



2020 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

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Chairman of the Board

Dr. Marsha Gordon
President/CEO

George Lence
Vice Chair Governmental Action

John Ravitz
Executive Vice President/COO

Andra Horsch
*Vice President of State
Government Affairs*

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White House

Donald J. Trump, *President*
Mike Pence, *Vice President*

United States Senate

Charles E. Schumer, *Minority Leader*
Kirsten Gillibrand

United States House of Representatives

16th C.D. Eliot L. Engel
17th C.D. Nita M. Lowey
18th C.D. Sean Patrick Maloney

New York State Public Officials

Andrew M. Cuomo, *Governor*
Kathy Hochul, *Lt Governor*
Thomas DiNapoli, *Comptroller*
Letitia James, *Attorney General*

State Senate

34th S.D. Alessandra Biaggi
35th S.D. Andrea Stewart-Cousins,
 Majority Leader
36th S.D. Jamaal Bailey
37th S.D. Shelley Mayer
40th S.D. Peter Harckham

State Assembly

88th A.D. Amy Paulin
89th A.D. J. Gary Pretlow
90th A.D. Nader J. Sayegh
91st A.D. Steve Otis
92nd A.D. Thomas J. Abinanti
93rd A.D. David Buchwald

94th A.D. Kevin Byrne
95th A.D. Sandra R. Galef

Westchester County Public Officials

George Latimer, *County Executive*
Timothy Idoni, *County Clerk*
Anthony Scarpino, Jr., *District Attorney*

Board of Legislators

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2nd District Kitley S. Covill
3rd District Margaret A. Cunzio
4th District Vedat Gashi
5th District Benjamin Boykin, *Chairman*
6th District Nancy E. Barr
7th District Catherine Parker
8th District Alfreda A. Williams,
 Vice Chairman
9th District Catherine Borgia
10th District Damon R. Maher
11th District Terry Clements
12th District Mary Jane Shimsky
13th District Lyndon Williams
14th District David J. Tubiolo
15th District Ruth Walter
16th District Christopher A. Johnson
17th District Jose Alvarado

Mayors

Shawyn Patterson-Howard, *Mt. Vernon*
Noam Bramson, *New Rochelle*
Andre KJ. Rainey, *Peekskill*
Thomas Roach, *White Plains*
Mike Spano, *Yonkers*



2020 Overview

The Business Council of Westchester (BCW) is the county's largest and most prestigious business membership organization representing more than 1,000 members, including multinational corporations, hospitals, universities, biotech pioneers, not-for profits, entrepreneurs and companies of all sizes. As the county's **only** business membership organization focusing on **advocacy** and **economic development**, the BCW's members enjoy unparalleled access to today's top thought leaders, diverse business development opportunities and lawmakers at all levels of government.

The BCW's members represent over 200,000 employees in Westchester County and beyond. Most importantly, the members continue to help drive the county's economy in creating economic growth and jobs. The BCW is proud of its open, inclusive and collaborative culture which is fostered through the involvement of its members and the strong leadership and dedication of its Board of Directors. Many of the BCW's members conduct business on a regional, statewide, national and international level, which has served to create opportunities for business growth in Westchester and throughout the Hudson Valley.

The BCW is a private not-for-profit corporation funded by annual investments by its members.

BCW members continue to help drive the county's economy in creating economic growth and jobs.



BCW President & CEO Marsha Gordon has served on Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Council for the past eight years.

Government Action Council



Improved Business Climate

The mission of the BCW's Government Action Council is to provide leadership in public policy and involve our members in helping to advocate for economic opportunity in Westchester County and the Hudson Valley.

To accomplish this, the BCW's Government Action Council will:

- ✦ Educate and inform the business community about relevant county, state and federal policy issues.
- ✦ Review county, state and federal legislation and regulations to assess potential impacts on the business community.
- ✦ Influence public policy outcomes through advocacy when the business community's interest may be affected.
- ✦ Serve as an information resource and clearinghouse for the business community and governmental leaders.
- ✦ Leverage public policy issues and legislation to promote business growth and create a more competitive business environment.
- ✦ Look beyond the borders of Westchester County and the Hudson Valley to address issues impacting the business community.

The important role of the BCW's Legislative Agenda

Every year, legislative bills that are passed or not passed in local, state and federal legislatures have a powerful impact on the Westchester business community's ability to serve its stakeholders. Business leaders, whether they represent large, medium or small sized communities owe it to themselves, their employees and their shareholders (if they work for a publicly traded company), to offer their opinion and expertise on important policy issues.

