



Westchester County Legislator  
**DAMON R. MAHER**  
*Proudly Serving the 10th District*



800 Michaelian Office Building  
148 Martine Avenue, 8th Floor  
White Plains, New York 10601  
(T) 914-995-2817; (F) 914-995-3884  
Maher@westchesterlegislators.com

**Follow us online:**

westchesterlegislators.com  
 facebook.com/westchestercountyBOL  
 twitter.com/westchesterBOL

**Watch meetings live or on-demand** at  
westchestercountyny.IQM2.com

**Up-to-date schedules** at  
westchesterlegislators.com/calendars

## IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE...

**General:**

Westchester County 2-1-1 Hotline | 2-1-1  
Catholic Charities of Yonkers | 914-476-2700

**Evictions:**

Westchester Residential Opportunities | [wroinc.org](http://wroinc.org) | 914-428-4507  
Westhab | [mail@westhab.org](mailto:mail@westhab.org) | 914-345-2800  
Westcop | [westcop.org](http://westcop.org) | 914-633-0101  
Legal Services of the Hudson Valley | [lsbn.org](http://lsbn.org) | 877-574-8529

**Foreclosures:**

The Bridge Fund of Westchester | 914-949-8146  
Human Development Services of Westchester | [hdswn.org](http://hdswn.org) |  
914-835-8906

**Shelters:**

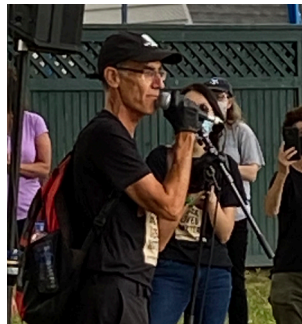
Choice of New Rochelle | 914-576-0173  
Office of Temporary Shelter for Families | 914-9955-2099

**Nutrition:**

Eastchester Community Action Program, Tuckahoe | 914-337-7768  
SNAP/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program | 914-995-3333  
HOPE/Help Our People Eat | [hopecommunityservices.org](http://hopecommunityservices.org) |  
914-355-5236

## KNOW JUSTICE/ KNOW PEACE

Throughout the county many of us have gathered to express our outrage at the killing of George Floyd. This event and others have moved many to call for a reimagining of how we deploy our police and to question the often disparate treatment of people of color by law enforcement and the judicial system. As we move toward realizing a more just society, we also seek to work toward a society in which the violence of poverty, racism, and intolerance is replaced with peace. ■



### SNAIL MAIL IS EXPENSIVE – MAKE SURE YOU SIGN UP FOR MY EMAILS!



I send one piece of mail to you via USPS annually. If you want to stay up to date with the latest news regarding legislation and county events, please sign up at [westchesterlegislators.com/subscribe-to-updates.html](http://westchesterlegislators.com/subscribe-to-updates.html).

## Westchester County Board of Legislators NEWS

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

Fall 2020 Newsletter



## Damon R. Maher

District 10 ~ Eastchester, Tuckahoe, New Rochelle



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

*The year 2020 has been an unusual one, to say the least, and I will take the unusual step of reproducing here a redacted letter that I sent in mid-April, which seems like a lifetime ago, from my Manhattan law office to out-of-state clients and colleagues:*

First, I hope you are well.

My home is in New Rochelle, a small and generally quiet city in Westchester County, New York, just north of New York City. Two years ago I became a part-time elected official representing New Rochelle and adjacent communities in the County's legislature. New Rochelle became the first COVID-19 hotspot on the East Coast in early March. All of our schools and almost all of our businesses in the County have been closed since then and our residents ordered to stay home.

In the coronavirus era, this “part-time” job has been pretty much all-consuming. I have been involved in finding citizen volunteers and public and private funds for food distribution centers for struggling laid-off workers and their families; reporting these desperate “conditions on the ground” to various departments; advocating for, and delivering laptops to, many of these same families so that all children can participate in “remote” learning; finding and advocating free or low-cost day care for children of first responders, medical professionals and other employees of healthcare facilities; encouraging constituents to support local family-owned restaurants; raising money to buy special meals from those restaurants for delivery to workers at healthcare facilities, police stations, firehouses and EMT/ambulance depots; advocating for residents in senior and disabled-care facilities; intervening in particular specific cases for vulnerable constituents; connecting people and organizations with similar or complementary missions; figuring out how government will be able to pay for essential police/fire/sanitation/medical/public health services as sales taxes receipts plummet; conveying helpful ideas, from smart and experienced business people and scientists to health department professionals and public officials; and distilling out relevant information to my constituents and putting it out in comprehensive, e-mail form once or twice a day to keep up morale and dispel damaging rumors and falsehoods.

