

Westchester County Board of Legislators NEWS

Voice of the People of Westchester County for over 300 years

2026 Midyear Update



Shanae Williams

Majority Whip & District 16 Legislator ~ *Yonkers*
Chair, Committee on Infrastructure & Housing



Dear District 16 and Friends,

As I reflect on this past year, I do so with an immense amount of gratitude that I have the honor of serving as your county legislator. My priority has always been to listen to all of your concerns and meet you where you are, which is something that will not change. Serving our district is a privilege that I do not take for granted. I am incredibly proud of the progress we have made, and I am confident that with your support and input we can continue to improve the lives of all residents in Westchester County.



Assuming the role of Majority Whip
at the Board's organizational meeting

This year, my colleagues at the Board of Legislators have entrusted me with the leadership position of Majority Whip. In this role I count votes and see where members stand on legislation, build consensus within the Democratic caucus, and communicate priorities from leadership. As Majority Whip and as Chair of the Infrastructure and Housing Committee, I remain focused on expanding access to affordable housing throughout the county and investing funds to maintain and strengthen our county's aging

infrastructure. A major investment we have made is \$53.6 million in funds to replace 116 Bee-Line buses with new electric models, guiding us toward a more sustainable future, as we improve the service so many of us rely on every day. Another necessary investment we made is \$585 million to maintain and improve the Yonkers Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant, which serves more than half our county's population. We have heard from residents about growing flooding issues that occur every time we experience heavy rain. As a result, we have invested \$167 million to address flood mitigation throughout the county.

Public safety continues to be one of my priorities as your County Legislator. I am proud to have cosponsored the *Visual Gun Warning Law*. Westchester is just the second jurisdiction in the nation to adopt legislation requiring firearm retailers to display images detailing the dangers associated with gun ownership. As more than 50% of suicide deaths in our county involve the use of a firearm, the adoption of this legislation was essential. In 2022, Westchester adopted legislation requiring written notice of the dangers of owning and possessing firearms, but as we've seen with tobacco safety campaigns, graphic warning labels are a far

more effective deterrent than text alone. In advancing this legislation, I am grateful for the dedicated work of the Westchester County Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, whose hard work, research, and advocacy helped to make this achievement possible. Together, we are taking meaningful steps toward enhancing the safety needs of our community.

I have dedicated much of my time in the community to strengthening our local economy. I am committed to supporting the minority- and women-owned businesses



Supporting Unk's Fish & Chips
at their ribbon-cutting at 7 New School Street

that make our neighborhoods thrive. Everyone should have the same opportunity to do business in our county, therefore my office remains a valuable tool in connecting new entrepreneurs and businesses with all the resources the county has to offer.

I remain dedicated to hearing your concerns and working on solutions to the issues that plague our communities as they arise. Thank you for your continued trust and support.

Sincerely,



Announcing the *Visual Gun Warning Law*

Around the District



Modern Women with a Modern Vision workshop at the Hudson River Museum



Protesting at the "Communities Not Cages" National Day of Action rally



At Mercy University's CSTEP award ceremony



Celebrating Pride Month at the Yonkers Pride Festival



Annual Meeting with the New York State Delegation



Encouraging our future leaders at Westchester County Youth Bureau's Invest Fest



Celebrating the Playland grand opening



Women and Girls in Sports Day celebration at Saunders Trades and Technical High School



Governor Hochul allocates \$10 million to the Yonkers Downtown Revitalization Initiative



Ribbon-cutting at Trevor Park's new Canine Pit Stop



Celebrating with presenters at Yonkers Arts Black History Month Spoken Word Event

FIGHTING FOR AN AFFORDABLE WESTCHESTER

INVESTING IN CHILD CARE, HEALTH, AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES

The County's \$2.6 billion budget for 2026 provides critical support for Westchester residents through a broad range of social services, including childcare assistance, enhanced health programs, support for domestic violence survivors, and resources to address food insecurity. Affordable child care remains a central priority. As of May, the Child Care Scholarship Program has assisted 232 families and 301 children this year, helping parents work and pursue their education with greater stability and peace of mind.

STABILIZING HOUSING FOR RESIDENTS AND PREVENTING EVICTIONS

The Westchester County Office of Housing Counsel has become a critical lifeline for residents facing housing instability since it opened in July 2025. Since then, the program has helped prevent 282 evictions and kept 369 households out of the shelter system. The office connects income-qualifying residents facing eviction to legal representation, trusted housing providers, and services, strengthening pathways to stable housing across the County. It was made possible by the Board's 2023 passage of the landmark *Access to Counsel Law*.