In order to address this critical responsibility, the BCW's Government Action Council creates

a Legislative Agenda each year. All BCW members are encouraged to contribute their suggestions and expertise in this process. The BCW also works with local, state and federal elected officials to convert legislative goals into reality. Included in this overall effort is the BCW's annual Albany Lobby Day that is held during the state's legislative session. The Government Action Council also meets on a regular basis with local, state and federal elected officials and agency representatives to ensure that positions on legislation and regulatory matters are addressed in a timely manner. Every year the work of the BCW's Legislative Agenda promotes pro-business recommendations that help Westchester and the Hudson Valley's economy. Every Westchester County elected official will receive a copy of the BCW's 2020 Legislative Agenda.

Current Challenges and Priorities

In 2020, governments at all levels will face many challenges that our elected officials will be working on. The BCW will continue to call for fundamental reforms in the way that our county, state and federal governments conduct business. The BCW will urge our elected officials to adopt policies that lead to sustainable economic growth that will create new jobs in all business sectors.

The BCW looks forward to continuing meaningful discussions with our county, state and federal elected officials on numerous issues to ensure that the collective voice of the county's business community is heard.



FAR LEFT Marsha Gordon with Maria Trusa and Gina Cappelli, Formé Medical Center and Urgent Care, asking a question to Robert Mujica, NYS Budget Director.

LEFT BCW Executive Vice President John Ravitz at a roundtable discussion at the BCW's 2019 Annual Albany Lobby Day.

ABOVE NYS Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins welcomes BCW members to Albany for the BCW's Annual Albany Day.

The BCW will urge our elected officials to adopt policies that lead to sustainable economic growth that will create new jobs in all business sectors.



Remaining Fiscally Responsible

In 2020, the BCW looks forward to continuing to work with Westchester County Executive George Latimer and the members of the County Board of Legislators. In December 2019, the Board of Legislators voted and approved the

county's 2020 \$2.1 billion dollar Executive Budget. During last year's county budget deliberations, in order to restore the county's Triple A bond rating, the BCW urged the County Executive and the Board of Legislature to produce a budget that did not raise taxes, continued to cut the county's property tax levy and which did not include any "one-shots" or fiscal gimmicks. The BCW is pleased that the county government addressed these concerns. In fact, after the 2020 budget was approved, Standard & Poor's revised the county's bond rating to their Triple A rating. The economic health of Westchester County is dependent upon our county government making the right decisions to ensure fiscal stability for the future. The county budget should send a strong message to the business community that the county's fiscal house is in order and that it will protect its bond rating, which is critical to attracting and retaining employees.

In 2019, the BCW held numerous "round table" discussions with members of the Board of Legislators to discuss concerns about specific pieces of legislation that the Board was proposing to adopt. During these sessions, business owners of all sizes gave concrete examples on what the *negative*

TOP The BCW hosted the first three downstate County Executives' Summits. From left to right: Steve Bellone, Suffolk County Executive; Laura Curran, Nassau County Executive; George Latimer, Westchester County Executive.

ABOVE Westchester County Executive George Latimer, former BCW Board Chair Anthony Justic, NYS Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul, Marsha Gordon and BCW Executive Vice President John Ravitz.

The BCW also urges the County Executive and the Board of Legislators to promote and adopt smart private-public partnerships that will create solid opportunities for real economic growth.

impact would be if certain legislative initiatives were adopted. It is critical that county legislative leaders understand that passing legislation that has unintended consequences could serve as a barrier for future employers creating more jobs in Westchester County.

In 2020, the BCW will again remind county government that Westchester prides itself on having a strong vibrant workforce. We have employers who are committed to their employees. Passing legislation that becomes direct mandates and cause unintended consequences to businesses sends a message to employers, that in Westchester County, government will determine how they manage their workforce. Creating that type of environment will not help bring more permanent jobs to Westchester.

The BCW also urges the County Executive and the Board of Legislators to promote and adopt *smart private-public partnerships* that will create solid opportunities for real economic growth. The BCW has always supported a public-private partnership proposal for Westchester County's Airport and Rye Playland. Both facilities are important economic development tools to recruit and retain jobs in the county. Westchester County needs to continue to look for private sector partners who have proven track records in working with municipalities in an *open* and transparent manner to improve and enhance key county owned properties. Other states around the country have shown that public-private partnerships have worked, not only to successfully enhance existing properties and projects, but to create more private sector jobs as well.



