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Harckham & Levenberg Submit Bill to Stop Holtec from Dumping Nuclear Waste into Hudson

NO TOXIC WASTE IN THE HUDSON!

After decades of tremendous efforts to clean up the Hudson River, the idea of anyone dumping radioactive water into this estuary, the economic lifeblood of our region, is simply outrageous,”-State Senator Pete Harckham

By Dan Murphy

Thanks to New York State Senator Pete Harckham and Assemblywoman Dana Levenberg, who announced on Feb. 24 that they have introduced legislation (S.5181) that will prohibit the discharge of any radiological agent into the waters of the state. The new legislation was galvanized when plans were announced by Holtec to release radioactive waste water from the decommissioned Indian Point nuclear power plant into the Hudson River.

Past owners of the Indian Point Energy Center, which opened in 1962, had been releasing radioactive waste water into the Hudson for decades. Through federal, state and local investments and actions, the Hudson River is much cleaner today than it once was, and the river now provides increased and significant economic strength to the communities that line its shore and the state as a whole.

“After decades of tremendous efforts to clean up the Hudson River, the idea of anyone dumping radioactive water into this estuary, the economic lifeblood of our region, is simply outrageous,” said Harckham. “No person, corporation or government has the right to recklessly pollute New York State’s waters, and the mere idea that this is being contemplated is troubling. While the decommissioning of a nuclear power plant is a complex issue, there can be no rationale for releasing radioactive waste into the Hudson.”

“Too much is still unknown about the possible impacts of discharging radioactive waste into our waterways,” said Levenberg. “We wouldn’t want people to feel inhibited in their recreation or in moving to our communities because of the stigma of radioactive wastewater. And ultimately, the State of New York should have control over what is released into our waterways.”

The legislation, which was developed in consultation with environmental advocates, including Riverkeeper, includes a stipulation that violations would be met with fines of \$25,000 per day, then \$50,000 per day for a second violation and \$150,000 per day per violation thereafter.

Holtec Indian Point LLC and Holtec Decommissioning International LLC preside over the Indian Point nuclear facility in Westchester while continuing the decommissioning process. The potential release of radioactive contaminants to our state’s largest river is an urgent matter to the residents of Peekskill and all other communities along the tidal estuary.

Existing regulations represent the minimum protections the state is required to provide, and state laws must be more protective of the Hudson River and all of New York’s waterways, as existing state regulations do not address the discharge of radiological materials. Harckham and Levenberg added that New York’s abun-

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Westchester Resident Appears on Shark Tank with FunkkOFF! TeethRefreshers®



Joelle Flynn, left, and Rye resident Sonia Hounsell on Shark Tank
By Dan Murphy

Westchester resident Sonia Hounsell and her childhood friend, Joelle Flynn recently appeared on ABC’s Shark Tank to pitch their innovative product called FunkkOFF! TeethRefreshers®

The episode appeared on TV Feb. 17, and can be watched at- abc.com/shows/shark-tank/episode-guide/season-14/14-episode-14

We spoke to the women about their Shark Tank experience, and their Made in the USA product, a pocket-sized, reusable tooth brush and tooth gel that is 100% natural and vegan. Twist the bottom like you would lip balm and the gel pushes up through soft bristles on the brush head. Then, just brush, rinse and SMILE. Plus, there is a mirror on the bottom of FunkkOFF! TeethRefreshers® so you can check your smile! This is ideal for quick, on-the-go use – clean, refreshed teeth and an irresistible smile.

Joelle Flynn, who lives in California, explained that during her visits to the Napa Wine country, she always wanted to brush her teeth after sampling a few glasses. “I wondered why there isn’t something compact and reusable to clean and refresh your teeth after some wine, or coffee, or any meal.”

That is when Flynn, a former stockbroker and entrepreneur, began to brainstorm about ideas for what would become FunkkOFF! She created a prototype, filed many patents, and then she contact Sonia, a Rye resident who has vast experience launching new consumer products and brands.

“We decided to form a company in 2019 and started to work on manufacturing. This is a very easy product to use, but complicated to make. It has been a great experience to build our own brand and product,” said Hounsell.

Flynn explains that “I have always had an entrepreneurial spirit. I paid my way through college and was a stock broker at 22. If we girls need something, we get it

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Analyzing Hochul’s Housing Plan, as Most Westchester Elected Officials Oppose it



Workers “want to live in Westchester and Nassau and Suffolk. There’s a lot of jobs there, and a lot of employers are saying, ‘I can’t get the workers I need.’ We have to have affordable housing

--Gov. Kathy Hochul

Governor Kathy Hochul, at Pace Law School in White Plains Feb. 5

By Dan Murphy

In her State of the State address in January, Governor Kathy Hochul announced her New York Housing Compact, an ambitious plan to combat affordable housing and homelessness by building 800,000 new homes over the next decade to meet the historic shortage, and support New York renters and homeowners. The plan includes local participation requirements and incentives to achieve housing growth in every community so that every part of the State is a partner in solving this urgent crisis. The plan will also require municipalities with MTA rail stations to locally rezone for higher density residential development.

“New York faces a housing crisis that requires bold actions and an all-hands-on-deck approach,” Governor Hochul said. “Every community in New York must do their part to encourage housing growth to move our State forward and keep our economy strong.”

In Westchester, all Cities, towns and villages will be required to build 3% new homes over three years, and requires that localities with Metro-North Train stations undertake a local rezoning or higher density multifamily development within half a mile of the station unless they already meet the density level. By expanding housing potential in these transit-oriented communities, more families will be able to enjoy improved access to jobs and thriving sustainable communities.

After 3 years, in localities that do not meet growth targets, proposed housing developments that meet particular affordability criteria, but may not conform to existing zoning, may take advantage of a fast-track housing approval process if the locality denies the permit. To expedite rezoning and development of new homes, specific relief from environmental review will be included in the plan, which must be approved by the State legislature.

Governor Hochul came to Pace Law school in White Plains on Feb. 3 to highlight her housing plan, which has drawn a large amount of criticism from suburban state legislators, but support from housing advocates.

Housing Help, a non profit affordable housing group said “We at Housing Help are truly disappointed with the opposition from a handful of elected officials to Governor Hochul’s Housing Compact proposal. Legislators are elected to address and solve problems, not be a part of them. They know the housing crisis exists and

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Yorktown Board Celebrates New Par 3 Developer in Advance of Judge Wood March 10 Hearing

Did Tom Diana Read Judge Wood’s Order?



Yorktown Supervisor Tom Diana, with members of the Town Board and Assemblyman Matt Slater, announce new Par 3 developer Feb. 21

By Dan Murphy

The Yorktown Town Board recently approved a new contract for the development of the Par 3 in Jefferson Valley, even though NYS Supreme Court Judge Charles Wood signed an order for a March 10 hearing to determine the validity and legality of charges made by the previous developer-RC Recreation Development. In court documents, RC argues that that they have a contract which is still in effect that grants them the exclusive rights to develop, complete and open the golf course until 2028.

Judge Wood must determine the merits and hear the arguments of both RC and the Town of Yorktown. Until that decision is rendered, there is no legal standing for anyone to work on the Par 3 course that RC has spent millions of dollars and is close to being ready to open.

