



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

## Community Update: Calling for Ceasefire, Budget Update, Upcoming Events

SENATOR SHELLEY MAYER March 14, 2024

Dear Friends,

We had another busy week in Albany as we worked towards finalizing our “One House” budget, which is the Senate’s response to the Governor’s proposed budget for the next fiscal year. My top priority is rejecting the proposed cuts to public school funding, which impact every district in the state (some more drastically than others). As Chair of the Senate Education Committee, I’ve been outspoken in my opposition to the Governor’s proposal, which makes abrupt changes to the funding formula and fails to acknowledge the additional work schools are doing to cope with learning loss and social/emotional impact of the pandemic. I’m hopeful that ultimately, we will prevail and that these unanticipated cuts will be fully restored.

Of course there are many other budget issues of importance to you and to me, and I’m fighting on behalf of our district on these as well. Once the Senate and Assembly each propose their “One House” budgets, it is then up to the Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, and Governor Kathy Hochul to work together to come to the final budget by April 1. I’ll keep you posted as the process unfolds, but of course, we must be mindful of the limitation on the state’s resources and the burden

already placed on so many by high property taxes.

Finally, I am extremely proud that this week Governor Hochul nominated Westchester resident Dr. DaMia Harris-Madden to serve as Commissioner of the Office of Children and Family Services. Dr. Harris-Madden currently serves as Executive Director of the Westchester County Youth Bureau. I have worked closely with her and have seen first-hand her passion, competence, and commitment to our communities. I couldn't be more pleased and look forward to her confirmation by the Senate.

### **War in the Middle East**

I couldn't let this week go by without speaking about the War in Gaza - 150 days since the seizure of hostages and they must be released now! We cannot wait anymore for them to be reunited with their loved ones. And, we know too many innocent Palestinians have suffered.

On the eve of the holy days of Ramadan, I join the call of Vice President Harris and many others for an immediate bilateral ceasefire - at least for the next six weeks but hopefully for much longer - that includes: 1) immediate release of all of the hostages, 2) an immediate cessation of hostilities in the Gaza Region and resumption of food and humanitarian assistance to Gaza, and 3) and a real plan for a long-term peace that ensures Israeli security and self-determination for Palestinian civilians - a true two-state solution. This is a subject that is difficult and emotional for me and others. We cannot wait any longer for peace for all - we must have the release of the hostages followed by the full cessation of all attacks on all innocent civilians in Israel and Gaza.

If there is anything my office can assist you with, please email me at [smayer@nysenate.gov](mailto:smayer@nysenate.gov) or call (914) 934-5250.

Warm regards,  
Shelley B. Mayer  
State Senator  
37th District

Read the full Community Update [here](#).