TOP NYS Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins was the guest of honor at the BCW's first 2019 KeyBank Speaker Series Breakfast. Seen with Anthony Justic, George Latimer, Marsha Gordon, Joseph Markey, Senior VP of KeyBank and John Ravitz.

MIDDLE BCW's Annual Board of Legislators' Reception. Legislators Nancy Barr, Chair Benjamin Boykin, Margaret Cunzio, John Ravitz and Michael Kaplowitz.

ABOVE Co-Chairs Ronnie Ram and Peter Herrero join Anthony Justic, County Executive George Latimer and Marsha Gordon at the ribbon cutting for the 2019 BCW Westchester Business Expo, the largest business to business trade show in the Hudson Valley.



Members of the BCW's Coalition for Westchester Airport.

Coalition for Westchester Airport

Unfortunately, in 2019 there was no significant action taken on enhancing the Westchester County airport. In fact, opponents of any public-private partnership dominated the discussions. In the case of the airport, opponents of the proposal to engage in a public-private partnership to enhance not enlarge the services of the airport did all they could to severely restrict

airport operations, even suggesting that the airport be closed. Believing that a voice of reason needed to be part of the discussion regarding the future of the airport, the BCW created the Coalition For Westchester Airport to remind our political leaders of the following important facts:

- ✦ The airport is a key element in the county's transportation infrastructure.
- ✦ The airport is one of the county's most valuable economic assets.
- ✦ The airport is essential to attract and retain businesses in Westchester.
- ✦ The airport employs thousands of people in diverse industries.
- ✦ The airport is a tool for workforce development and training.
- ✦ The airport helps maintain a healthy tax climate.

Over 100 businesses have joined the Coalition For Westchester Airport as it continues to advocate for a new partnership between the county and an

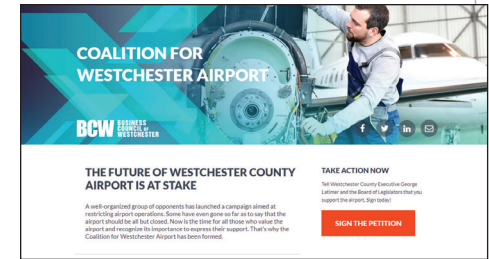
operator with a proven track record who will improve essential services and address important environmental and quality of life issues that the business community, the traveling community and the neighboring community are contending with at the airport. The Coalition will continue to stay laser-focused in 2020 on finding a solution that will help **enhance** and not expand the airport.

There is still much work that can and needs to be done to help improve the county's fiscal matters. The BCW will continue to advocate for strong structural reforms that are important to strengthening the county's long-term financial condition. This will require continuing to identify recurring benefits and savings and concessions from labor unions in future contract negotiations. The county must also treat its reserve funds judiciously and make real efforts to consolidate services between local governments.

The BCW continues to support the important work of the County's Local Development Corporation, which has helped small businesses and not-for-profits to receive funding and helped generate new programs and jobs.

Workforce Development

The BCW recognizes that having the appropriate talent to fill the jobs available in Westchester is critical to economic development. As a member of the Workforce Investment Board, the BCW will continue to advocate for funding on the federal, state and county levels for workforce training programs which meet the jobs of our key employers, especially in health care, life sciences, hospitality and IT. With a strong construction economy, the BCW will pay special attention to the jobs available in that industry and provide wages that are competitive in our marketplace. The BCW has a special long standing commitment to employment opportunities for young people that will continue through partnerships with youth organizations and not-for-profits, especially those serving youth in our urban centers. Finally, our partnership with our institutions of higher learning provides the groundwork for building the workforce of the future.



The Coalition will continue to stay laser-focused in 2020 on finding a solution that will help enhance and not expand the airport.



Green Business Partnership

Established in 2009 as a BCW program in partnership with Westchester County and Green Team Spirit LLC, the Green Business Partnership (GBP) provides a diverse group of businesses and non-profits with

the tools, training, and expertise needed to reduce carbon emissions and integrate environmentally sustainable practices into company operations. The GBP program “democratizes” sustainable business by making it accessible and affordable for any organization, regardless of size and industry.