After the vote, the Town Board sent out a press release which included- “We are determined to see our Town’s golf course open this summer,” said Supervisor Tom Diana. “The contract we approved has definitive opening dates and mandatory payments to the Town that begin this month. Under a canceled contract with a previous developer, there were no specified opening dates or payments being made.”

“In November, the Town Board voted to revoke a management contract for the golf course because of breaches and nonperformance by the developer—RC Recreation Development,” states the release from the Town. What actually happened last November was that the Yorktown Police Department evicted RC Recreation Development from the property, without an order from a Judge.

RC President Larry Nussbaum has consistently claimed that the contract and extension that the Town of Yorktown granted him had no required date of opening

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Eastchester Irish American Social Club to Honor 7 Grand Marshals at St. Patrick's Parade



The Eastchester Irish American Social Club will honor seven Grand Marshals for the 17th Annual Eastchester St. Patrick's Day Parade. Grand Marshals Brenda Nangle Geraghty, John Collins, Liam Deegan, Steve Doherty, Margaret Murtagh, John Murtha and John Phelan have all served as presidents of the club, with full resumes of volunteerism and community service.

The Parade is Sunday, Mar. 12, 2023 at 3 pm—stepping off at Immaculate Conception Church in Tuckahoe and continuing north on Route 22 to Lake Isle Park in Eastchester.

The Gala honoring and bestowing Parade Sashes to the Grand Marshals and Parade Honorees, Connie Cullen and Beth Schaefer, is Friday, March 3, 2023 at Mulino's, located at Lake Isle Country Club in Eastchester. Cullen and Schaefer are being recognized for extensive volunteer support for the EIASC's aim to encourage appreciation of Irish culture in our community.

When asked to comment on the Grand Marshal honor, John Murtha said "It is an honor to represent the Irish community as Grand Marshal with my esteemed colleagues, as well as our two Honorees. The Eastchester Irish American Club members lead many noteworthy efforts that have made our Irish culture accessible to our town and future generations."

Margaret Murtagh added, "I am very honored to be part of this wonderful group of men and women who have over the years helped make Eastchester Irish American Social Club a great organization. We have brought our rich Irish heritage to the town of Eastchester and helped many new residents to the area feel welcome."

The Eastchester Irish American Social Club hosts many events with membership open to all. When asked how the Club serves the community, Steve Doherty replied: "Christine and I have always tried to pass on to our children not only the pride of being Irish, but also what our ancestors sacrificed to come to the United States. Both the Club and parade help relay and honor those messages. I'm grateful for that, and proud to be recognized for my contributions."

Grand Marshal John Collins has volunteered alongside many other EIASC members and Eastchester residents to raise money for scholarships and community improvement through events like the Eastchester Annual 5K and The Eastchester Cup Collins shared "My family and I love Eastchester and I am eternally grateful for the Eastchester Irish for befriending us and making us feel comfortable in this once new setting. This organization has also provided the platform for which I was able to give back to the Town and raise money and awareness to great causes."

The Green Line Sponsor for 2023 is Jack's Bar & Restaurant in Eastchester jackseastchester.com. Membership details are at eastchesterirish.org. EIASC is a nonprofit organization founded in 1966 with members from Eastchester, Tuckahoe, Bronxville, Crestwood and surrounding communities.

Animal-Free Flip Circus Kicks Off US Tour in Yonkers



Ringmaster Arthur Figueroa will open Flip Circus' U.S. Tour in Yonkers March 3

Flip Circus is returning to Yonkers, and the Cross County Center for a 17-day stay starting March 3-20. Last year, the response to Flip Circus in Yonkers was so great that the owners, the Vazquez family, who has brought their circus to families for more than 50 year, decided to start their 2023 National tour here!

The acts in the Flip Circus include the traditional offerings of a ringmaster, clowns, trapeze artists, contortionists, daredevils and jugglers. No animals appear in the show.

Performers this year include:

Ukraine's high-energy Bingo Troupe (a completely different group from last year's show). This Troupe was a big hit with Yonkers Rich Ukrainian community.

Ringmaster Arthur Figueroa who overcame the fact that he is a little person and began his career as a Ringling Bros. clown

The magnificent Bello Sisters, finalists on America's Got Talent

Fourth-generation performer Carolina Vazquez

The daring Duo Vanegas who defy gravity on the 30-foot Wheel of Steel Italy's "siblings of silliness" – audience favorites Stiv & Roni Bello and more!

Ringmaster Figueroa is originally from Monterrey, Mexico. He has more than 40 years in the circus and live entertainment business. He has played many roles including as a clown, comedian, actor, and now Ringmaster. He is very passionate about traveling and discovering new horizons. He is a veteran of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, where he performed as a clown for many years. This is his second year as Ringmaster of Flip Circus.

We asked Figueroa- What is it like to be a Ringmaster?

Being Ringmaster of Flip Circus is a privilege and I love getting to present these incredible artists to our audiences. Plus I get to enjoy their great talents up close.

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WHY WOULD THE YORKTOWN TOWN BOARD WILLFULLY DISREGARD A COURT ORDER?

See you in court next Friday

"The Order to Show Cause tells Yorktown of the nature of RC's request from the NYS Court and states the date, time and location where the request will be made. This Order to Show Cause contains a direction to Yorktown to stop doing anything at the golf course until the court hears or decides the motion.

The RC Order to Show Cause is supported by several "Affidavits in Support" that will help the judge make a decision.

Yorktown will have to explain to the judge why they issued a New Concession Agreement, replacing RC without compensation, while this motion was pending and why the Town Board did this in such a secretive manner.

Contempt of court is defined as any willful disobedience or disregard of a court order.

The judge could decide that Yorktown's contempt is "criminal" because Yorktown actually interfered with the ability of the court to function properly.

I can promise the Yorktown Board and Yorktown Golf Group, Inc. that I will be a very dark cloud over all their smiling publicity pictures".



Above: Multi-million dollar renovation of Par 3 Clubhouse by RC Recreation Development. Right: dilapidated clubhouse the RC found in 2014



Black History and its Teaching are in Jeopardy



L-R-Derickson Lawrence, Westchester County Legislator Herman Keith and NYC Mayor David Dinkins, listening to Rev. Jessie Jackson at Iona College, some 35 years ago
Submitted by Derickson K. Lawrence

On the heels of the last year’s 47-state voter- suppression initiative, this year (2023), the following states have already banned how race is taught: Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, and Tennessee. Those represent only the tip of the iceberg, however.

States that currently have similar bills moving through their state legislature include: Georgia, Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

What’s surprising is the wide swath of Midwest states outside the states comprising the old Confederacy giving the nod to restricting how race is taught in their state’s curriculum.

What’s important to preserving Black History, beyond the month of February, is to pursue an authentic narrative of “Connecting the Ten Dots of Civil Rights Reversal in America,” for the next generation. (More on that in the future.)

