

# Assemblyman PAT BURKE



## Legislative and Community Report - 142<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District - Summer 2020

### Dear Neighbors,

I want to first and foremost say that I hope this letter finds you and your family in good health. These past few months have been unimaginably difficult for us all, and I want to assure you that the state Legislature hasn't stopped working to support New York families and lay the groundwork for a brighter future.

Whether during good times or bad, your health and safety will always be my top priority. I encourage all residents to continue practicing basic safety precautions, such as social distancing, frequently washing hands and disinfecting surfaces, wearing masks and avoiding large gatherings.

Although the 2020 legislative session is coming to a close, I'll continue supporting Erie County residents in any way I can. Together, we will overcome the challenges this year has presented us.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patrick Burke".

**Pat Burke**  
Member of Assembly  
142<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District

### Assemblyman Burke: Priority Legislation

Assemblyman Burke introduced a host of measures, including bills to:

- protect the environment of Lake Erie by establishing a bill of rights to allow it to exist, flourish and naturally evolve, and instituting a fine for violations of those rights (A.6313);
- enact the Justice for Rachael Act, which would allow judges to detain defendants pre-trial if they pose a danger to the community (A.6688-A);
- grant Erie County park officers the status of peace officer, allowing them to issue appearance tickets (A.10812);
- prevent the sale of plastic products labeled as "biodegradable," "degradable" or "decomposable" except under specific conditions (A.9628); and
- require the Department of Environmental Conservation to work with shoreline residents to design and develop specific shoreline hardening plans as well as reimburse property owners for up to 50% of project costs (A.9607).

### Making New York a Better State for All

Assemblyman Burke co-sponsored bills alongside Assembly colleagues to:

- provide temporary retirement incentives for certain public employees and provide an age 25/55 temporary retirement incentive for certain public employees (A.10595);
- establish higher income tax brackets for individuals to ensure millionaires pay their fair share (A.10364);
- establish the "New York Public Banking Act" to authorize the lending of public credit to public banks to bring more money back to our local governments and communities (A.9665-D); and
- repeal the electronic rebate of the stock transfer tax, collect 100% of this tax and ensure wealthy New Yorkers pay their fair share (A.7791-B).

# Keeping New Yorkers Safe

## Supporting COVID-19 Relief Legislation

This year, the state Legislature passed several laws to support New Yorkers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures:

- ensure all workers subject to a mandatory or precautionary quarantine order receive paid sick leave, family leave and employee benefits (Ch. 25 of 2020)
- prohibit price gouging of essential medical supplies and consumer goods used to promote the health and welfare of the public (Ch. 90 of 2020)
- allow industrial development agencies (IDAs) to issue short-term loans of up to \$25,000 to small businesses and nonprofit organizations affected by COVID-19 (Ch. 109 of 2020)
- enact an emergency rent relief program to support renters who lost income due to COVID-19 and meet certain income requirements (Ch. 125 of 2020)

## Information on COVID-19 Testing

Getting tested for COVID-19 is critical to maintaining the health and safety of both ourselves and those around us. Contrary to what some may claim, COVID-19 testing is free, quick and relatively painless and all personal medical information provided is protected.

There are two types of tests available for COVID-19: a diagnostic swab test, which tells you if you have a current infection, and an antibody test, which tells you if you had a previous infection. Currently, information about the infection is limited and studies are ongoing to determine whether or not the presence of antibodies protects someone from future infections. Additional information can be found at [www2.erie.gov/health](http://www2.erie.gov/health).

## Erie County COVID-19 Testing Sites

Please remember to call these sites ahead of time to confirm availability. This list is subject to change and may not reflect all possible testing locations.

### WellNow Urgent Care – Orchard Park

3245 Southwestern Blvd.  
Orchard Park, NY 14127  
716-608-2226

### WellNow Urgent Care – West Seneca

1956 Ridge Rd.  
West Seneca, NY 14224  
716-608-0041

### Erie County Dept. of Health

ECC South, 4041 Southwestern Blvd.  
Orchard Park, NY 14127  
716-858-2929

### WNY Immediate Care

3050 Orchard Park Rd.  
Orchard Park, NY 14224  
716-675-3700

### Buffalo Sabres Parking Lot

125 Perry St.  
Buffalo, NY 14204  
888-364-3065

## Information on Phase 4 of Reopening

Erie County has entered Phase 4 of the reopening process, which includes all essential businesses that were previously permitted to remain open in addition to non-essential businesses and commercial and recreational activities that are permitted to operate under safety restrictions. Additional information can be found at [forward.ny.gov/phase-four-industries](http://forward.ny.gov/phase-four-industries).