GBP utilizes a collaborative, peer-sharing approach, a model that has been recognized by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) as replicable for businesses across New York State and beyond. Based on policy, action and performance, it is the only program of its kind where members make an organizational commitment to sustainability and track facility-based metrics (such as energy use, water consumption, volume of waste, and refrigerant use) as well as transportation, behavioral, and purchasing activities. The program currently reaches upwards of 20,000 employees across more than 150 member organizations, 58 of which are certified green businesses.

Highlights from the past year include:

✦ **New Association Partnerships:** The GBP’s online portal that guides members through the green business certification process has been instrumental in the program’s continued growth throughout New York State and beyond. The GBP expanded its partnership with the New York Library Association while entering into new agreements with the Westchester Hotel Association, Westchester Library System and the US Green Building Council of Long Island.



✦ **Leaders in Sustainability Speaker Series:** This highly successful forum entered its fifth year in partnership with Con Edison and Westchester Community College to educate the business community about key topics, including business resiliency in a changing climate, clean energy cooling and heating programs, and how weather data can be used to increase their competitive edge.

✦ **Recognizing Green Business Achievements:** Green business certification ceremonies were held across the region and the 9th Annual Green Business Awards Ceremony at the Cambria Hotel White Plains was a major highlight from the past year. Dr. Marsha Gordon, President and CEO of the BCW was joined by Deputy County Executive Kenneth Jenkins and GBP Directors Dani Glaser and Scott Fernqvist to recognize program sponsors and a prestigious group of honorees for outstanding achievement. Honorees included River Architects, Lindenhurst Memorial Library, Wartburg, Lippolis Electric, Inc., Encourage Yoga, Balancing Life’s Issues, Acadia Realty Trust, and Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers. The GBP team looks forward to marking a decade of green business growth at its 10th Annual Awards in June 2020.

TOP LEFT Leaders in Sustainability Speaker Series featuring Steven Wysmuller (far left), Global Weather Leader, IBM/The Weather Co., who spoke about “Business Resiliency in a Changing Climate.”

BOTTOM LEFT 2019 Green Business Partnership Award Winners celebrating their achievements at the Cambria Hotel White Plains.

ABOVE Sponsors of the 2019 Green Business Partnership Awards.

The GBP program “democratizes” sustainable business by making it accessible and affordable for any organization, regardless of size and industry.



ABOVE Marshlands Nature Preserve.



ABOVE RIGHT Kensico Dam Plaza.

FAR RIGHT Sunset Yoga at Rye Playland Beach.

Parks

The BCW has long been a supporter of maintaining the infrastructure of our county. Of critical importance is the stewardship of the 18,000 acres of the county's park system. Parks and open space are vital to attracting and keeping businesses in the county and the recruitment of personnel, especially young families.

Safe, clean, affordable places for people to recreate are among the most indispensable elements that make Westchester a great place to live, work and play. They help sustain our business community, our social lives, our well-being and our families.

Our parks have economic power. In Westchester, \$185 million per year in economic impact is directly related to our award winning, nationally accredited park system. Nearly 1,000 private sector jobs are supported annually. Many successful rebirths of urban or downtown areas start with a park. Just think Fountain Park in downtown White Plains, Ruby Dee Park in New Rochelle or Van der Donck Park in Yonkers and you can see that both public and private decision makers see the powerful and essential value of parks.



As such, the BCW supports the continuing reinvestment into the infrastructure of the Westchester County Park system by:

- + Significantly reducing an over \$400 million backlog of previously approved capital improvement projects;
- + Utilizing private sector expertise by fully initiating a “project manager” form of capital contracting that will speed completion of projects, save tax dollars and return worn or closed facilities to full public use;
- + Prioritizing projects in the southern portion of the county where open space and access to parklands is much more restricted; and
- + Adopting New York State legislation that will codify Executive Order #5 of 2019 requiring state legislative approval to dispose of any dedicated county parkland larger than two acres in size.

Our parks have economic power. In Westchester, \$185 million per year in economic impact is directly related to our award winning, nationally accredited park system.



TOP Marsha Gordon and NYS Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins during the BCW's 2019 Albany Lobby Day.



ABOVE Assemblyman Kevin Byrne addresses BCW members at the 2019 Albany Lobby Day.

The BCW advocates that state government work to remove burdens and obstacles that prevent economic growth and job creation.

Last year brought enormous changes to Albany as the Democratic party assumed the majority in the State Senate, ushering in full Democratic control of the Governorship and both houses of the State Legislature. As we enter the next decade and the 2020 legislative sessions gets underway, new challenges are on the horizon as the state will be facing a \$6.1 billion dollar deficit, that includes a \$4 billion Medicaid spending gap caused by rising costs.

