

*Look inside for
an update from
Assemblymember
Didi Barrett*



An update!
from the office of
**Assemblymember
Didi Barrett**

August 2020

Dear Neighbor,

I hope that this letter finds you and your loved ones safe and in good health. These past few months have presented us with unforeseen challenges, but through it all, my team and I continue to work hard to support our families and build a brighter future for our communities.

When the New York State Department of Labor faced an unprecedented number of unemployment applications, we helped hundreds of constituents navigate the backlog, bringing individual applications to the department's attention to move the process forward.

To help small businesses through this difficult time, I partnered with the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation and the Columbia Economic Development Corporation to establish a **Small Business Continuity Fund**. It generated more than \$200,000 in contributions and provided direct grant relief to over 100 businesses across Columbia County. My team and I also delivered hand sanitizer to libraries, veterans' groups, fire houses and at community events.

As chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I'm committed to helping our heroes and their families access vital services and resources. I authored and passed the **Outdoor Rx Act to make our state's natural resources more accessible to veterans** (A.8094-A) and others struggling with trauma, depression and other mental and behavioral health issues and helped secure record-high levels of funding for veterans' programs, including **\$4.5 million for the Joseph P. Dwyer Vet-2-Vet program**. Additionally, I helped pass legislation that paves the way for the creation of a state veteran's cemetery (A.10782).

I continue to advocate for **full and reliable broadband coverage** in our region -- an issue that became more acute in recent months with folks working and learning at home, and I have pushed to shine a spotlight on the looming crisis in caregiving needs in our region and state, from child care to caring for children and adults with special needs to elder care. I introduced legislation to ensure homes and services for foster youth during the pandemic and **successfully got funding released for this year's Summer Youth Employment Program**, a vital tool for young people to get work experience through critical community based organizations such as the North East Community Center and the Art Effect.

In this centennial year of women's suffrage, it is fitting for all of us to reflect on the invaluable contributions of women to our regional and state history. I welcome everyone to learn the stories of the trailblazing women who shaped our region by reading the 2020 edition of **Women's History in the Hudson Valley: Ten Stories from Columbia and Dutchess Counties**. You can visit nyassembly.gov/barrett or your local library to access this year's booklet.

I'll continue to do my part to help our communities navigate these challenging times. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns. I do miss seeing you all at community events and Diner Stops throughout the district. Stay safe!

Sincerely,



Didi Barrett
Member of Assembly, 106th District



The deadline to complete the 2020 Census is Sept. 30. To ensure an accurate and complete count for New York State, please fill out the census if you haven't already. For questions or to complete the census, **visit my2020census.gov**.



Assemblymember
Didi Barrett

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