COMBATING RISING COSTS WITH PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

In May, the Board launched the Affordability and Economic Development Task Force to address financial pressures facing Westchester residents and businesses through concrete policy recommendations. The task force brings together community, business, and nonprofit experts to identify cost-of-living drivers and strategies to strengthen small businesses and expand job creation in Westchester. Growing economic uncertainty at the federal level underscored the need for local action.

STANDING AGAINST UNAFFORDABLE UTILITY RATE HIKES

Westchester County continued to press the New York State Public Service Commission to reject proposed rate increases from Con Edison and New York State Electric and

Gas. In partnership with the County Executive and state and local officials, the Board advocated for residents, citing widespread alarm about soaring utility bills. The proposed increases exceed inflation and would add further financial pressure to households. This follows sustained advocacy in 2025, which included public input sessions across the County and legal participation in major New York State rate cases.

PUTTING WORKERS FIRST

OPENING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND STRENGTHENING OUR WORKFORCE

Legislators unanimously passed a law in April creating a direct pathway for Westchester residents to enter skilled trade careers that offer higher wages, healthcare, and pensions. The *Mandating Apprenticeships in County Projects Law* requires contractors bidding on large County construction projects to offer New York State-registered apprenticeship programs in the building trades. Labor leaders praised the measure as a meaningful investment in workforce development. They called apprenticeships a proven route to the middle class that does not require a college degree.

ENSURING FAIR WAGES FOR ALL COUNTY CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

In May, the Board unanimously passed a measure guaranteeing that all workers on County construction projects receive standard union wages. The new law covers job sites on property Westchester County leases but does not own. Previously, a gap in state law left workers on those sites without fair wage protections, even when the work directly supported County operations. The

Westchester County Lessor Prevailing Wage Act applies to long-term lease agreements and



Announcing passage of the *Westchester County Lessor Prevailing Wage Act*

larger construction projects, requiring contractors and subcontractors to pay prevailing wages. The Board and labor leaders called it a win for working families, making clear that County dollars should always uphold values of dignity and fair pay.

PROMOTING COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

SUPPORTING SENIORS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Board funded the replacement of paratransit vehicles to ensure safe, reliable, and accessible transportation for seniors and residents with disabilities. Additional state funding expands senior nutrition programs countywide. Together, these investments strengthen essential services that support health, mobility, and independence for older adults and residents with disabilities. ■



Annual Meeting of Westchester Disabled on the Move, Inc.

KEEPING WESTCHESTER'S FINANCES STRONG

Westchester County again earned the highest-possible AAA bond ratings from S&P Global and Fitch Ratings. The continued confidence of these independent agencies, particularly in a challenging economic climate, reflects the Board's sound budgeting, healthy reserves, and effective long-term planning. This distinction keeps borrowing costs low and places Westchester among the highest-rated counties in the nation. ■



Westchester County Legislator

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BREAK THE SILENCE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

5K Run/Walk at Tibbetts Brook Park



Scan to
Register:



Register by September
12th for a t-shirt and
personalized bib!

**SATURDAY,
OCTOBER 10TH
8 - 11:00 AM**



Meet at the Pavilion at
Tibbetts Brook Park
355 Midland Ave, Yonkers, NY 10704

For more information, please email:
jaxn@westchestercountyny.gov

All proceeds, minus the costs associated with this event, will support the Yonkers Community Action Program, which provides resources and services that improve health, education, and employment outcomes for Yonkers residents. Your registration fee will cover the costs associated with this event. To make a direct donation, please visit: <https://rebrand.ly/kj6vqls>

Scan to
Volunteer:



Looking ahead, I am excited to announce that my office and our partners will host the 3rd Annual Break the Silence on Domestic Violence 5k Run/Walk at Tibbetts Brook Park on October 10, 2026. This year's event is in support of Yonkers Community Action Program (YCAP) and the vital work they do to protect survivors of domestic violence, trauma, and emotional distress. There are numerous ways to get involved, whether you sign up as a participant, volunteer your time on race day, or become a sponsor.

If you are interested, kindly contact my office. For any additional questions or information, please do not hesitate to reach out. I hope to see you on October 10th as we take steps together for an important cause. For further details, contact my office at (914) 995-2813, or use your phone to scan the event QR codes to the left.