In Westchester County there has always been a healthy respect for inclusive, progressive policies, and politics. Organized by the Rev Dr. W. Franklyn Richardson and the Westchester Black Clergy, some thirty-five years ago in Iona’s College gym, close to 10,000 people (a diverse crowd from around the county) filled the floor space and seats to hear the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Attached-Image-Next to me is future Mayor David Dinkins (NYC), and Westchester County Legislator Herman Keith (Yonkers) – the warm ups for Rev. Jackson.

History was made then and all through his run. Rev. Jackson’s “Keep hope Alive” speech at the Democratic Convention that year (1988) was riveting.

Two memorable quotes:

a) “When I look out at this convention, I see the face of America: red, yellow, brown, black and white. We are all precious in God’s sight.”

b) “All of us, all of us who are here think that we are seated. But we’re really standing on someone’s shoulders. Ladies and gentlemen, Mrs. Rosa Parks the mother of the civil rights movement.”

He tore the roof off the convention, raised the level of aspiration of the next generation of leaders (Barack Obama won two decades later), and broke new ground in civil rights.

Today, we must continue the fight to preserve the ground we thought we had already won. Restricting how race is taught, or suppressing it, leaves the next generation of leaders in the dark.

The writer is a Mount Vernon resident and is executive producer of the award-winning docuseries America’s Open Wound the Killing of the Movement ©.

AOW’s Episode 3- “Civic Engagement in a Post Insurrection Environment” is in post production for a late summer 2023 release.

A Robbery Too Close for Comfort

By Eric Wolf Schoen



The company has been in business since the 1964. They started out selling hot coffee broadening their selection to the 10 or so varieties they offer every day today. No matter what time of day you are guaranteed a fresh cup of coffee or the coffee is free. I like the hazelnut coffee, three sweet and low, a touch of hazelnut creamer and fat free 1/2 and 1/2. 2% milk will work if they don’t have fat free half and half.

This month’s special is buy any size coffee and you get a free muffin. And oh boy, are the muffins good. Fresh baked daily, your selection includes corn, blueberry and French toast added last week. My diet precludes me from eating the high calorie muffin, so I will take it and give it to a friend, neighbor or someone who crosses my path. Once in a while if there is a person begging for money outside the store, I will give it to him or her. Better that they eat the muffin than I give them money which they could spend on drugs, liquor or beer available right in the store.

They have an OK selection of prepared foods with a hot roller machine featuring everything from hot dogs to cheeseburger big bites. The latter is a cheeseburger in the shape of a hot dog with cheese swirls coming out of it. Chicken is very much featured whether it be strips fried to golden goodness and various types of wings bone in and boneless. Breakfast egg sandwiches are warmed in the microwave. This is no WAWA with their made to order sandwiches and ‘Hoagie Fest’ where each 12 inch hoagie is a mere \$5.

They do have cold sandwiches which are quite tasty including tuna, egg, turkey, cold cuts and cheese as well as pre made hoagies, wedges, hero sandwiches whatever you want to call them. That’s a tough question when you live in Yonkers. The American Hoagie features all American cold cuts. The Italian sandwich has red peppers and is dressed in a vinaigrette. It’s all what they call grab and go, and you are welcome to put chili or cheese on your frankfurter as preferred.

Most communities have several of these stores. Yonkers had 2 but is now down to 1. Yes, Yonkers has many bodegas, small grocery stores like my father use to own, but if you want a slurpee you need a WAWA Or this particular store (slurpees are \$1 for a large one right now).

Lately a lot of the work done by employees in these stores involves packing orders people have sent in electronically. These order are picked up ‘by the next person on the list’ and delivered to the consumers home. Employees also make whole pizzas and slices.

These stores are run by hard working immigrants who put in 12 hour days at least 4 days a week supplemented by neighborhood people, adults and kids. These folks run the register, pack out merchandise and foods in refrigerated cases, keep the store clean and help you find what you want. Once they get their foot in the door they will bring people in from their respective countries to work 12 hour days.

My particular store has a husband and wife who had a baby maybe 18 months ago. The wife works days, 7 am to 7 pm 4 days a week. Her husband works overnights 4 days a week, 7pm to 7 am. They are very nice to their customers when the customers are nice to them. The staff for the most part is friendly and helpful. 12 hour days are not easy. Their English is not too good but they have learned a lot since they came to America.

Unfortunately, not everyone is like us, and many kids come in and help themselves to food or drink consuming it in store and not visiting the register. The chicken wings come 6 for \$5, and I have seen people take wings from one box adding extra to the box they are buying. I’ve also seen people consume their hot foods online waiting to get rung up and not paying for what they ate. Drinking their slurpee in a corner of the store so they can’t be viewed. I am convinced people are pigs.

Despite being called 7 Eleven, the store is open 24 hour a day 7 days a week. Someone probably threw away the key. I usually go to pick up milk, bread, a power drink and bottled water during the day. Sometimes when I get the urge for a snack, I’ll show up at 2 am or 3 am to fulfill my needs. It’s a good thing I wasn’t there at 3:09 last Sunday morning.

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Application deadline is April 1, 2023.



Road Rage With A Gun on Saw Mill Ends in Crash



Westchester County Police Department officers arrested two men after a road rage incident a few days ago on the Saw Mill River Parkway. While there are always consequences for road rage, this time we made a federal case about it.

The incident occurred about 10:30 a.m. Monday after two motorists first exchanged words at a traffic light in Yonkers. At the light at Lawrence Street, the passenger in one of the vehicles brandished a gun and pointed it at the driver of the second vehicle. The victim sped off and dialed 911. The suspect vehicle, a Chrysler 300, followed him. Our Communications Unit dispatchers stayed on the line with the victim and he reported their locations as both cars traveled northbound. WCPD sent the cavalry — multiple Patrol, Conditions and Emergency Services Unit officers responded to the Saw Mill. They attempted to pull the suspect vehicle over in the Elmsford area, but the driver would not stop and attempted to exit the parkway at Exit 25 (Route 9A) in Hawthorne. If you know the exit, you know it has a sharp turn and a guidrail. Looks like the driver of the Chrysler didn't know that, so for him things took a turn for the worse and he came to a crashing halt. Officers removed driver and passenger from the now-crumpled Chrysler and placed them into custody. A flashing light coming from something tucked away in the rear seat led to the recovery of an unloaded Polymer80 9 mm handglove — also known as a “ghost gun” pictured above. The two suspects were found to be convicted felons who have served jail time for violent crimes. One of them is still on parole. The case will be prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York.

Three Men Indicted for Fatal Peekskill Shooting

Westchester County District Attorney Miriam E. Rocah announced today that three men were arraigned on an indictment charging them in connection with the January 2023 murder of Ricky Brickhouse in Peekskill.

A Westchester County Grand Jury indicted Arnold Fernandez, 19, of Peekskill, for Murder in the Second Degree and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree, both felonies, and Erick Lowe, 26, of Cortlandt Manor, and Omar Williams, 20, of Peekskill, for Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree. The defendants were arraigned in Westchester County Court on Feb. 23, 2023. Fernandez and Williams were remanded and bail was set for Lowe.

