



Westchester County Legislator
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Taking a Stand Against Con Edison Rate Hikes



Legislators Host Rye Brook Public Listening Session for Con Ed Proposed Rate Increases

In addition, the Village of Rye Brook led a consortium of 40 municipalities to contest the proposed rates. Due to the overwhelming opposition, negotiations significantly reduced the rate increases. However, the County Administration and Board of Legislators called on the PSC to reject Con Edison's rate hikes entirely. I support efforts by NYS Legislators to change the public service law to create a more equitable process so that Westchester County won't face exorbitant rate hikes in the future. ■

Sound Fiscal Management/Budget

My colleagues and I faced severe funding deficits in the 2026 County Budget due to the expiration of post-COVID funding and significant Federal cuts to programs that house, feed, and provide healthcare to our most vulnerable residents, including seniors, veterans, and the disabled. We spent months reviewing the budget and trying to balance the priorities of our many constituencies. Although we were not able to provide funding at our preferred levels, I am hopeful that our County departments, nonprofit organizations, the private sector, and community members will join together to work toward creative solutions to ensure that our residents' needs will be met. ■

The Board of Legislators and the County Executive's office joined the rate case before the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) to contest Con Edison's proposed double-digit rate hikes for electricity and gas. These increases would have further burdened working families, seniors, and small businesses already struggling with exorbitant utility bills. The Board hosted six Public Input Sessions, including at Rye Brook Village Hall, to enable residents to voice their concerns.

Westchester County Board of Legislators NEWS

Voice of the People of Westchester County for over 300 years

2025 Year in Review



Nancy E. Barr

District 6 ~ Harrison, Rye Brook, Port Chester



Dear Friends & Neighbors,

Since joining the Board of Legislators in 2018, I have advocated for more accessible and affordable mental health services for Westchester residents, especially for young people. This advocacy became more personal for me this past April, when I lost my beloved 30-year-old son Zachary to suicide.

Nationally, suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth and young adults, ages 10–34. As a community, we must do everything we can to change this. Since my son's death, I have been even more vocal about the importance of reducing the stigma around mental illness. Each time I speak of my loss, I am approached by people with their own stories of loved ones at risk or lost to suicide. I am hopeful that opening the door to these conversations will help individuals at risk, and provide healing for those who have faced loss.

If you or a loved one are struggling with suicidal thoughts, there is help and there is hope. Visit the Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health website at <https://mentalhealth.westchestergov.com> or www.988lifeline.org for information about available resources. If in crisis, call the **988 Crisis Hotline** or text **"988"** for confidential and free assistance in English or Spanish, 24/7/365.

For those who are healing, Westchester County created the Healing Garden at Ridge Road Park in Hartsdale. This garden provides a tranquil space for family and friends to reflect, remember, and honor their loved ones. This past May, a plaque was added to the Garden to further honor the memory of those lost to suicide.

In this new year, let's be sensitive to those around us and supportive of those who may need some extra help. Let's build stronger connections with family and friends, and work to amplify and celebrate all the positive in our community and in each other.

Best,

Nancy E. Barr



Zachary's Wedding Day, May 2024



National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Westchester Walk



Healing Garden Plaque Dedication



County Executive Signs Responsible Bidder Legislation

Good Governance

I proudly spearheaded "Responsible Bidder" legislation to enhance the County's ability to identify responsible bidders on public works contracts. This law creates a consistent, comprehensive system for evaluating potential contractors to ensure that quality workmanship, efficient operation, safety, and timely completion of projects are considered, in addition to price. This law enables the County to make smarter decisions with taxpayer money. ■

Investing in Our Children & Training Our Workforce

DISCONNECT TO RECONNECT LAUNCH

It is widely understood that too much time spent in front of screens and on social media can have a negative impact on early childhood development and mental health for all age groups. As Co-Chair of the Board's Families Task Force, I have partnered with the Westchester Library System, the Childcare Council of Westchester, and the Westchester Children's Museum to lead a County-wide "Disconnect to Reconnect" effort, which promotes creative play and encourages families to reduce screen time and spend more quality time together. For more information, visit <https://conversations.westchesterlibraries.org>.



Students Receive Disconnect 2 Reconnect Backpacks

WESTCHESTER CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

The Board approved a 20-year lease extension for the Westchester County Children's Museum, ensuring this popular Rye institution will continue to serve families through interactive STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) education. The museum, which attracted 140,000 visitors in FY 2024–2025, is committed to fostering creativity, critical thinking, and self-confidence in young people.

SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The Board approved a grant program whereby New York-Presbyterian Hospital will fund \$150,000 in salaries for a six-week summer employment program for youth ages 16–24 to assist them in building the professional skills, networks, and connections needed to launch successful careers. This program operates in eight municipalities, including Port Chester. ■

Enhancing Public Safety

PREVENTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DEATHS

The Board approved a game-changing county-wide program aimed at preventing domestic violence deaths. The Domestic Violence High Risk Team, a collaborative group of County agencies, Westchester Medical Center, and nonprofit organizations, will identify victims in extreme danger and coordinate emergency services to protect them and their families before tragedy strikes.

PROTECTING CONSUMERS FROM SCAMS AND PREDATORS

Westchester County residents and small businesses now have stronger protection from dishonest and unethical business practices thanks to landmark consumer protection legislation passed by the Board. This updated code shields residents from deed theft, AI-powered fraud, subscription traps, hidden fees, and data breaches. This year, I arranged for the County's Director of Consumer Protection to speak to Seniors at the Posillipo Center in Rye Brook and Broadview Senior Living in Purchase to educate residents to help them avoid scams.



Consumer Protection Director Visits Seniors

LIFESAVING LEGISLATION FOR ALLERGIC INDIVIDUALS

The Board unanimously passed the Giovanni Cipriano Act, a groundbreaking measure to provide eligible County police officers with EpiPens and training to respond to severe allergic reactions and save lives. Named after a 14-year-old who tragically died from an allergic reaction, "Gio's Law" ensures that officers will be equipped to act quickly during life-threatening allergy emergencies.

BLUE ENVELOPE PROGRAM

To promote safer interactions between law enforcement and drivers with autism and other disabilities during traffic stops, the Board approved the launch of the Blue Envelope Program. Program participants are given a distinctive blue envelope to store their driver's license, registration, and insurance information. The envelope signals to officers that the driver may require communication help, and includes tips for both drivers and officers to encourage clear, respectful, and calm interactions. Contact your local police department to sign up. ■

Quality of Life

HOUSING

The Board passed the Land Acquisition Act to enable the County to invest in properties to encourage development of affordable housing. Examples include approval to transform unoccupied buildings in downtown White Plains into affordable condominiums for first-time homebuyers, and the purchase of a property in Peekskill which will include affordable units for young adults 18–25 who have aged out of foster care.

MAKING PUBLIC TRANSIT EASIER AND MORE CONVENIENT

The Board acted to upgrade Westchester County's Bee-Line buses to provide both contactless payment technology and cash fareboxes. This approved dual system preserves free transfers between Bee-Line and MTA subways and buses, benefiting six million passengers annually.

EQUAL CHANGING ACCESS FOR ALL FAMILIES

To ensure all parents and caregivers have equal access to diaper changing stations, the Board passed the "DIAPRS Act" to develop a plan to install additional changing stations at County parks and publicly accessible County-owned buildings. The intent is to ensure changing stations are available in spaces other than in women's restrooms. ■

Photo Gallery



Fighting Food Insecurity at Harrison Food Pantry



Port Chester 9/11 Commemoration



Honoring Outgoing American Jewish Committee President Wendy Lubkin



Troop 420 Eagle Scout Court of Honor Ceremony



Honoring Michael Romita at the Board's Italian American Heritage Celebration



Proud to be Honored at the NAACP Freedom Fund Luncheon



LUCA FAFSA Boot Camp at Port Chester High School



Emergency Food Distribution for Federal Employees Impacted by Shutdown



Harrison Chamber of Commerce Networking Event



Speaking in Support of Worker Safety



Announcing the Passage of Gio's Law



Council of Community Services Honors Port Chester Recreation's Heather Krakowski

Supporting Westchester's Heroes

EXPANDING TAX RELIEF FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND AMBULANCE CORPS MEMBERS

Under this new legislation all volunteer firefighters and emergency personnel, regardless of where they serve in Westchester, will receive a 10% County property tax break. Previously only volunteers serving in their home community benefitted from this tax exemption. Volunteer fire and ambulance workers provide a significant benefit to residents and taxpayers, and this tax exemption will help improve recruitment and retention of these critical volunteers.

HONORING VETERANS WITH FREE COUNTY PARK PASSES

To honor the service and sacrifice of our U.S. military, the Board of Legislators approved an Act to provide free County park passes to all veterans living in Westchester. This Board-led initiative extends an existing benefit that previously covered only active duty military and disabled veterans. ■