

# NEWS from Assemblymember Jonathan Jacobson



Fall 2021

## Year in Review

### Dear Neighbor:

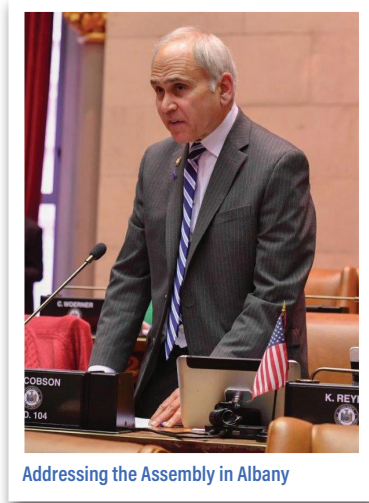
It's hard to believe that we are nearing the end of another roller coaster year. As we continued to battle the pandemic and began the long return to normal, **I have been working hard to serve you** and am proud to report back on some highlights.

In addition to my existing assignments, **I was appointed to the Assembly Labor Committee.** This allows me to use my experience as a workers' compensation judge and attorney to help injured workers get the treatment they need. **I have already successfully passed two bills** that correct shortcomings in the workers' compensation process.

**I wanted to ensure that voters know where to go when their polling place is moved,** so I introduced a bill requiring Boards of Elections to post visible signage at the old polling site indicating the address of the new site. It's a commonsense measure that has been signed by the Governor and is now mandated by law.

Extreme weather-related power outages are on the rise, which is why I passed a bill to study the feasibility of burying New York's power lines. **We shouldn't have to live in fear every time a storm is in the forecast.** Burying power lines would create good-paying jobs while also hardening the grid for all residents.

New York State made a historic investment in our public schools in this year's budget, which I fully supported. The 2021-22 budget is the first to include statewide funding for pre-K programs in school districts outside New York City.



Addressing the Assembly in Albany

**This enabled the school districts I represent to expand or launch pre-K programs.** Perhaps most exciting, the State has finally committed to fulfilling its obligation on school Foundation Aid.

The budget also includes substantial increases in library aid. Our libraries worked hard to keep their communities connected during the pandemic, and **I secured funding to help every library in my district expand its services.** I also secured additional funding to help **Poughkeepsie** make sidewalk repairs, for **Beacon** to purchase a new pumper truck for its fire department and for **Newburgh** to build an outdoor fitness court at the Recreation Park.

**My office continues to help hundreds of constituents every year** deal with problems with state agencies, including COVID-related issues such as unemployment insurance and the state's Emergency Rental Assistance Program.

**If you need help resolving a problem, my office is here to help.**

Very truly yours,

### Bills Sponsored by Assemblymember Jacobson that Passed in Both Houses

- Requires the Workers' Compensation Board to appoint the Uninsured Employers' Fund as the insurance carrier until the responsible insurance carrier is determined (A.359-A).
- Amends the Workers' Compensation Law so that irregularities in a cover sheet for an application for administrative or full board review or a rebuttal shall not be grounds for denial (A.386).
- Requires Boards of Elections to post information concerning a change in a polling place location (A.2168).
- Directs the Public Service Commission to study the feasibility and the costs of burying all or most of the electrical, telephone and internet transmission lines in New York State (A.2330-A).
- Allows the city of Beacon to sell its excess sewage capacity to private corporations and individuals outside of the city limits (A.5399).



With David Tavernier, Chief Operator, Beacon Wastewater Treatment Facility, Councilperson Dan Aymar-Blair, and City Administrator Chris White

## Gun Violence

I'm committed to ending the scourge of gun violence in our communities. In addition to co-sponsoring legislation that restricts the sale and possession of plastic "ghost" guns, I **secured funding for the cities of Newburgh and Poughkeepsie to host gun buyback programs**. I also secured funding for organizations that offer our young people jobs and programs that help keep them away from gangs and guns.

I am hosting a gun buyback program in the City of Newburgh on December 19th and will host a buyback program in the City of Poughkeepsie in the spring. Please contact my office for more information or if you have ideas you wish to be considered. **Let's work together to keep our communities safe!**

## Safe Staffing at Hospitals and Nursing Homes

In response to the devastating effects of the pandemic, I **co-sponsored legislation establishing safe staffing levels for hospitals and nursing homes** because I wanted to ensure that both patients and staff are protected from accidents and incidents that can happen in an understaffed facility. Both bills have been signed into law.

I've also continued to join rallies with union members from 1199SEIU and the New York State Nurses Association as they continue their efforts to urge hospitals and nursing homes to comply with the new laws.

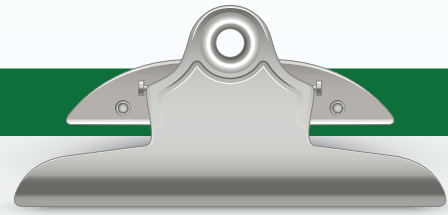


Assemblymember Jacobson leads a safe staffing rally outside Vassar Brothers Hospital

## Tenant and Landlord Assistance

The economic downturn caused by COVID-19 hurt both tenants and landlords. In order to keep people in their homes, New York passed legislation, **which I co-sponsored, creating the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) and the Landlord Rental Assistance Program (LRAP)**. So far, it has provided more than \$2 billion to renters and landlords whose finances were negatively impacted by the pandemic.

## Protecting the Environment



### New York League of Conservation Voters 2021 Legislative Scorecard

Legislator	Score
Jacobson	100%

Additionally:

- To combat climate change, New York State set a goal requiring **all in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks, as well as off-road vehicles and equipment, to be zero-emissions by 2035**, and medium- and heavy-duty vehicles to be zero-emissions by 2045.
- This November, voters overwhelmingly supported a constitutional amendment, which I co-sponsored, **adding the right to clean air and water and a healthful environment to the New York State Constitution's Bill of Rights**.
- To help us transition away from fossil fuels, I have **introduced legislation to regulate the standardization of public charging stations for electric vehicles**.