On Jan. 29, 2023, at approximately 4:16 p.m., Fernandez allegedly fired three shots at the 35-year-old victim, striking him once, on Spring Street in Peekskill. The defendants are also charged with possessing a loaded .40 caliber semi-automatic pistol. The gun is believed to be the murder weapon.

The victim was transported to New York Presbyterian Hudson Valley Hospital in Peekskill and then Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla, where he died.

The Peekskill Police Department arrested the defendants following a pursuit on the Sprain Brook Parkway in Greenburgh. The Westchester County Department of Public Safety, the Westchester County Department of Public Safety's Real Time Crime Center, the Westchester County District Attorney's Office High Technology Crime Squad, and the Westchester County Department of Laboratories and Research assisted with the investigation.

The case is before Judge George Fufidio in Westchester County Court, and is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorneys Celia Curtis and Cooper Gorrie, both of the Trials and Investigations Division.

Letter to the Editor

WESTCHESTER RISING

We are awestruck and deeply grateful for the eloquent, poignant article, Animals are People too by Eric Wolf Schoen.

The internet and particularly Youtube has shown the world the sentience, the true depth of emotion and intelligence of animals...and also the horrifying, mindboggling cruelty we casually bestow upon them in the name of greed and ignorance, because its so easy to hide and no one's checking: In horse racing, puppy mills, zoos, rodeos, factory farms, laboratories, sport hunting and even to their own homes and habitats, which we destroy by the second; avoiding also the fact that animals and nature are proven to be beneficial to human health - much less the fact that they have a right to live on this earth too. The animals and nature are part of our life, not something alien; indeed they were here before anyone else.

Along with children and the elderly, animals are the most victimized in society. But there is room in our hearts for the care of both human and non-human animals. Animal advocacy is one of the most agonizing and spirit-crushing...perhaps the most difficult such effort in the world. We see nightmare images that seem unstoppable; then the thoughtful, considerate words of Mr Schoen remind us that in 2023 there is hope.

Kiley Blackman, founder, Animal Defenders of Westchester, www.ADOW.org

Hochul Housing Plan, continued from pg 1-

their constituents repeatedly ask them to act and deliver results. Are they proposing any solutions? The time to act was yesterday. If our local elected officials denounce the Housing Compact, they need to propose alternative steps to address this urgent issue.

Westthab, stated, “We applaud Governor Kathy Hochul’s bold new plan to address NY’s housing crisis and build 800,000 homes over the next decade! We’re glad to have twice hosted the governor at Dayspring for the signing of important housing legislation and a recent Housing Roundtable. That work is clearly being continued and built upon through New York Housing Compact. Here’s to making affordable housing a top priority in building vibrant, thriving communities that work for all New Yorkers!”

What is also interesting to note is that several democratic state legislators are also raising concerns and objections to the Governor’s Housing proposal, fearing a similar uproar that happened during a similar discussion and debate between Westchester County and HUD, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, ten years ago.

State Senator Pete Harkham said, “I know from personal experience, most municipalities are incredibly wed to their authority with home rule and are very defensive of that, and I’ve already heard from some municipalities who just conceptually are in opposition. Others are saying, ‘let’s wait until we see what the actual language is.’”

One of Hochul’s arguments for the plan is that there is no place for many workers to live, or afford to live in Westchester. “They want to live in Westchester and Nassau and Suffolk in particular. There’s a lot of jobs there, and a lot of employers are saying, ‘I can’t get the workers I need.’ We have to have affordable housing to bring them out.”

Timothy Foley, CEO and Executive Vice President of the Building and Realty Institute (BRI) and member of the Welcome Home Westchester campaign, wrote an Op-Ed in support of Hochul’s plan. “Westchester County is the poster child for why we need state leadership to help us through our housing shortage. We have so many communities like Ossining, Mamaroneck, Peekskill, Mount Vernon and others that have created transit-oriented developments that are climate-friendly, millennial- and senior-friendly, and have helped revitalize their downtowns, stabilize property taxes, and boost their local economies. We’ve also seen a handful of villages and towns move forward with thoughtful proposals to allow for accessory dwelling units. But just this month, we’ve also seen Greenburgh slam the breaks on the development of moderate-to-affordable condos and co-ops by increasing property taxes on them and Pleasantville enact a moratorium on building housing not to address a specific problem with schools or parking near the train station or some other identifiable issue, but simply because the loudest voices of the community demanded it.”

“The governor’s approach offers a lot of options for municipalities to choose from, but the important point is that everyone needs to be part of the solution. ‘The way things have always been done’ is what got us into this mess. It’s time for something new.”

The Westchester County Housing Needs Assessment found that Westchester needs to build 11,703 new units of housing just to meet present-day needs, let alone future growth. Over the previous decades, our fragmented municipality-by-municipality land use system created barriers to housing, created delays in approvals, and allowed leaders to pass the buck to others when it came to housing affordability.

Consider where this system has led us: from 2010-2018, Westchester produced just 9 homes per 1,000 residents, far fewer than comparable suburban areas around Boston (16), San Francisco (25), and Washington, D.C. (Maryland is 26; Virginia is 40).

Despite Westchester’s reputation as a commuter community, there are nearly as many people commuting into Westchester every day as there are commuting from Westchester into New York City. We know that 30-to-45-year-olds, the key demographic that has always been the renewing lifeblood of any community, are being priced out of Westchester. In fact, it is the one demographic now shrinking the fastest as affordable housing and starter home options become increasingly out of reach. Tragically, we also know that more than 2,000 children find themselves homeless in Westchester County on any given night, according to the Department of Education.

The Housing Compact is a bold vision to tackle our housing shortage. Many of the details should still be negotiated with the Legislature, but the overall direction is right for Westchester. Even villages and towns like Pleasantville, Port Chester, Croton-on-Hudson, and Mount Kisco are likely to easily achieve that 3 percent target with projects already in the pipeline or with reasonable reforms in existing transit-oriented development zones.

The bad news is we have almost three dozen municipalities who are clinging to the “way things have always been done” — despite the clear evidence of how much harm that has done to our region and our residents,” writes Foley.

Congressman Mike Lawler called the plan a radical state takeover of local zoning. While we all understand the need for increasing the availability of housing, especially affordable housing, we cannot support a one-size fits all approach to local zoning. By forcing unit quotes onto municipalities and by providing little to no investment for critical infrastructure upgrades, you will create chaos.”

Mount Pleasant Town Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi “The governor’s proposal to force communities to add housing where she thinks it should be is a slap in the face to every local municipality in the state,” he said. “I still believe in government by the people, for the people, not something dictated or mandated by one level of government on another. And that is the direction the governor has decided to go by attempting to force her will”

Bronxville Mayor Mary Marvin writes, “The 3% requirement for Bronxville translates into 75 new housing units by the end of 2027 or we lose all control over our local land use laws. According to the Governor’s proposal, the area subject to the mandatory zoning and planning changes shall encompass all developed land within a half mile radius from a train station or in our case over 2/3 of the entire Village of Bronxville.

Closer to home our Assemblywoman, Amy Paulin is very outspoken in her opposition to this plan. As she stated, “Bronxville wouldn’t be able to accommodate so many housing units or even a fraction of the amount required. It would change the character and integrity of the community. You would no longer be a suburb of an urban area. You would be a congested urban center without the infrastructure to support it. I will fight to make sure this doesn’t happen.”

