



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Gun violence in New York is declining thanks to the state legislature's investments in public safety and prevention initiatives. We remain committed to building on this progress by keeping guns out of the hands of dangerous individuals and making our communities safer.

The report also includes information on rising utility costs, resources available to assist families and small businesses, and a petition you can sign to demand accountability from utility companies.

With the first day of school approaching, you will find details on the new statewide cell phone-free policy for K-12 schools, designed to help students focus on learning and foster meaningful in-person connections.

Please join us for a community event our office is pleased to sponsor:

- **No-Cost Notary Public Service at the Community Office of Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright, 1485 York Avenue (78th/79th Streets)**
 - Mon, Wed, & Fri from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm
 - Tues, Thurs from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
- Wednesday, September 3 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm: **MetroCard Sales/OMNY Bus** (York Ave/79th Street). Refill your MetroCard/OMNY card or apply for reduced fare.
- Thursday, September 18 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm: **No-Cost Community Shredding on Roosevelt Island** at the Motorgate Turnaround (688 Main Street).
- Thursday, September 11 at 5:30 pm: **Lighting the Way with the East Side 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony** in Carl Schurz Park (at 86th Street).
- Save the Date! **Animal Care Centers of NYC (ACC) Mobile Adoption Event** on Sunday, October 12 from 12:00 pm-4:00 pm at East 79 Street and York Ave.

As always, please consider our office your resource.

Phone: 212.288.4607

Email: SeawrightR@NYAssembly.gov

Sincerely,

REBECCA A. SEAWRIGHT

Assembly Member Seawright Supports Initiatives Leading to a Major Drop in Gun Violence Across New York

Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright applauds the 14% decrease in shooting incidents with injury in communities participating in the Gun Involved Violence Elimination (GIVE) initiative during the first seven months of 2025, announced by the Office of Governor Hochul. This decline is attributed to state investments and strong collaboration between local law enforcement and community organizations.

Shooting deaths also dropped by 21% compared to the same period in 2024, with notable reductions by nearly 20% in New York City.

Recent legislation cosponsored and strongly supported by Assembly Member Seawright has strengthened New York's approach to preventing gun violence, including the codification of the Office of Gun Violence Prevention, safe firearm storage requirements, and enhanced measures under the state's Red Flag Law. These efforts have been instrumental in reducing shootings and keeping communities safer.

Assembly Member Seawright Discusses Combating the Rise in Incidents of Antisemitism with Jonathan Greenblatt, National Director and CEO of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL)



Honored to discuss my recently held antisemitism forum and hate crime legislation with Jonathan Greenblatt, National Director and CEO of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL).

Read his NYT feature here: <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/09/magazine/jonathan-greenblatt-interview.html>

Sign Our Petition Against Rate Hikes

Make your voice heard about the Public Service Commission's energy rate hikes

You do not need to be an expert — simply explain how the rate increase would affect you, your family, or your business.

- ✔ Comment online at the PSC's comment portal: www.dps.ny.gov
- ✔ Call the Public Service Commission's Opinion Line: [1-800-335-2120](tel:1-800-335-2120)
- ✔ Attend a PSC public hearing in person or online

Mail your comments:

New York State Public Service Commission
Secretary to the Commission
Empire State Plaza, Agency Building 3
Albany, NY 12223

The enormous utility rate hikes we have seen recently are completely out of control and are putting real strain on families and small businesses across our community. These giant corporations are making record profits while everyday New Yorkers struggle to pay their bills. We cannot stand by and accept this. It's time to fight back. Make your voice heard and demand accountability! Sign our petition today: <https://nyassembly.gov/mem/Rebecca-A-Seawright/story/101467>

If you need help managing high utility costs, here are resources available in New York State and City:

HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program): Provides help with heating and utility bills. Apply here: <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/>

NYC Utility Assistance Programs: Offers emergency utility support and payment plans for low-income residents: <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/ocd/downloads/pdf/residents/utility-assistance.pdf>

Con Edison Customer Assistance: Payment plans, discounts, and energy efficiency programs: <https://www.coned.com/en/accounts-billing/payment-assistance>

National Grid Energy Assistance: Programs to help with bills and energy efficiency: <https://www.nationalgridus.com/NY-Home/Billing-and-Payment/Assistance-Programs>

Together, we can push for fair rates, access the help we need, and protect New Yorkers from unfair utility hikes.