## Working Behind the Scenes

In addition to my work in Albany, I'm **constantly working behind the scenes to serve the municipalities and residents of my district**.

The pedestrian/bike path on the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge is currently open from dawn to dusk. In response to requests from constituents and local officials in Beacon and Newburgh, **I began working with the New York State Bridge Authority to expand its hours**. The Authority's Board of Commissioners recently voted unanimously to move forward on providing permanent 24/7 access to the path.

This fall, the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) announced the imminent closure of a portion of the state-owned road in front of Fishkill Correctional. This proposed closure threatened to create serious traffic issues, particularly for Beacon City School District buses. Since the pandemic began, school districts have grappled with unprecedented challenges, including a nationwide bus driver shortage. **I reached out to DOCCS and negotiated permission for school buses to continue using the road**.

# Around the District



With Debra Long, Program Coordinator for Family Partnership SNUG



Distributing pillows and pajamas with Laborers Local 17 at the Newburgh Armory



With Beacon Mayor Lee Kyriacou, Fire Chief Gary VanVoohris and Councilperson Amber Grant announcing a new firetruck funded with an Assembly grant



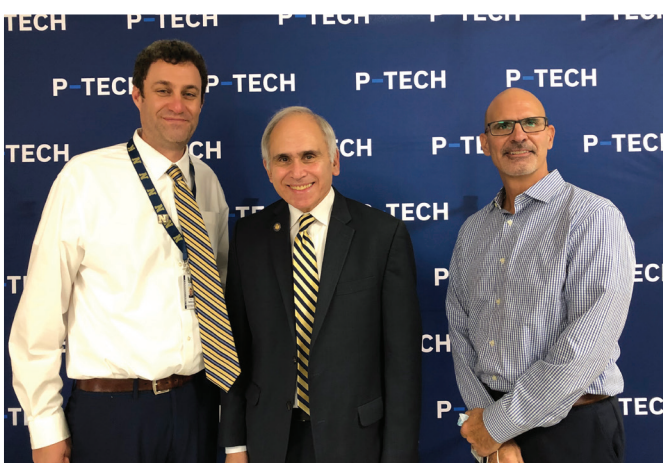
With Sara Hull Hallock Library Director Lois Skelly and Board of Trustees President Rosemary Wein in Marlborough



At the Town of Lloyd Senior Picnic



Visiting a Pre-K Class at the Poughkeepsie City School District's Early Learning Center



At Newburgh Free Academy with Kevin Rothman, P-TECH House Principal, and Matteo Dotto, Co-Principal



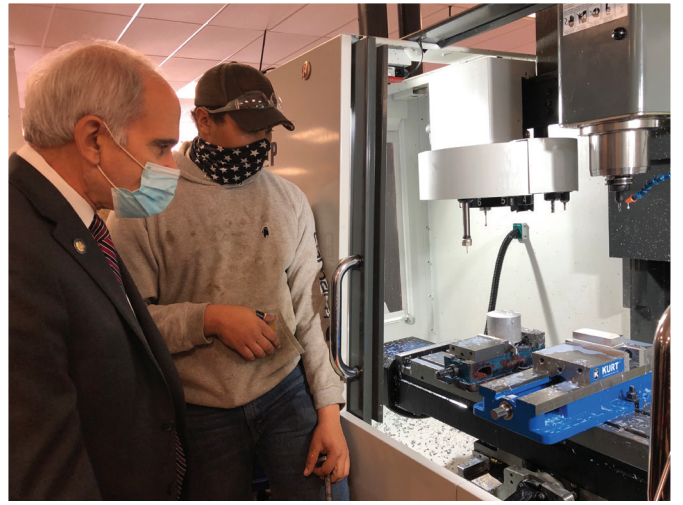
With SUNY Orange President Dr. Kris Young

## Workforce Development

**Just as we should not build bridges to nowhere, we should not be wasting taxpayer dollars to equip our residents with skills that take them nowhere.** Across the country, there is a disconnect between workers and jobs. **Too many unemployed and underemployed adult residents lack the necessary skills to fill the needs of local employers,** who are themselves struggling to satisfy growing demand for their products and services. **Young people who have no hope of building a prosperous future often drop out of school and turn to gangs or drugs.**

**COVID has only brought this problem into sharper focus.** In addition to visiting regional Department of Labor (DOL) offices, I have been meeting with unions, workforce investment boards, chambers of commerce, manufacturers, BOCES, high schools and community colleges to find solutions. Last month, **I questioned DOL Commissioner Roberta Reardon at a Labor Committee Hearing** and followed up with a letter urging her to initiate major reforms to our State's workforce development programs.

**The DOL must ensure its offices are accessible and open for in-person help and that staff are friendly to walk-ins.** The DOL must help all those who come to its doors, including those without a formal referral from the unemployment office or another State agency. Well-developed career and technical training programs already exist in New York. **The DOL must actively work to replicate successful programs** and refer job seekers to unions for apprenticeships and to BOCES.

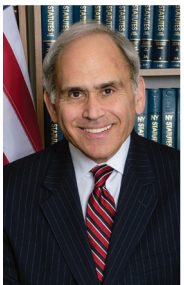


At Ulster BOCES

**Shortly after the hearing, Governor Hochul and Commissioner Reardon announced new measures drawing on a number of my suggested reforms.** It's a great first step, but we must do more. It's time for DOL to roll up its sleeves and take action now to put New Yorkers back to work and build the skilled labor force we need to reboot American manufacturing in the Hudson Valley and across the state.

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