Senator Mayer shared her thoughts on the issue as well, “I have grave concerns with the approach taken by Governor Hochul in her proposed budget that seek to improve housing access in the NYC suburbs. Specifically, I believe the 3% requirement in the New Homes Target and Fast Track Approval proposal will not work in Bronxville. I also believe the Transit Oriented Development is equally flawed in the village. Both approaches apply a sledgehammer to an issue that requires a needle and thread, reflecting different communities, different needs and far greater nuance.

The Trustees and I unanimously passed a resolution in opposition to the “Housing Compact” as its passage would change Bronxville forever,” writes Marvin.

“A 3% goal in a small town would not require a large-scale gigantic development like a Co-op City to be created in their area,” said Matthew Dunbar, the executive vice president at Habitat for Humanity New York City and Westchester County.

Westchester Rising

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FINANCING AVAILABLE WITH APPROVED CREDIT

Over Two Dozen Nonprofits receive Funding from Empire City Casino by MGM in 2022



Empire City Casino By MGM Resorts Team Members presenting grant award to Groundwork Hudson Valley, Executive Director Brigitte Griswold and Director of Development Karen Tumulty, photo by Mike Lizzi

Empire City Casino by MGM Resorts (“Empire City”) has long been a part of the fabric of its surrounding communities with a strong commitment to supporting nonprofit organizations in the region. That philanthropic commitment has continued under the ownership of MGM Resorts which acquired the entertainment destination in January of 2019. Local charitable organizations have received hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants, cash, and in-kind donations, as well as employee volunteer hours, since the acquisition.

Philanthropic giving in 2022 included more than two dozen local nonprofit organizations which received cash grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000 to address timely issues facing communities. The MGM Resorts enterprise-wide philanthropic initiative, “Focused on What Matters”, guides company donations to support public educational programs that reinforce academic success, food insecurity programs that provide access to nutritious meals, workforce development programs to prepare individuals for career opportunities, as well as environmental sustainability initiatives that create local sustainable environmental changes. Empire City continues to put community and corporate social responsibility (“CSR”) at the forefront of its commitment to New York.

“Social responsibility is ingrained in the MGM Resorts culture,” said Ed Domingo, Senior Vice President and General Manager of Empire City Casino by MGM Resorts. “As an economic fixture of the New York ecosystem, we will continue to listen to the needs of the communities and give back to organizations that work to create a better New York for all. We are so thankful for the local nonprofit partnerships that allow us to deliver critical resources to our communities.”

Through more than two dozen individual grants and cash donations in 2022, Empire City continues its influential role in supporting local Bronx and Westchester communities through numerous organizations. The Youth Community Outreach Program (“Y-COP”) of Mount Vernon, a certified childcare provider which helps provide families with equitable access to much-needed childcare and educational programs, was a grant recipient. The support provided by Empire City Casino allowed Y-COP to expand after-school and summer programs for area families. Additional public education programs were funded through ArtsWestchester, Untermyer Performing Arts Council, United Way of Westchester & Putnam, and other organizations.

Nonprofit organizations addressing food insecurity, including Feeding Westchester, New York City Food Bank, Yonkers Family YMCA, Yonkers Community Action Program, Youth Shelter Program of Westchester, and Catholic Charities, received funding to provide fresh locally-sourced food to residents in well-known food deserts in Westchester and the Bronx. Empire City’s continued focus on combating food insecurity remains paramount as the number of hungry New Yorkers grows while organizations face a reduction in donations due, in large part, to inflation and rising food costs.

Greyston Foundation, ArtsWestchester, BronxWorks, Bronx Chamber of Commerce Foundation, and The Guidance Center of Westchester were among the grant recipients implementing workforce development programs. VISIONS Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired received funding to support workforce development programs that provide blind or visually impaired youth in the Bronx and Westchester with tools and resources needed to successfully enter the workforce.

Environmental sustainability has long been a priority for MGM Resorts and the company continues to uphold its role as a corporate leader supporting environmentally sustainable initiatives in the communities in which they operate. A grant from Empire City supported Groundwork Hudson Valley’s Youth Leadership and Green Team initiative to nurture the next generation of environmental leaders. Their Green Team program works with Yonkers Public School students, providing extensive training and placing them in paid environmental jobs. In 2022, the team built infrastructure trenches and rain gardens at various municipal housing sites around the city in response to the vulnerable flooding in Yonkers neighborhoods.

“Empire City Casino has supported our efforts to provide green jobs for local youth and make learning about the local environment accessible to Yonkers residents and visitors,” said Brigitte Griswold, Executive Director of Groundwork Hudson Valley. “There’s something powerful about local establishments joining forces for the overall benefit of our community.”

Organizations working in the core focus areas stated above can learn more about the company’s philanthropic opportunities by visiting www.empirecitycasino.com.

We Have an Open Government Crisis in New York State

*Written Testimony of Paul Wolf, Esq.
President, New York Coalition For Open Government*

When Kathleen Hochul became Governor, she promised a “new era of transparency”. In her recent State of the State address, Governor Hochul did not say one word about transparency. In the budget submitted to the legislature there is no new funding for transparency initiatives and no proposed transparency legislation.

There is an open government crisis in New York State that can be addressed through the state budget. The only entity measuring compliance with the Open Meetings Law and the Freedom of Information Law is the New York Coalition For Open Government. Over the past several years, every monitoring report we have done has documented large-scale non-compliance with open government laws.

For our reports, we randomly select 20 local government entities across every region of the state. Here are some examples of our findings, from 2022.

- 72% of towns not posting meeting documents online as required by law.
- 25% of towns not posting meeting minutes or recordings online as required by law.
- 39% of counties failed to acknowledge a FOIL request within five business days as required by law.
- 28% of counties never acknowledged our FOIL request.
- 65% of county board of elections did not respond to emails or telephone calls seeking information.
- 73% of election boards failed to acknowledge our FOIL request within five business days as required by law.

It took an average of 49 days just to receive meeting minutes from county Board of Elections

Additional funding is needed to address the lack of compliance with the Open Meetings Law and the Freedom of Information Law.

Increase Funding To The State Committee On Open Government

The NY State Committee on Open Government is a great resource for information but the Committee does not have any enforcement power and limited staff resources. The legislature can show its commitment to open government by providing more resources to the Committee. The state’s lack of commitment to open government is clear when the resources provided to the Committee are compared to other organizations. The Committee has a staff of four state funded employees compared to the organizations listed below.

Inspector General’s Office 92 Employees, Joint Commission on Public Ethics 50 Employees, Authorities Budget Office 11 Employees

Provide Technology Grants To Local Governments

During the pandemic, live streaming of meetings made it much easier for the public to attend and observe their local government meetings. Across the state, more people watched meetings through live streaming than ever-attended meetings in person. Hybrid meetings (in person and virtual) should continue to be live streamed; with recordings posted online afterwards

State grants are made available to assist local governments with sewer, water, and economic development projects; but are not obtainable for transparency initiatives.