Less Scrolling, More Learning.

Starting this school year, all K-12 public schools across New York State are going distraction-free! Governor Hochul's new policy makes New York the largest state in the nation with a bell-to-bell restriction on cell phone use, and it's going to help our kids focus on the most important parts of school: getting a great education and making in-person connections with their peers. Schools have spent months



DISTRACTION-FREE SCHOOLS

More Learning, Less Scrolling: Creating Distraction-Free Schools

Recognizing the necessity of ensuring safe and productive learning environments for students and educators, Governor Hochul advanced legislation to create a statewide standard for distraction-free school environments and secured its passage in the FY2026 budget. The enacted legislation aims to create safer, more productive learning environments by minimizing distractions from smartphones and similar technology in K-12 schools statewide.

Key Provisions

As the most populous state with a statewide, bell-to-bell restriction, Governor Hochul's cellphone policy creates a model standard including:

- No unsanctioned use of smartphones and other internet-enabled personal devices on school grounds in K-12 schools for the entire school day (from "bell to bell"), including classroom time and other settings like lunch and study hall periods.
- Allowing schools to develop their own plans for storing internet-enabled devices during the day - giving administrators and teachers the flexibility to do what works best for their buildings and students.
- Securing \$13.5 million in funding to be made available for schools to aid in purchasing storage solutions to help them go distraction-free.
- Requiring schools to give parents a way to contact their children during the day when necessary.
- Requiring teachers, parents and students to be consulted in developing the local policy.
- Requiring schools to annually publish a report detailing the enforcement of the policy they adopted, helping to prevent inequitable discipline.

Exemptions, Discipline, and Applicability

Exceptions to the restrictions include:

- Use authorized by school staff for educational purposes
- Emergency situations or healthcare management
- Translation needs
- As required for individualized education (IEP or 504 plans)
- Special caregiver responsibilities (case-by-case basis)

Students cannot be suspended solely for policy violations. Enforcement must be fair; annual demographic data reporting is required to spot and address any disparities.

This legislation applies to school districts, charter schools, and boards of cooperative services (BOCES).

New Yorkers can now visit ny.gov/phonefree to look up their school's policy

Sign up for Governor Kathy Hochul's email newsletter at ny.gov/SignUp

Follow [@govkathyhochul](https://twitter.com/govkathyhochul) on Twitter/X, Instagram & Facebook

Consider Our Office Your Resource

NO-COST NOTARY PUBLIC SCHEDULE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
10AM-1PM	10AM-12PM	10AM-1PM	10AM-12PM	10AM-1PM



METROCARD/OMNY BUS

**STOPS HERE
(79/YORK):**

WED. 9/3, 9/17

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**REFILL YOUR
METROCARD/OMNY
CARD**

**APPLY FOR
REDUCED FARE**

Resources

Cash Assistance & Benefits Security

Cash Assistance Skimming Alert: Beware of electronic theft of EBT benefits via skimming or phishing. To learn more or file a claim for stolen Cash Assistance benefits, visit: nyc.gov/hra/benefitreplacement

Paid Family Leave

Since 2018, New York's Paid Family Leave program has supported thousands of working families. Benefits and wage replacements increase annually with the NY State Average Weekly Wage. Learn more about 2025 benefits at: paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/2025

Tax Credits & Financial Assistance

Empire State Child Credit: Over 1.5 million eligible New Yorkers will automatically receive supplemental payments based on this credit. No action needed. Details: [Additional Empire State Child Credit Payments](#)

Unclaimed Funds: Check for unclaimed money you may be owed at: osc.ny.gov/unclaimed-funds

Energy & Heating Assistance

Energy Affordability Program: Income-eligible consumers may get discounts on electric/gas bills. Info and forms: [ConEd Energy Affordability Program PDF](#) or call 800-752-6633 (seniors: 800-404-9097).

Regular HEAP Benefit: The 2024–25 season is open. Eligible households can get help paying heating bills. Details: otda.ny.gov/programs/heap

Cooling Assistance: HEAP also covers fans and AC units for qualifying households:

otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/#cooling-assistance

Health Insurance & Counseling

Qualified Health Plans: Enroll by the 15th for coverage the following month with new cost-sharing savings. Info: nyc.gov/health/healthcoverage or call 347-665-0214.

HIICAP: Free counseling on Medicare, Medigap, and long-term care insurance. Call 1-800-701-0501 or visit aging.ny.gov/hiicap.