The Governor and Legislature will be challenged with the difficult task of reigning in this deficit. They will also need to look at reforming the Medicaid program to address rising costs in a sensible matter that will ensure that essential services are delivered without creating a new mandate on counties to pick up the bill.

In meeting the deficit challenges, the Governor and Legislature need to be especially cognizant of the recent U.S. Census reports on population loss. It showed that New York had the largest population loss of any of the ten states that saw declines between July 2018 and July 2019. This trend cannot continue, as it is critical that New York State remain competitive and implement policies to improve the state's business climate.

The BCW advocates that state government work to remove burdens and obstacles that prevent economic growth and job creation by stressing that the impact on taxes, business fees, burdensome

regulatory requirements and lengthy approval processes cause real issues for creating new jobs in Westchester County and the Hudson Valley.

The BCW will be diligent in monitoring the upcoming budget discussions and seeing what unintended consequences this large deficit may bring to the business community. In the year ahead, the BCW will remain in constant contact with the Governor, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and with the members of the Westchester delegation to ensure that the Westchester business community's voices continue to be heard.

In 2020, the BCW urges the State Legislature to:

- ✦ **Prohibit new mandates.** The state should not impose any new mandates on municipalities, school districts and taxpayers. The BCW urges the Governor and the Legislature to create meaningful legislation that focuses on alleviating the burdens of mandates that are detrimental to local municipalities.
- ✦ **Continue to create enhanced tax credits for small businesses and adopt new small business tax reform policies** that encourage businesses to have the resources to expand in New York State. The BCW supports the Governor's proposal to **reduce** the corporate tax rate for small businesses from 6.5% to 4%.
- ✦ **Pass a serious regulatory reform package to help reduce the state's onerous regulatory burden.** The BCW encourages the Legislature to reintroduce legislation to end New York's regulatory barrage. New York has approximately 140,000 pages of regulations. Businesses that are looking to relocate or expand in New York need to see that state government is being proactive in removing obstacles and burdens that have a negative impact on their day-to-day operations.
- ✦ **Continue to pass on-time budgets in the "light of day."** The passing of the state budget should not occur in the early hours of the morning. Debating and voting on the budget should be done in a transparent manner that gives the public the opportunity to have a clear understanding of the state's spending plan.



- + **Reduce the cost of construction on public-private projects.** The state must reduce the costs of construction by repealing the Wicks Law and reforming the Public Construction Act.
- + **Reform the Scaffold Law by passing S.326/A.3737.** The Scaffold Law costs taxpayers \$785 million annually and private businesses that work on public projects \$1.49 billion annually. Reforming this law written 135 years ago in 1885 has gained momentum in light of new transportation infrastructure projects and the need for more affordable housing and new schools. The BCW has taken a leadership role in a state-wide coalition that has been making strides in reforming this old law and it will continue to be one of the major legislative priorities for the BCW in 2020. The law (Labor Law 240/241) holds property owners, employers and contractors ABSOLUTELY LIABLE for “gravity related” injuries that happen on the job. What this means is that there is no defense from a lawsuit, even if worker’s gross negligence contributed to the accident. Even parties that had no supervisory control over the worker are held liable. New York is *the ONLY state in the country that still keeps this law on the books*.
- + **Reform the state environmental quality review (SEQR) process.** Now, more than ever, with the changing energy landscape and move to renewables, the BCW urges the Governor and the Legislature to amend and in some cases eliminate the SEQR rules and regulations that cause unnecessary delays for important projects throughout the state. In Westchester it is clear that the SEQR process has been used to cause serious delays in getting projects completed in a timely manner. This delay causes local municipalities to at times abandon economic development projects, which then prevents new jobs and revenue from being generated.
- + **Pass Public-Private Partnership legislation.** The Legislature and Governor should note what other states have accomplished and continue to explore ways to allow New York to authorize private entities to design and build, finance, operate and maintain infrastructure. Public-Private Partnership projects would create new jobs that would bring major revenue to Westchester County and the rest of the state.