Enforcement Powers Are Needed

No entity has the power to enforce New York’s Open Meetings Law. The only recourse a person has in NY is to hire an attorney. In other states such as Massachusetts, the Attorney General has the authority to investigate and to fine government officials who violate the law. In Connecticut, they have an independent commission with power to address complaints and violations of the law. A restructured Committee on Open Government should be provided increased staffing and enforcement powers.

Hiring an attorney to litigate violations of open government laws is virtually impossible for most people. The legislature has the ability to address the open government crisis that exists in NY State, by providing budget funding and enforcement powers.

Shark Tank FunkkOFF!, con’t from pg 1-

done. That is the spirit behind this Woman Owned company.”

Many patents were filed to make sure, “that the big companies didn’t steal our idea,” said Flynn. “This is a highly unique deliery of a products, thanks to the genius of Joelle. We didn’t want anyone to copy it and re-introduce it. We spent a lot of time bringing it to market so we wanted to figure out how to protect it,” said Hounsell.

Their journey continued with their recent appearance on Shark Tank in Feb. So what happened? “All five sharks told us what a great product we had, but politely passed on investing in FunkkOFF!. As we were walking out, Robert Herjavec, changed his mind, and called us back into the tank,” said Sonia.

Herjavec explained in the episode that his wife frequently tells him about products on the show that he should have invested in. FunkkOFF!, he thought, was one of those products. He invested \$250,000 for a 12% share, and hours after the show aired on ABC TV, the product sold out.

“It worked out great, we were prepared to sell out and then take pre-orders on the website,” said Joelle. “Share Tank has huge awareness and the viewship remains quite high, with a lot of loyal customers. But it was validation of our hard work and our product,” said Sonia.

FunkkOFF! TeethRefreshers® is currently on back order, until they can manufacture more supply, expected in May. But Sonia told us of a few places in Rye where you can buy one. “Misfit Bazar, Angela’s, Hudson Paul Salon, Griffin’s Wine, they have inventory.”

They also sell on Amazon, but also sold out for now, along with 70 other locations across the county. “We don’t sell at pharmacies, but in boutiques, spas, dental offices and wineries,” said Sonia.

And how did they come up with the name-FunkkOFF! “We tried not to curse, but that’s how women feel when they look in the mirror and see the wine stains on their teeth. We created a new intersection between oral care and beauty,” said Joelle.

Interested customers can visit the website-FunkkOFF! and get a 25% off coupon for pre-order. I was surprised at how affordable the product is-\$22 each, or \$42 for a two-pack, and you can use one up to 30 times. Another unique feature; the tooth gel is natural and vegan, so you can swallow it if you have to on the go. “We have a large consumer base to tap into. Everyone with teeth can use this.”

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Eric Schoen, continued from pg 3-

At that time, 2 male suspects entered the store, smashed the cash register on the ground and took an undetermined amount of cash. They exited the store, and if you know the area you will realize how easy it is to get on either the Saw Mill Parkway or New York State Thruway.

The robbers didn't display guns, but caused enough drama in a normally sleepy neighborhood. Word gets around fast and the website for this paper had the story posted early in the day Sunday.

So here you have people working 12 hour days having to deal with this drama at 3 in the morning. That's the time when the fresh donuts, pastries and sandwiches come in so filling the showcase probably didn't happen as police did their investigation.

Most chain stores tell their employees not to fight back in situations like this or particularly when the crooks have weapons. These episodes are why we pay more for food at the grocery store.

Thank god everything turned out OK and no one was injured. But as a 3-5 day a week shopper at the store this robbery was a little bit too close for comfort!

Listen to Eric Schoen on the Westchester Rising Radio Show Thursday's from 10-11 a.m. On WVOX 1460 AM, go to WVOX.com and click the arrow to listen to the live stream or download the WVOX app from the App Store free of charge.

NYTOPSOLUTIONS LLC of Org. filed with the SSNY on 04/06/2022. Office: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC,475 S. 4TH Avenue Mt. Vernon, NY 10550. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of formation of Beagal, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 10/11/2022. Office: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC, 47 Washington Blvd Mt Vernon NY 10550. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of formation of 808 Commerce LLC, a domestic LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with Sec. of State of NY (SSNY) on 12/05/2022. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY is designated as agent upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: LLC at 808 Commerce Stret, Thornwood, NY 10594. Purpose: Any lawful act.

Harkham, Levenberg, Holtec con't from pg 1

dant clean water sources will serve as a competitive economic edge in the years to come, as the effects of climate change continue to threaten the country and the world.

“Holtec International’s reckless plan to discharge tritiated wastewater from the Indian Point Energy Center’s decommissioning site into the Hudson River in the coming months must not go forward as planned. The state has a clear role to play in protecting the health and economic interests of its citizens and natural resources and this legislation introduced by Senator Pete Harkham and Assemblymember Dana Levenberg does just that,” said Riverkeeper President Tracy Brown. “Riverkeeper strongly supports this legislation to prohibit discharges of radiological agents into the state’s waters. We urge the Senate and Assembly to expedite its passage and, ultimately, are counting on Governor Hochul’s support to turn this bill into law.”

DiNAPOLI: THOUSANDS OF YOUNG CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

NOT RECEIVING EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

Audit Finds More Than Half Did Not Receive Services to Which They Were Entitled; Black and Hispanic Children Faced Greater Barriers

Therapeutic and support services available through New York’s Early Intervention (EI) Program are vital for infants and toddlers with disabilities, but an audit released on Feb. 28 by New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli found many young children did not receive services or faced delays in care. The audit recommended the New York State Department of Health (DOH) improve its management of the EI program and eliminate barriers to care.

“Failure to provide babies and toddlers with early intervention services misses a critical window of opportunity and increases the risk of significant developmental and learning delays, and the need for more special education services in the future,” DiNapoli said. “The Department of Health needs to address the underlying reasons why children are not receiving the services they are entitled to, why services are often delayed and how access can be improved.”

DOH is tasked with developing a system that ensures children are identified, located and referred to the EI program. The department oversees 57 counties and New York City, which operate the program at the local level. Services are available for children under 3 years of age who have a confirmed disability or established developmental delay, and could include speech pathology or audiology, occupational or physical therapy, psychological services or support services for children and families. Under the law, children must be evaluated for services within 45 days after being referred to the program, receive an individualized plan for services, and begin receiving those services within 30 days, upon parental consent.

From July 2018 through February 2022, approximately 189,000 children with a suspected or confirmed disability were referred to the program. However, records showed that 27,000 (14%) never received an evaluation and 10,000 (5%) were still pending. Of the nearly 152,000 children who were evaluated, 98,000 or 64% were determined eligible to receive services, but about 2,000 (2%) of eligible children never received an individualized plan and another 1,000 were pending. Of the 95,000 children who did receive an individualized plan:

Nearly 51% or about 48,000 children did not receive all types of the therapeutic services to which they were entitled. About 28% or 27,000 children did not receive authorized services within 30 days. About 3% or 3,000 children did not receive any of their authorized therapeutic services.