Housing & Tenant Rights

Renters Rights: NYC tenants are protected against unsafe living conditions, harassment, and discrimination. See the [Tenant Bill of Rights](#).

Homeowner Handbook: A resource to help NY homeowners manage responsibilities and find assistance. View at homeownerhelpny.org/handbook.

Discrimination Reporting: File discrimination reports by phone at (844) NYS-DHR1 or (844) 697-3471.

Rent Protection & Resources: NYC tenants can check rent increase legality and get help at GoodCauseNYC.org.

Food Assistance

SNAP Benefits: Simplified one-page applications, longer recertification periods for seniors, and no interview needed for recertification. Learn more and apply online.

Health Bucks: At NYC farmers markets, spend \$2 in SNAP/EBT/Summer EBT and get \$2 bonus Health Bucks for fresh produce, up to \$10 per visit. Info: grownyc.org/greenmarket/ebt/nutritionprograms.

Transportation

MTA Reduced-Fare Program: Half-fare benefits are moving to OMNY. New cards should have arrived; continue using MetroCards meanwhile. Check updates at [MTA Reduced-Fare OMNY info](#).

MTA Mobile Sales: Services include reduced-fare applications, OMNY sign-ups, card balance transfers, and lost card reports. Schedule at mta.info/fares/mobile-sales.

Congestion Pricing: Tolls apply entering Manhattan south of 60th St. Discounts and exemptions available. Details: mta.info/discounts and congestionreliefzone.mta.info.

Emergency & Community Resources

Mental Health Hotline: Call 988 for mental health support; call 911 for emergencies.

Community Health Advocates: Help with medical bills and insurance issues at 1-888-614-5400.

NYC Emergency Alerts: Sign up for Notify NYC at nyc.gov/notify or call 311.

Animal Care Centers: Due to temporary dog intake suspension, ACC urges adoption. Visit local centers or website for info.

Curbside Composting: Available citywide weekly on recycling day. Details: nyc.gov/curbside-composting.

Identification

New York Mobile ID: Carry a secure digital ID or driver's license on your phone. Learn more and download the app.

NYC Infrastructure

NYCDOT Street Work Permit Maps: View active street work permits for your district at nycdot.info.

Upcoming Events



LIGHTING THE WAY EASTSIDE 9/11 REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY

John Finley Walk at Carl Schurz Park
Thursday, September 11, 2025 at 5:30 PM

All Community Members are Invited - FREE (rain or shine)
Carl Schurz Park entrance, 86th St & East End Ave. // Wheelchair access 84th & 87th St



A community commemorative event showcasing music, poetry and reflections on September 11th. The Ceremony continues a tradition from the first years after 9/11 that drew together people from across the community and city.

9-11 CEREMONY COMMITTEE:

Chairs: Howard Teich, Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright, Council Member Julie Menin

Partners: UES CommunityUnity Initiative, The Carl Schurz Park Conservancy, Manhattan Community Board #8, Borough President Mark Levine, Senator Liz Krueger, Assemblymember Alex Bores, Councilmember Keith Powers, Virginia Maloney, Commandant David Menegon and the Knickerbocker Greys, The Reverend Matthew Dayton-Welch, Rabbi Joel Mosbacher, Friends of the East River Esplanade, NYPD, FDNY, John Phillips and The Mansion Restaurant, Greater New York Chamber of Commerce, Patrick McCluskey, Ann Meschery, Valerie Mason, Alida Camp, Arlene Kayatt, Russell M Squire, Vanessa Aronson, Faith Bondy, Gavilan Longino.

OFFICE OF ASSEMBLY MEMBER REBECCA SEAWRIGHT

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Rebecca
Seawright
ASSEMBLYMEMBER



NO-COST COMMUNITY SHREDDING

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18
ROOSEVELT ISLAND MOTORGATE
TURNAROUND (688 MAIN STREET)**

9AM TO 12PM

NO NOTEBOOKS, BINDINGS, OR X-RAYS

**OFFICE OF NYS ASSEMBLY MEMBER REBECCA A. SEAWRIGHT
1485 YORK AVENUE
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SEAWRIGHTR@NYASSEMBLY.GOV**

Construction Updates

[Community Update: August 15, 2025](#)

[Community Update: August 8, 2025](#)

[Community Update: August 1, 2025](#)

[Community Update: July 25, 2025](#)

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