- + **Expand and make permanent the extension of the design-build method of project delivery for state agency projects.** In 2019, Governor Cuomo signed into law a bill allowing New York City to use “design-build” for its big projects. This will allow the City to cut through red tape and save time and money on critical projects. The BCW urges the Legislature to grant similar authority to state agencies so they too can see similar results throughout New York State.
- + **Continue to pass amendments to the state’s Minority and Women’s Business Enterprises (MWBE) program** to bolster the program, enhance opportunities and encourage greater participation. In 2019, the BCW was pleased to see that one of its priorities (S.6575/A.8414/Chapter 96) was signed into law, that extended and strengthened the program. The BCW encourages the Legislature to continue to make the MWBE program a priority in the year ahead.
- + **Enact legislation (S.3842B/A.2919) to allow non-CPAs to be minority owners of CPA firms,** consistent with 49 other states and jurisdictions.

Westchester Senate delegation members including Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senators Carlucci, Harckham, Mayer, Bailey and Biaggi discuss their 2019 legislative priorities during the 2019 BCW Albany Lobby Day.

The BCW encourages the Legislature to continue to make the MWBE program a priority in the year ahead.



Marsha Gordon and the BCW advocated for the cities of Peekskill (ABOVE) and New Rochelle (BELOW) to receive significant funding through the State's Downtown Revitalization Initiative Grant.

New residential projects are transforming Yonkers, New Rochelle, Mount Vernon, White Plains and Peekskill, bringing new residents, new jobs, and new opportunities.

Economic Development

Comparative employment trends continue to be the best available indicators of whether New York State's fiscal policies are fostering economic growth. It is clear that New York State must continue to

make increasing private sector job growth a top priority. The BCW has seen improvements in this area for both Westchester County and the Hudson Valley Region in certain sectors, but much more work needs to be done to ensure that the county's unemployment rate does not grow.

The BCW will continue to advocate that the most effective economic development program is the creation of a more competitive business environment, which can only occur when New York State acts to lower state imposed taxes, fees, assessments and employer mandates.

- + The BCW will continue to support the Governor's Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC), which for the last nine years helped create a comprehensive strategic plan that has catalyzed job creation and economic development in the state. In 2019, the Mid-Hudson Valley (which includes Westchester County) Region received \$65.8 million that will be used to fund 105 projects all across the region. This includes a total of approximately \$19.2 million to fund 30 projects in Westchester County. The 2019 winners in Westchester included municipalities such as Harrison, Peekskill, Sleepy Hollow and Mamaroneck, which received awards to complete badly needed infrastructure upgrades.



Our businesses, institutions of higher education and our arts and cultural institutions also benefitted. In the first nine rounds, the Mid-Hudson region has been awarded a total of \$713.6 million for 914 projects around the region. In addition to the REDC, the BCW was very involved in assisting New Rochelle and Peekskill, both of which over the last two years have received significant funding through the state's Downtown Revitalization Program.

- + The BCW **opposes** prevailing wage legislation (S.1947/A.1261). Westchester's most prominent developers have joined with the BCW to form the Westchester Coalition to Save Smart Development to strongly oppose legislation to require the payment of prevailing wages on private construction projects receiving any form of state funding support. The application of prevailing wages to what are really non-public work activities go well beyond just economic development and construction projects. Depending on the scope of the proposal, affordable housing development, healthcare, higher education and non-for-profit investments, brownfield remediation and a whole host of other important activities could be defined as "public work" simply because they received any type of state assistance or even a tax credit.

Westchester's urban centers are in the beginning of a renaissance. New residential projects are transforming Yonkers, New Rochelle, Mount Vernon, White Plains and Peekskill, bringing new residents, new jobs, and new opportunities. But proposed prevailing wage legislation would radically increase the cost of private construction projects and will bring all of this to a crashing halt by preventing numerous developments from coming to fruition. The prevailing wage is not "minimum wage". Rather, it is the term used for wage rates applied to government "public work" projects

**SAVE JOBS IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY
PROTECT NEW INVESTMENT IN OUR COMMUNITIES
STOP PREVAILING WAGE LEGISLATION IN ALBANY!**

Prevailing Wage would be catastrophic to job creation and economic development in Westchester County, particularly in our urban centers, which have started to revitalize over the past few years. The effects of Prevailing Wage would be devastating and immediate. Our local governments have needed to harden their construction. This would bring it all to a crashing halt.

MARSHA GORDON
President and CEO
The Business Council of Westchester

Westchester's urban centers are in the beginning of a renaissance. New residential projects are and will transform Yonkers, New Rochelle, Mount Vernon and White Plains, bringing new residents, new jobs and new opportunities. But proposed Prevailing Wage legislation in Albany would radically increase the cost of private construction projects and will bring all of this to a crashing halt by preventing numerous developments from coming to fruition.