The good news is evidence that here we set out an early path to social distancing and staying at home, so that our infection curve has bent toward a plateau with slightly lower numbers in hospitals each day over the past week or so. But we still need to do what we're doing, staying home with intervals of outdoor exercise with social distancing and face covering, and staying in touch with extended family and friends via online media; quarantine and isolation depending on testing and symptom. Please learn from this where you are. The cliché “unchartered waters” doesn't being to describe the situation.

All the best to you and yours!

*Damon R. Maher*

## COMMUNITY MEETINGS

With the pandemic, my spring meetings with senior groups at Father Fata Hall, Lake Isle, Garth Road and Jackson Avenue had to be postponed. Our planned in person conversations at neighborhood associations this fall have also been delayed. We are happy to set up virtual presentations. Please contact my office at 914-995-4526 for more information.



January 2020 transportation seminar for seniors at the Garth Road Senior Center



## HOUSING



Housing Workshop for Seniors and People with Disabilities at the Tuckahoe Community Center

As the chair of the BOL Labor & Housing Committee, I have made the issue of housing insecurity a top priority. With our partners at Westchester Residential Opportunities, Westhab, Inc., Legal Services of the Hudson Valley, Westchester County Dept. of Planning and Westchester County Depts. of Social Services and Senior Programs and Services, we held a workshop for our seniors and disabled community last fall. Now we are getting information about available eviction prevention, rental assistance and legal help to those negatively impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. On the last page of this newsletter is a list of resources for those in need. ■

## EXOTIC ANIMAL BAN

Despite the pandemic, the work of the Board of Legislators continued. This spring Westchester County legislature unanimously passed my bill to ban the exhibition and performance by wild and exotic animals. The new law also bans various tools and equipment used during rodeos.

I was proud to push this proposal, which had languished for several years in committee but now brings Westchester in line with the same law passed in NYC two years ago, as well as in New Jersey and several other jurisdictions across the U.S. These animals don't show up at circus offices looking for work. They don't choose to live in cages. They are made to jump through hoops literally, often through the use of cruel, physically coercive techniques. In some cases, stressed animals have even broken free, endangering the public. With this legislation, Westchesterites finally join the ranks of those who have acted to end the misuse of these sentient creatures. ■



## REGENERON SCHOLARS



Eastchester student Maho Toyomura for her project "Gene editing in ALDH2 for a potential cure for alcoholism."



New Rochelle student Jake Egelberg for his project "Flagella-Mediated Antibiotic Persistence: A Scientific Enigma."

## POLICE REFORM AND REIMAGINING TASK FORCE

Following the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May of 2020, Westchester County Executive George Latimer established a working group of various stakeholders to review procedures and policies at the Westchester County Police Academy. In addition to this review, the Task Force, of which I am a member, is also charged with responding to Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 203, requiring each local government to develop a police reform plan with community input in order to reinvent and modernize police strategies and programs within the County's Department of Public Safety. The working group, known as the Westchester County Police Reform and Reimagining Task Force is led by co-chairs Leroy Frazer and Mayo Bartlett, two eminent attorneys from the Criminal Law Bar. We have been charged with performing a comprehensive review of current deployments, policies and procedures at the County Department of Public Safety, and with public input, developing a more modernized plan to improve the Department and offer it as a model for other law enforcement agencies, including local municipal police departments. ■



## WESTCHESTER STRONG!

While the COVID-19 crisis revealed in sharp focus the food and housing insecurity in our communities, it has also shown the generosity and resiliency of our neighbors, community partners and local government. From food drives to the timely assistance of the National Guard, I have been inspired by the work of volunteers, neighbors, community partners and our local governments who have stepped up to secure the social safety net for our seniors, youngsters and essential workers. ■



With Senator Shelley Mayer spending a bit of time at 95 Lincoln in New Rochelle. Here making sandwiches.



Hats off to the hard working staff, volunteers and National Guard at "95"



Shiloh Baptist Church in New Rochelle provides breakfast at Hope Community Services.



Shiloh Baptist Church in Tuckahoe hosted a COVID-19 Screening Sponsored by Tuckahoe Village Trustee Omayra Andino



How 'bout those apples and onions and potatoes? Working the window at Bethesda Baptist food pantry in New Rochelle



Back to school clothing drive at Eastchester Community Action Program gets a big assist from students of the Ursuline School