DOH pointed to the absence of parental consent as the cause of many instances of denied or delayed services. Since DOH does not require explanations, case files rarely identified why consent was not given, why a parent withdrew their child from the program, why some children were referred to the program but were not evaluated or why they faced delays in care. Officials in 10 municipalities told auditors that sometimes they were not able to reach a parent or there was a lack of service providers. In some cases, parents couldn’t attend meetings or get to a provider during the day. DiNapoli’s audit also found that delays in evaluations and delivery of services were major issues.

According to a report from DOH, from July 2017 to June 2020, Black and Hispanic children were less likely to be referred to and evaluated for the EI program compared to white children. Black children were also less likely than white children to receive therapeutic services within 30 days. In addition, auditors identified disparities across the state in the availability of providers and access to services. In Broome County, for example, there were less than three providers for every 100 eligible children, while in Putnam County there were nine. The audit determined DOH must do more to identify and address barriers to equitable access to the program. The COVID-19 pandemic also created problems for families in accessing services.

DiNapoli’s audit recommends DOH: Identify why some children are not receiving services or are facing delays in *care and develop and implement strategies to improve participation and timely delivery of services.*

Yorktown Par 3, continued from pg 1-

and remains in effect.

Town attorney Adam Rodriguez did not publicly comment at the meeting about the pending litigation, nor did anyone on the Town Board at the Feb. 21 meeting.

Judge Wood’s order states that on March 10 he will hear arguments as to whether “the court should appoint a receiver to take control of the property during the litigation; enter a preliminary injunction enjoining the town from naming and/or prohibiting the successor concessionaire from taking possession of the property.”

Despite the court appearance on March 10 to argue whether Judge Wood will indeed issue a TRO against any new concessionaire, the Town Board did just that at their Board meeting Feb. 21. The Board voted unanimously to give authority to Town Supervisor Tom Diana to sign a new agreement with Yorktown Golf Group, and principals, Carmine DeMeglio and Anthony Stallone.

Yorktown Golf Group Inc. was incorporated in New York State on February 17, Four days later the Town Board approved a contract with the new company. The resolution granting Diana authority to sign the new agreement was not on the agenda but placed on at the last minute.

In a statement released to local, Yorktown media, Nussbaum said that he believes the Town Board may now be in contempt of Judge Wood’s order. “The Order to Show Cause tells Yorktown of the nature of RC’s request from the NYS Court and states the date, time, and location where the request will be made. This Order to Show Cause contains a direction to Yorktown to stop doing anything at the golf course until the court hears or decides the motion.

“The RC Order to Show Cause is supported by several “Affidavits in Support” that will help the judge make a decision. Yorktown will have to explain to the judge why they issued a New Concession Agreement, replacing RC without compensation, while this motion was pending and why the Town Board did this in such a secretive manner.

“Contempt of court is defined as any willful disobedience or disregard of a court order. The judge could decide that Yorktown’s contempt is “criminal” because Yorktown actually interfered with the ability of the court to function properly.

“I can promise the Yorktown Board and Yorktown Golf Group, Inc. that I will be a very dark cloud over all their smiling publicity pictures,” stated Nussbaum, who reminded this reporter that the Town had deemed the clubhouse “unsafe” just a few months ago.

Since then, there has been no work to remedy that so called violation, which Nussbaum claims was issued without cause, to impose further delays on RC getting the project done, and on opening the course.

Last month, we reported that one of the contractors hired by RC to perform the work, withdrew their building designs once RC was removed from the premises and from the project.

Notice of formation of PRESS START! Mobile Gaming LLC Arts. of Org. filed with SSNY on 01/03/2023. Office: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of the process to the LLC, 455 Tarrytown Rd Suite# 1521 White Plains NY, 10607. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of formation of Creative Tiny Steps, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 11/09/2022. Office: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC, 114 West Hartsdale ave, Hartsdale, NY 10530. Purpose: Any lawful activity

Notice of Formation of AADNYS TECHNOLOGIES LLC. Art. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 01/30/2023. Office: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to the LLC, 6 Lewiston Ct, Briarcliff Manor NY, 10510. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

TSA Precheck Enrollment Coming to Westchester County Airport March 27-31



Save Time and Stress the Next Time You're Flying by getting TSA PreCheck® Enrollment from March 27-31 at Local White Plains Airport

TSA PreCheck® is the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) expedited security screening program for airline passengers who are considered low-risk and who qualify for the program. From Monday, March 27 through Friday, March 31, Westchester County Airport (HPN) will be working with the TSA in collaboration with IDEMIA to offer travelers the opportunity to enroll in the TSA PreCheck® program here in Westchester. This special five-day enrollment period will be available daily at Westchester County Airport at 240 Airport Road in White Plains from 9 AM–Noon and 1-5 PM in the terminal arrivals area near the baggage claim carousel.

Westchester County Executive George Latimer said: "Bringing the PreCheck enrollment process up here to local residents is a benefit to all Westchester travelers who don't have the time or extra resources to go down to JFK and back just to go through the enrollment process. I encourage all residents to consider taking advantage of this great limited-time opportunity to save time and stress."

The TSA PreCheck® program helps travelers save time through a smarter travel experience that expedites the checkpoint screening process and cuts down on the stress of travel. Those enrolled do not need to remove their shoes, laptops, 3-1-1 liquids, belts and light jackets when going through designated TSA PreCheck® security lanes. In January 2023, 92% of the nation's TSA PreCheck® passengers waited less than five minutes waiting to be screened.

Westchester County Airport Manager April Gasparri said: "Westchester County Airport is excited to work with the TSA to expand enrollment of its TSA PreCheck program right here in Westchester. This is a win for local travelers and community members whether they fly through White Plains or elsewhere."

Enrollment Process

The enrollment process is quick, convenient and even faster when the application is completed online beforehand. The in-person enrollment requires that applicants provide proof of identity, proof of citizenship, fingerprints and a photo. IDEMIA offers TSA PreCheck® enrollment for \$78 and if approved, travelers get a five-year membership with the program.

Following the in-person enrollment appointment, most applicants receive their Known Traveler Number (KTN) in about three to five days. The KTN number must be added to flight reservations to enjoy TSA PreCheck® benefits.

For more information or to apply online and schedule a 10-minute in-person enrollment appointment at Westchester County Airport from March 27 to March 31 visit: www.tsa.gov/precheck.

Circus, con't from pg 2-

What are some of the new things families can expect to see in the new edition of Flip Circus? The expectations are very high because last year's show was so well-received and we are determined to present a new show that is as exciting or even more exciting than last year's. For our new show, we've brought together many new acts. Audiences will definitely enjoy the experience of being so close to the performances in our intimate big top tent.

What is your favorite part of being a Ringmaster? As a Ringmaster, I really enjoy working with so many talented artists from around the world and seeing the joy on the faces of the children and adults when they watch our show. The circus is a magical place where amazing things take place and as Ringmaster, I get to be the audience's guide through it all.

How did you get involved in the circus business? I was around 14 years old when I started working in a circus in Mexico. A year later, I took a break to continue with my academic studies. When I was 18, I focused once again on my career as a performer and over the years, I have worked as a clown, a physical comedian and now as Ringmaster.


