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Proudly Serving the 2nd District



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SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL NONPROFITS

The County provides funding to our local nonprofits, supporting the critical work they do for our residents. In 2025, we provided dollars that helped to move the needle on a variety of important local issues, as well as funding for special events such as Mt. Kisco's historical celebration. In 2026, we are proud to continue our partnerships with:

- **BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF NORTHERN WESTCHESTER** (Mt. Kisco) to support youth mental health;
- **COMMUNITY CENTER OF NORTHERN WESTCHESTER** (Bedford) to combat food insecurity;
- **COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES** (North Salem) to assist students aging out of special education services;
- **EMERGENCY SHELTER PARTNERSHIP** (Mt. Kisco) to support the unhoused;
- **ENDEAVOR THERAPEUTIC HORSEMANSHIP** (Bedford) for Veterans mental health programs;
- **FRIENDS OF KAREN** (North Salem) to aid families with a child facing serious illness;
- **NEW DAWN FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER** (Pound Ridge) to support domestic violence victims; and
- **THE PANTRY** (Mt. Kisco) to combat food insecurity.

PICTURED: Announcing funding for The Pantry in Mt. Kisco (top) and for New Dawn Family Resource Center in Pound Ridge (bottom)



Westchester County Board of Legislators NEWS

Voice of the People of Westchester County for over 300 years

2025 Year in Review



Legislator Erika Pierce

District 2 ~ Bedford, Lewisboro, Mount Kisco,
North Salem, Pound Ridge, Somers



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As the legislator representing District 2, which includes six municipalities, it is my honor to work cooperatively with our local governments and assist hundreds of constituents and non-profits on a myriad of issues. Inside, you will find legislative highlights for 2025, plus updates on our district's County Parks facilities and local non-profits receiving support as we head into 2026.

2025 was truly historic. The Elephant Hotel celebrated 200 years, Mt. Kisco 150, Ward Pound Ridge 100, and Muscoot Farm 50. And these organizations were not alone! Our houses of worship met major milestones, as did our community groups. And this year, we will all come together to mark our 250th!

In 2025, the Board prioritized making Westchester more affordable. From fighting utility rate increases, to investing in affordable housing and supporting our food pantries in the face of cuts, these issues remain a priority in 2026. Other highlights included: helping to return over \$4 million to Westchester residents through our Unclaimed Funds workshops; the launch of the new 24/7 domestic violence hotline; new laws protecting residents from AI deep fakes and other scams; improvements to how we select contractors for large capital projects; and the launch of the County's Office of Housing Counsel.

Three pieces of my legislation were enacted into law, including the free County Parks Pass program for Veterans, and I was thrilled to vote to expand tax relief for local volunteers after years of effort. We have completed many projects in our parks, and I am excited that the new Ward Pound Ridge fire tower is nearing its finish line. I was also reappointed Vice Chair of the National Association of County's Environment, Energy, and Land Use Committee.

The budget process for 2026 was difficult and a sign of things to come. Revenues, including federal funding, have decreased as costs continue to escalate, leading the County to institute cuts across the board and a property tax increase, the first since 2019. The Board of Legislators was instrumental in reducing the proposed tax increase, initially set at 5.2%, to 3.7%, while maintaining funding for some of our local non-profits and, importantly, for childcare. We will have our first Coffee and Conversation for 2026 on March 3 in Lewisboro. If you do not already receive my weekly e-blasts, use the QR code on the back to sign up.

I am proud of the work we have done and grateful for the opportunity to represent our beautiful district.

With gratitude,

PICTURED TOP TO BOTTOM: 1. (left to right) Mt. Kisco Chief Hollis, Sen. Harkham, and County Executive Jenkins at the annual Bedford Volunteer Fire Department Inspection Dinner 2. Celebrating Pride with Westchester County, including Lewisboro's Rachel Simon and Bedford's Cade Schwark 3. Marking 200 years of the Elephant Hotel with (left to right) Town Councilmen Clinchy, Garrity, and Ciriaco 4. With (left to right) Mindy Quintero, Sue Moga, and Jonathon Benjamin at Run the Farm 5. Recognizing Mt. Kisco's Sesquicentennial



AFFORDABILITY

PROVIDING LEGAL REPRESENTATION TO PEOPLE FACING EVICTION

The Westchester County Office of Housing Counsel officially opened in July, fulfilling the landmark Access to Counsel legislation passed by the Board in 2023. This first-of-its-kind County program provides free legal representation and support services to financially eligible tenants facing eviction and related housing proceedings. Early statistics indicate this powerful program is getting the job done, helping to keep people from becoming unhoused in the first place, which is not only the right thing to do, but also fiscally responsible.



Speaking at the Board's Con Ed hearing held in Mt. Kisco

STANDING UP FOR LOCAL RATEPAYERS

The Board of Legislators mobilized to oppose both Con Edison and NYSEG's proposed double-digit rate hikes, partnering with County Executive Ken Jenkins to become parties in both rate cases. We held public input sessions in communities across the County, giving residents opportunities to voice their concerns. Comments generated by the Board's public input sessions were submitted to the



Residents at the Board's NYSEG hearing held in Somers

New York Public Service Commission (PSC) to become part of the public record and helped to round out our testimony. Westchester County is continuing to fight for lower utility delivery rates.

