



Westchester County Legislator
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Voting Changes Coming to Westchester

This past January, New York State implemented the first new sweeping reforms to our voting laws in a generation. We hope that these changes will make it easier for people to vote, and inspire greater voter participation, but we know for sure that there will be a learning curve as the Board of Elections works to implement new procedures.

Here are some of the things voters need to know about the new voting reforms:

- **ONE PRIMARY ELECTION DATE** -- Previously in New York we had separate dates for federal and state primaries. Under the new law there will be one primary election date -- the fourth Tuesday in June, for all federal, state, county and local candidates. Separate rules apply to village elections that do not take place in November.
- **EARLY VOTING** -- Beginning with this November's general election, voters in New York will have the option to vote early. In 2019, the dates for early voting will be Saturday, October 26th through and including Sunday, November 3rd. The Westchester County Board of Elections will select multiple voting locations specifically for early voting, which may be different from your regular, election-day polling place. The Westchester County Board of Elections will notify you by mail of your early voting polling site.
- **VOTER CHANGE OF ADDRESS** -- Voters will no longer have to re-register in person when they move from one location to another in New York State. When a voter moves within the state, and the Board of Elections receives notice of an address change from the U.S. Post Office, a state agency or an affidavit ballot, their voter registration will go with them.

In addition, beginning in 2020, 16 and 17-year-olds will be able to pre-register to vote, so they will be automatically registered and eligible to vote on their 18th birthdays.

The state legislature also is considering future legislation that would allow for same-day voter registration and absentee voting by mail for any reason, but those laws have not been passed yet.

Stay tuned as we continue to work at the Board and through our Voting Reform Working Group to monitor the changes and take whatever steps the Board has to take to keep Westchester in compliance with the new laws. ■

Important VOTING DAYS TO REMEMBER

- ✓ **Early Voting**
October 26 – November 3
- ✓ **Election Day**
November 5th

VOTE

Westchester County Board of Legislators NEWS

Voice of the People of Westchester County for over 300 years

Fall 2019 Newsletter



Terry Clements

District 11 ~ New Rochelle, Pelham, Pelham Manor



Safe Leave Protects Victims of Domestic Violence

No one should have to choose between their safety and a paycheck, that's why this spring we pass a new law creating 'safe leave' for victims of domestic violence in Westchester.

Under the new law, victims of domestic violence are entitled to take up to 40 hours of paid leave from their jobs to attend or testify in court proceedings related to their situations, or to move from an abuser's residence, or to confer with lawyers or other advisers.

We all hope that few people will ever have to take advantage of these protections, and we must continue to work to prevent this kind of violence. But giving victims a margin of safety and security in their situations is just the right thing to do.

The Safe Leave Act creates protections beyond those which were created in 2018 by our Earned Sick Leave Law which ensures access to sick time for workers. Under that law, workers who had no sick time before can earn up to 40 hours of sick leave per year. ■

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It is an honor and privilege to represent the people of Pelham, Pelham Manor and New Rochelle at the Westchester County Board of Legislators. I would like to thank the people of our wonderful community for your continued support.

At the Board we are working hard to ease the burden on property taxpayers, expand protections for renters, continue to improve our aging infrastructure, safeguard the environment and to protect the rights of seniors and immigrants.

The Committee on Intergovernmental Services, which I chair, will work to ensure the safety of all the residents of District 11 and all of Westchester County. Along with my colleagues and other county agencies, we are committed to developing collaborative safety measures so Westchester residents can live and work without fear in our communities. This defensive action to combat violence in our society expands my commitment to school safety to include every facet of our daily lives.

In the past year I have supported legislation to clean up our environment by eliminating the use of polystyrene food containers reducing the chance that this toxin will not contaminate our waterways or be dumped in landfills. We are committed to a greener, more sustainable Westchester.

I am also excited to have been a part of the legislation approving a new location for the Family Court which will move from its current location to Garden Street by 2021. This new location will provide a state-of-the-art facility, more space for the court, and ensure easy access for area families in need of the services the court provides.

I would love to hear from you. With frequent communication, we can resolve issues and make Westchester one of the best communities to reside in. With your help, we can move our county forward.

Thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,



THOMAS PAINE COTTAGE REOPENING — It was an honor to join the Huguenot & New Rochelle Historical Association this June for the re-opening of the Thomas Paine Cottage Museum. Knowing our history helps shape our future. The Thomas Paine Cottage is a New Rochelle gem. Thank you to the director, staff and board for keeping our history alive.

New Location Selected for New Rochelle Family Court



The Westchester County Family Court in New Rochelle is finally getting a new home.

The family court will be moving into a building to be constructed at 26 Garden Street in New Rochelle.

We at the Board spent much of June and July examining a 30-year lease for part of the property, to make sure the deal serves the best interests of county taxpayers and the needs of the court. I'm glad to

say, with the deal going forward, the court can expect to move into a new facility in 2021.