Industries included in Phase 4 include:

- Low-Risk Outdoor Arts & Entertainment
- Low-Risk Indoor Arts & Entertainment
- Media Production
- Professional Sports Competitions Without Fans
- Malls

## COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

### → Did the Legislature give the Governor unchecked powers?

No, the Legislature can rescind any executive order under the emergency legislation.

### → Has the Legislature continued to meet?

Yes, the Legislature has continued to meet virtually to pass legislation and hold oversight hearings regarding the state's response to the pandemic.

### → I'm still waiting to receive unemployment benefits or a New York State small business loan. What's going on?

Please contact my office at 716-608-6099 for assistance if you have been having trouble with state agencies.

## New York Flattening the Curve

The Buffalo News

July 15, 2020

The Editorial Board:  
"...New York flattened the curve and has kept infection rates low."

Just a few months ago, New York was the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak. But thanks to social distancing and other safety guidelines, and the hard work and dedication of New Yorkers, we've flattened the curve. According to health experts like Dr. Fauci, New York's COVID-19 response should serve as a model for the rest of the country.



# District-wide Community Resources: Food Banks, the Family Justice Center and More

## New York State COVID-19 Hotline

For questions regarding eligibility or access for testing in New York State, call 1-888-364-3065.

## Erie County COVID-19 Information Line

Information about testing and coronavirus updates in Erie County can be found at [www2.erie.gov/health/coronavirus](http://www2.erie.gov/health/coronavirus) or by calling (716) 858-2929.



Assemblyman Burke helping to collect food for FeedMore WNY with Orchard Park Town and Village leaders.



Assemblyman Burke distributing hand sanitizer at West Seneca West High School with Councilman Joe Cantafio and Principal Jay Brinker.

## Erie County 24 Hour Crisis Hotline

Erie County's crisis hotline is available 24/7 for anyone undergoing emotional or mental health-related crises. To talk to trained staff and volunteers, call 716-834-3131.

## Erie County 24 Hour Addiction Hotline

Addiction affects not only those suffering from it, but their friends and family as well. For consultation, support and a variety of treatment options, call the 24-hour hotline at 716-831-7007.

## Feed More WNY

FeedMore WNY's food bank and Meals on Wheels programs have a combined 90 years of feeding the Western New York community. For information on nutrition assistance and meal services, visit [www.feedmorewny.org/](http://www.feedmorewny.org/) or call 716-822-2002.

## Erie County Senior Services

The Erie County Department of Senior Services is designed to, among other things, represent the needs, interests and concerns of older persons to public officials and others. For additional information, help or support, visit [www2.erie.gov/seniorservices](http://www2.erie.gov/seniorservices) or call (716) 858-8526.

## Family Justice Center of Erie County

No one should have to fear for their lives in the safety of their own home. If you or someone you know is in an unsafe living situation, please visit [www.fjcsafe.org](http://www.fjcsafe.org) or call 716-558-SAFE (7233).

Free hand sanitizer outside of Assemblyman Burke's office Tues. & Thurs. from 12pm-2pm.



## West Seneca Clerk's Office Safety Glass

Assemblyman Burke was happy to work with the West Seneca Clerk's Office to help provide funding for glass dividers in order to provide additional protection against COVID-19 transmission.

# 2020 United States Census



Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau works to count every person residing in the United States. In previous census counts, New York State has been undercounted, resulting in the loss of billions in federal funding for hospitals, public schools, transportation, emergency services and more.

For anyone who hasn't completed the census yet, the U.S. Census Bureau has extended the deadline. New Yorkers can respond online, by phone or through the mail. All personal information provided is confidential. For more information or to fill out the census, go to [my2020census.gov](http://my2020census.gov).

Erie County libraries have recently reopened. For those who do not have access to the internet at home, census forms can be filled out online at libraries.

# WNY Blood Shortages

COVID-19 forced countless blood drives to be postponed or canceled, exacerbating existing blood shortages. Assemblyman Burke encourages all residents who are eligible to donate blood to step up and help save lives in our communities. The Red Cross and ConnectLife have implemented a host of safety measures to protect donors and staff from COVID-19.

To learn more or schedule an appointment, visit [redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive](http://redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive) or [connectlifegiveblood.org](http://connectlifegiveblood.org).



1074 Union Road, West Seneca, NY 14224



An update  
from the  
office of  
**Assemblyman  
PAT BURKE**

PRSR STD.  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Albany, NY  
Permit No. 75

## Assemblyman Burke's Committee Assignments

- Chair, Subcommittee on Oversight of the Department of Environmental Conservation
- Member, Committee on Banks
- Member, Committee on Children and Families
- Member, Committee on Environmental Conservation
- Member, Committee on Local Governments
- Member, Committee on Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports Development



Look inside for  
**important resources  
and updates on  
COVID-19**

