facility should be built. With the budget season coming up, the County should make this new building a number one priority. The County shouldn't wait until a poolgoer is hurt by the failing construction. We should do these repairs now before anyone gets hurt.

## Housing Town Hall

On March 29, I held a Town Hall on the Housing Compact Laws and other housing issues alongside zoning expert Paul Graziano. Residents are concerned with the rising cost of housing and are looking for solutions from all branches of government. I will continue to be a voice for a more affordable Yonkers.

## Flavored Tobacco Ban

On November 28, 2022, I voted against a bill banning the retail sale and distribution of flavored tobacco products in Westchester County along with five of my colleagues. I voted against the flavored tobacco ban because of several reasons. I worried about its negative impacts on minority communities, specifically Black Americans and Arab Americans. I was also worried about the net loss of sales

tax that would be instead funneled into a black market for flavored tobacco. If you have any other questions about this vote, please feel free to reach out to my office.



## Seniors on the Move

I was happy to attend the annual “Seniors on the Move” organized annually by the Westchester County Department of the Aging. I always get a kick out of seeing our Seniors put on such a good dance show. It was an honor to be able to speak at this year’s event.

## Leewood Avenue Tunnel

Repairs on the Leewood Avenue tunnel in the Town of Eastchester began last summer and are expected to be completed early in the fall.

## The Labor Subcommittee

As a Teamsters Local #456 member, it is an incredible honor to be a part of the Labor Subcommittee. The Labor Subcommittee is an ad hoc committee created by the Board of Legislators Budget

and Appropriations Committee. Its purpose is to act as a direct communication line to Labor Unions so that we can help them with issues that affect them. A big thank you to my colleagues for all their work in maintaining this committee!

## Walkthrough of Flood Damage in Armour Villa

Assemblyman Nader Sayegh’s office organized to have New York State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie tour Armour Villa to hear from residents impacted by flood damage. Armour Villa is one of many neighborhoods in LD 15 impacted by flash floods in recent years. Local officials, like myself, joined them on this tour.



Last year, I worked with my colleagues in County Government to draft Flood Mitigation Plans for neighborhoods in Northeast Yonkers like Armour Villa. I am pleased to see these plans start to come to fruition.

## Saving the Hudson River

The Indian Point Decommissioning company, Holtec International, an-

nounced plans to dump treated radioactive water into the Hudson River earlier this year. Immediately, our Board was called to action. We:

- unanimously passed a resolution opposing the plan and also supported the “Save the Hudson” bill, a state bill prohibiting radioactive waste dumping into state waterways, sponsored by State Sen. Peter Harckham and Assemb. Dana Levenberg (A5338/S5181),
- rallied alongside our state elected officials, Rockland County legislators, and local advocates highlighting potential long-term effects to our communities, and
- publicly urged Gov. Hochul to sign the bill immediately!

## Parkway Viaduct Bridge

In March, the Parkway Viaduct bridge that crosses over the Bronx River Parkway in Yonkers was shut down after stones began falling on the Parkway, and emergency repairs were done.



The Parkway Viaduct Bridge has been reopened, but it will undergo a restoration project in the next 24 months to restore it to its former glory!

## Investing in Children and Families

By investing in high-quality childcare programs, we give working parents the freedom to pursue their careers while their kids get nurturing care. The Board took action to reduce parent-share contributions, from 10% to 5%, for families eligible for subsidized child care. This means families pay less out-of-pocket!

## Caring for the Environment

In the past year, our Board has been actively fighting against threats to our environment and way of life. We’re working to preserve our county’s rich natural resources and biodiversity while encouraging sustainability. We love Westchester. It is our home, and we want future generations to love it, too.

## Advocated for the formation of the Westchester County Police SCUBA Team

On July 18, 2023, I resubmitted a letter to County Executive George Latimer asking for the formation of the Westchester County Police SCUBA Team. Since March 2021, there have been over 24 requests for divers in Westchester.

## Cape for a Cos

On July 29, I was a guest speaker for Capes For A Cos Annual Reveal Party, where local charity Capes For A Cos unveiled a bat mobile wheelchair for a kind boy named Rory.

Capes For A Cos is a charity that unites cosplayers and volunteers in New York City and surrounding areas to create custom-built, epic costumes for children who don’t usually see themselves represented in



## Business of the Month



Upon taking office last January, I highlighted 30 businesses in District 15 on social media and presented Westchester Board of Legislators’ Proclamations to them. If you or a business owner you know are interested in highlighting their business, please get in touch with my office!

the world of dress-up. They want to give children with physical or developmental disabilities a chance to be the star for a day.

## Expanding the Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities Homeowners’ Tax Exemption

Late last year, we enacted the Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities Homeowners’ Tax Exemption. This act expanded the income eligibility for property tax exemptions for those eligible by increasing the maximum household annual limit from \$29,000 to \$50,000. Now, more seniors and persons with disabilities will be able to age in place within their current communities, especially those on fixed incomes, by limiting their future property tax obligations.

## Committee on Appointments

As Chair of the Appointments Committee, I have helped oversee close to 120 appointments or reappointments to Advisory Boards, Commissions, and Task Forces including:

- Advisory Council on People with Disabilities
- African American Advisory Board
- Arab American Advisory Board
- Asian American Advisory Board
- Board of Election
- Board of Ethics
- Board of Health
- Citizen’s Consumer Advisory Council
- Community Services Board
- Council for Seniors
- Cybersecurity Task Force
- Hispanic Advisory Board
- Domestic Violence Council
- Housing Opportunity Commission
- LGBTQ+ Advisory Board

## Second Annual “Back to School Drive”



On August 31, 2023, I am holding my second annual “Back to School Drive” to help children in need get the supplies they need for the upcoming school year.

Our office is partnering with St. John’s Riverside Hospital, Target, and Staples to help make this happen. We’re collecting essential supplies such as backpacks, notebooks, pencils, pens, folders, loose-leaf paper, binders, crayons, glue, hand sanitizer, tissues, and disinfectant wipes until August 30 for anyone who would like to donate!