EXPANDING TAX RELIEF FOR LOCAL VOLUNTEER RESPONDERS

After years of effort, I was thrilled to be able to vote to expand property tax benefits for volunteer firefighters and emergency personnel who live in one Westchester municipality but volunteer in another. Previously, the state restricted who could be given that benefit. Now, all volunteers, regardless of where they serve in Westchester, will receive a 10% County property tax break. ■



Announcing the expansion of tax abatement for volunteer first responders

DISTRICT 2 PARKS

LASDON PUBLIC GARDENS AND VETERANS MEMORIAL was given a new name and work on septic systems and pathways has begun.

MERESTEAD PARK highlighted its newly connected trail system with a community-wide "Take a Hike Day" event. Farmhouse rehabilitation work has started and roof work was approved.

MOUNTAIN LAKES PARK welcomed new yurts at Camp Morty and new roofs, including at Camp Hemlock. Design for the replacement of the park's water system begins this year.

MUSCOOT FARM celebrated 50 years of being Westchester's farm park. Improvements are evident and include new bathrooms and parking lot.

WARD POUND RIDGE RESERVATION marked 100 years with a 100-mile challenge and a full day of celebrations. New dams and bridges are complete and construction on the fire tower is underway.



Celebrating 100 Years of Ward Pound Ridge

PUBLIC SAFETY

PROTECTING COMMUNITY MEMBERS FROM AI-GENERATED DEEPFAKES, SCAMS, AND PREDATORS

The Board passed a new law strengthening the County's ability to keep residents free from harassment, extortion, identity theft, and sexual exploitation through content created with AI. We also updated our Consumer Protection Code to provide stronger protection from dishonest and unethical business practices, shielding residents from AI-powered fraud and protecting them from deed theft, subscription traps, hidden fees, and data breaches.

PREVENTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DEATHS

We are thrilled to continue to develop Westchester's Domestic Violence High Risk Team, a game-changing county-wide program that identifies victims in extreme danger and coordinates emergency services to protect them and their families before tragedy strikes. Plus, the Board's 24/7 Domestic Violence Hotline initiative, a

collaboration with Westchester Medical Center and connected with the SAAVE program, is soon to be live and will be reached at (833) 222-2444.

BLUE ENVELOPE PROGRAM AND GIOVANNI CIPRIANO ACT

To promote safer interactions between law enforcement and drivers with autism and other disabilities during traffic stops, the Board launched the Blue Envelope Program. Plus, the Giovanni Cipriano Act will soon equip County Police officers with EpiPens, giving them the ability to act quickly during life-threatening allergy emergencies.

UPGRADES AND IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION AND DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Legislators approved replacing 25-year-old outdated security systems at the Westchester County Department of Correction and a security post, significantly improving safety for correctional staff and detainees. In addition, a variety of



Firefighters training at the County training facilities

projects at our Department of Emergency Services (DES), where the County's career and volunteer fire departments train, continue to move forward. This year, the Board voted to finance modifications and upgrades to the Westchester County Emergency Operations Center and DES's Emergency Management office to better protect Westchester residents in the case of a large-scale emergency. Local volunteers will be thrilled to know that the new Smoke House at the County's firefighter training facility is currently being installed. ■

GOOD GOVERNANCE, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND COMMUNITY

GUARANTEEING BETTER ROADS, BUILDINGS, AND SERVICES PLUS HIGHEST BOND RATINGS

The Board unanimously passed legislation I cosponsored that protects taxpayers from substandard construction work and unfinished projects. Tax dollars will now go to contractors best able to deliver quality results on time—not just those submitting the lowest bid. This means better roads, buildings, and infrastructure for Westchester residents, with less risk of cost overruns or contractor failures. Plus, Westchester is the only county in New York State with top ratings from all three agencies—earning AAA credit ratings from both S&P Global and Fitch Ratings plus an outlook upgrade by Moody's to positive. These achievements allow for investment in capital projects at a lower cost while maintaining fiscal stability.



Signing the legislation providing free Veterans Parks Passes

HONORING VETERANS WITH FREE COUNTY PARK PASSES AND IMPROVING PARK ACCESS FOR CAREGIVERS

To honor the service and sacrifice of our U.S. military, I introduced legislation providing free County Park passes to all Veterans living in Westchester. (Previously, this benefit covered only active duty military and disabled Veterans.) Additionally, I cosponsored the "DIAPRS Act" to ensure that at least one changing station is accessible to all caregivers, regardless of gender, on every floor of public-facing County buildings and in all County Parks bathrooms.

REDUCING COMMUNITY FLOOD RISK

Westchester continues to invest in projects that strengthen local infrastructure and safeguard homes, roads, and neighborhoods from increasingly severe storms, including projects this year in New Rochelle, Croton-on-Hudson, and Bronxville—communities that have faced repeated flooding. Since 2009, Westchester has invested more than \$120 million to fight flooding, with new funding put into the Capital Budget for 2026.

MAKING PUBLIC TRANSIT EASIER AND MORE CONVENIENT

Westchester has been working to improve its Bee-Line buses, including investing in new software to help better manage the bus system, new contactless payment fare boxes, and, most importantly, welcoming OMNY to Westchester. ■