Metro NYC dates for Flip Circus include: Yonkers (March 3-20), Staten Island (March 24-April 10) and Long Island (April 14-24). For more information and to purchase tickets, visit <https://tickets.flipcircus.com/>

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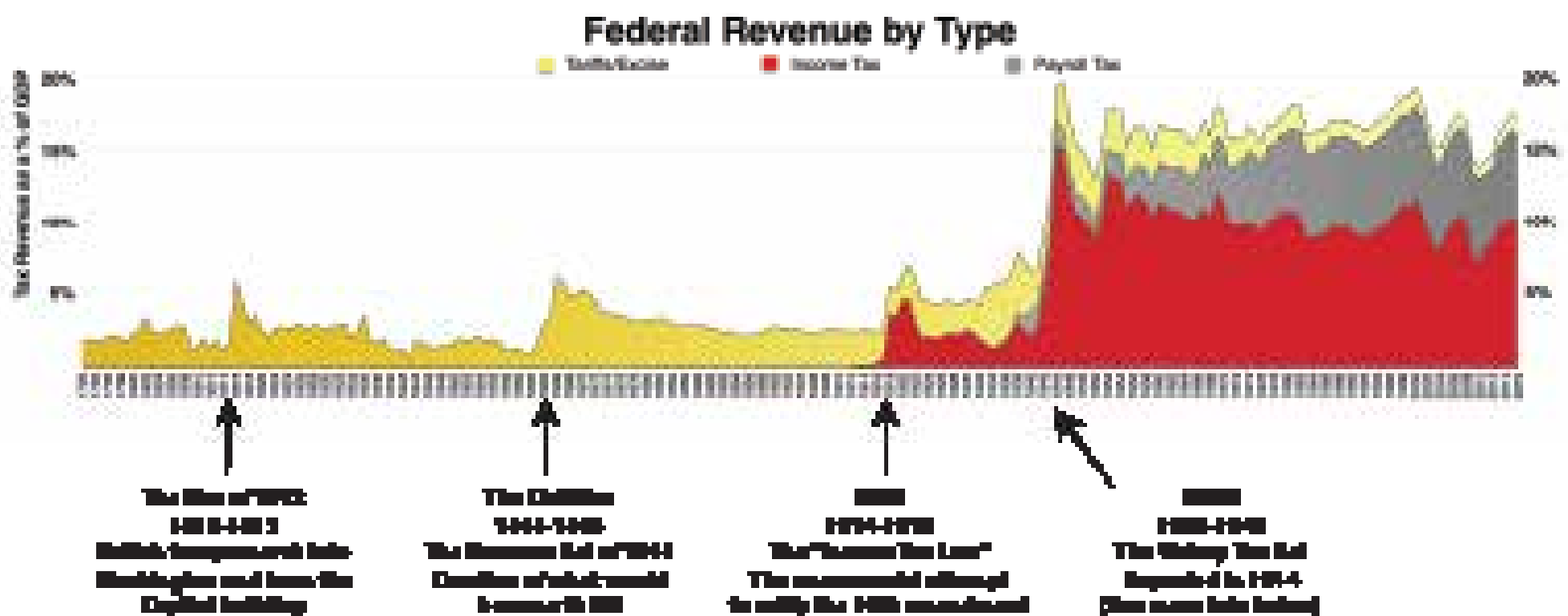
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DID YOU KNOW PAYING FEDERAL INCOME TAX IS VOLUNTARY?



Before World War II, no one outside the government paid income tax; the people were, and understood themselves to be, immune from that tax. During WWII, Congress passed the Victory Tax ([Section 1101](#)) to impose an income tax on every individual in The United States of America, something which had not been done by any previous income tax act. Excepted from that tax was those already paying income taxes per [L.I.C. 211\(a\)](#) – nonresident alien individuals with no United States business or office but living in a "contiguous country" and having income from United States sources.

Because the Victory Tax, a war-time measure, was imposed on individuals in the state of the union (and not countries such as Canada or Mexico), those already taxed by section [211\(a\)](#) had to be exempt from the Victory Tax or they would be taxed twice. This suggests that the nonresident alien individuals living in "contiguous countries" were in fact living in states such as Virginia and Maryland – being outside the United States (District of Columbia).

The Victory Tax was repealed by [section 6 of Income Tax Act of 1914](#), which in amending the L.I.C. includes the states of the union in the terms "certain foreign countries" ([section 6 \(b\)\(2\)](#)) and "foreign countries and possessions of the United States" ([section 6 \(b\)\(3\)](#)). This removed the scope of income taxation to what it had been prior to the Victory Tax, as not including individuals in the state of the union.

The states of the union are thus seen to be included in the terms "contiguous countries", "certain foreign countries" and "foreign countries and possessions of the United States". This shows that every state of the union is foreign to the United States. Those taxed under L.I.C. 211(a) must then be those living in a state of the union and working for government or one of its agencies – deriving income from "persons within the United States".

But because Congress failed to make it generally known that the Victory Tax was no longer in effect, people did not know to discontinue the withholding taxes for the Victory Tax. One was then considered as being a winner in paying income tax.

The Federal Income Tax- What If?

What if individuals were to stop filing and paying the income tax and employers, would stop withholding the tax from the paychecks of their employees and there was no new federal tax to take the place of the individual income tax? "Would we be able to fix the bridges and maintain a strong national Defense?" would we be able to avoid chaos?" would we be a stronger nation? Is a mechanism in place that would allow a peaceful and smooth transition from a society with an individual income tax to a society without one?

The answer to each of these questions is a resounding "yes."

Here we are in the year 2023 and the federal government has to start preparing to adopt the federal budget for the next fiscal year. Let's assume that Congress will come to the conclusion that it wants \$30 trillion in tax revenue next year. Let's also assume that Congress expects \$15 trillion to come from the tax already in place and authorized by article 1, section 8 of the constitution. (excise, taxes, tariffs, duties, and imports), and that those tax revenues were sufficient to maintain a strong defense, and to pay for the other federal programs, needed and authorized by the enumerated powers found in article 1. That leaves \$15 trillion dollars to come from someplace else to pay for everything else Congress wants to do. Assuming Congress decides not to increase the article 1, Section 8 taxes Congress would have to get the other \$15 trillion by taxing the people under the authority created by article 1, section 9 of the constitution. —i.e., by laying a direct tax, on the people, a tax that would have to be **APPORTIONED AMONG THE STATES**. This means Congress would have to pass a bill, and the president would have to sign the bill into law, requiring the states to come up with the money Congress wanted. To be constitutional, the bill would have to proportion the \$15 trillion among the 50 states based on the population figures of the last census. This is the mechanism that has been in place since 1787, and which could very easily work today. of course, with this approach to funding the federal government, there would be a dramatic shift in power away from the federal government to the states, and to the people. It can be safely assumed that if given the choice, the states will use their power to influence the federal government not to adopt the law, requiring the states to come up with the \$15 trillion deciding, instead, that they, the states don't need the middleman—i.e., that they the states will fund the development of communities of their states, and they will fund the education of the children of their states, without also funding the huge bureaucracies in Washington DC.