Finding a suitable site has been a long process. With each newly proposed site, we listened to community concerns about traffic, congestion and court access. Working with local officials, the County Executive's office, and the Office of Court Administration, we were able to arrive at the current location.

The process may have been long, but it shows that government really can work to solve problems when you have elected officials willing to listen and work with the community. I'm proud to have been able to play a role to support the right deal at the right location.

For those who don't know, family court handles matters such as adoption, child custody, guardianship and paternity, as well as cases of child abuse and neglect and cases of domestic violence. It's a court that does important work to protect vulnerable children and families. Local courthouses are essential to families who might otherwise have to travel great distances to make court appearances.

We have three Family courthouses in Westchester -- one in Yonkers, one in White Plains, and one in New Rochelle, each handling caseloads from different areas. The court in New Rochelle can no longer remain in its current North Avenue location. The county and the Office of Court Administration have been working for years to find a new location consistent with the needs of the court and the local community. ■

Safeguarding Our Environment by Eliminating Expanded Polystyrene Food Containers

Protecting and preserving Westchester's environment for our health and safety, and for the health and safety of our children, is among the most important things we can do as legislators.

That's why I'm proud to say this May we passed a law to eliminate the use and sale of expanded polystyrene take-out food containers in Westchester.

Americans throw out billions of tons of coffee cups and other food containers made from the lightweight, brittle materials every year. This material is not biodegradable. It clogs landfills, it contaminates in marine ecosystems where it eat these harmful contaminants birds and fish. It absorbs other pollutants, and it is difficult to recycle economically, especially after it has been used to hold food.

It's time we no longer allow this contaminate to poison our environment.

Our new law, which takes effect on December 10, applies to take-out food containers. It also prohibits the sale of loose-fill EPS packing foam in Westchester. Prepackaged food that arrives sealed in EPS packages, packaging for raw egg, and butcher case packaging are exempted, as are EPS packing materials that arrive here from elsewhere with things like boxed and shipped appliances.

This is common sense legislation that passed with unanimous, bi-partisan support. It allows Westchester to join our neighbors in Nassau and Suffolk Counties, as well New York City in working to make our shared environment cleaner, safer, now and in the future.

We'll be looking for ways to help lo-



cal businesses and organizations comply with these important new regulations. For example, in response to our new law, I've been working with HOPE Community Services, which operates a food pantry and youth programs in New Rochelle. HOPE is switching from disposable plastic dinnerware to reusable, washable items – costly change up front, but a change that will save money in the long run, and keep our environment in the long run. ■

Improving County Roads

I'm happy to report that county roads in our area are finally set to get the repair work they need. This year I joined my colleagues on the Board in unanimously approving major new projects for Pelham Parkway in Pelham Manor and for the Glen Island Bridge in New Rochelle.

In July, we approved a \$1.2 million project for milling, joint and crack repair, resurfacing, curb replacement, installation of ADA compliant sidewalk ramps, new traffic islands and more on Pelham Parkway from the Fulton Avenue Bridge to Boston Post Road.

We also approved \$1.2 million for the design of rehabilitated below-deck elements of the Glen Island Bridge, including replacement of the cross bracing, frames, main girders and bearings as well as repairs to the masonry piers and abutments.

Repair work to these important roadways has long been needed. Using a New York State Inspection System, the condition of the Glen Island Bridge rated as score of three out of seven, a "poor" rating. And the stretch of Pelham Parkway we'll be repairing has an average daily traffic count of more than 14,500, and the last time its pavement condition was assessed three years ago it rated a score of 66 out of 100, indicating serious need for repair.

I'm proud that with our new leadership at the Board and in the County Executive's office, Westchester is accelerating the pace of these important road repairs, which will make life better for residents and businesses in our community. ■

Supporting State Protections for Renters

I'm proud to say that I joined my colleagues this year in passage of a bipartisan resolution in support of efforts in Albany to strengthen and extend rent stabilization protections for renters under New York's Emergency Tenant's Protection Act. That effort paid off when the state passed the legislation we advocated for.

The new laws will end the practice that allows landlords to raise rents for rent-controlled apartments by as much as 20 percent when new tenants move into the units; end the practice of "vacancy decontrol"; keep landlords from using the cost of major repairs to raise rents beyond the cost of the repair; and prohibit evictions and non-renewals of leases without good cause.

By making sure that more, and more affordable rental housing stock remains on the market, these laws will not only protect renters in stabilized units, but should also help keep rents more affordable across the board in Westchester County and the entire region. ■



New Rochelle Police Department National Night Out



Terry at the Eagle Scouts Ceremony



Terry at the Eagle Scouts Ceremony



Terry at Hispanic Heritage Festival/ Kensico Dam



Terry at ArtsWestchester Awards Luncheon Event