Simply put, imposing Prevailing Wage would drastically inflate the cost of construction projects. One study shows that local workers and their employers would be forced to absorb the cost of construction projects. This would slow down private development in Westchester, particularly in our urban centers that for the first time in decades are enjoying a significant revival. Major projects will not go forward, resulting in billions of dollars of lost investment, jobs and residential opportunities.

The Prevailing Wage is not Minimum Wage. Rather, it is the term used for wage rates applied to government "public work" projects such as highways, bridges and tunnel construction. Applying this to private construction projects would add a maximum of 30 percent to overall project costs. For example, a bridge would be paid \$30 per hour and employees benefits would be covered 100% by the developer.

We can't afford to make New York any less competitive. Join us in support of job creation, community investment and economic development by saying NO to Prevailing Wage Legislation in Albany. Join your New York State Legislators today.

WESTCHESTER COALITION TO SAVE SMART DEVELOPMENT

Logos for: Westchester County, City of Peekskill, City of New Rochelle, BID, YONKERS, BI BRT.

such as highway, bridge and tunnel construction. Applying this to private construction projects would add a minimum of 30% to overall project costs. For example, a laborer would be paid \$100 per hour and employee benefits would be covered 100% by the developer. We cannot afford to make New York any less competitive. This legislation would be catastrophic to job creation and economic development in Westchester County, particularly in our urban downtowns, which have started to revitalize over the past few years. The effects of prevailing wage would be devastating and immediate. This represents another unfunded mandate that would drive-up the cost to build projects in turn making New York even more costly and less competitive and essentially drive businesses to neighboring states.

- ✦ The BCW **supports** adopting broad reforms in the state's business tax to reduce compliance costs and make the state's tax code more supportive on in-state investments and job creation.
- ✦ The BCW **urges** the Legislature to hold more hearings on the topic of regulating New York's gig economy workforce, including app-based companies, so that it hears from everyone...employers and employees... to ascertain the effects that reclassifying them as employees would have on different businesses within different industries across the state.
- ✦ The BCW **opposes** the elimination of the tipped wage (S.1760/A.1240). The BCW urges the Governor and the State Labor Department to keep the tipped wage intact. It is essentially the base wage paid to an employee that receives a substantial portion of their compensation from tips. Its elimination will force New York restaurant owners, who are already besieged with government red tape and expenses, to cut workers hours, consolidate and eliminate jobs.
- ✦ The BCW **urges** the Legislature and Governor to monitor the long term ramifications of their actions last year in extending the millionaire's tax for five years to 2024, especially in light of recent reports citing that New York had the largest population loss of any of the 10 states that saw declines between July 2018 and July 2019.

- ✦ While vetoed in 2019, the BCW continues to **oppose** employer liens legislation that would allow the imposition of a lien on personal property of employers based on a claim of wage and hour violations. This legislation would be unjustifiable burdensome to Westchester employers as it allows employees to secure a lean before an allegation is proven. This could potentially affect the credit lines of small businesses and put businesses at risk without any misconduct ever being proven.
- ✦ The BCW, working alongside the Westchester Hotel Association, **supports** legislation (A.2928A) to regulate Short Term Rentals (STRs). Legislation is needed to level the playing field between STR platforms and the regulated businesses in the tourism industry that provide traditional lodging options to consumers throughout the state. This legislation would not only enhance safety by requiring STRs to adhere to fire and safety regulations, but would also require STRs to pay sales and occupancy taxes, thus bringing much needed additional revenue to the state and local governments.
- ✦ The BCW and the Westchester Hotel Association will continue to **oppose** legislation (S.3346/A.315) to require employers of retail, food service or cleaning employees to give their employees 7-day notice of their work schedule and a month's notice of the minimum hours of work they will be assigned. This is not practical in the hospitality industry that is constantly evolving on a day-to-day basis and which is subject to circumstances which they have no control over.



The BCW, working alongside the Westchester Hotel Association, supports legislation (A.2928A) to regulate Short Term Rentals.



- + The BCW and the Westchester Hotel Association will continue to **oppose** legislation (S.2879/A.325) stating that an employer may not schedule or require an employee to work during rest periods defined as the first ten hours following the end of the previous calendar day's work shift or on-call shift, or the first ten hours following the end of a work shift or on-call shift that spanned two calendar days. This bill would effectively tie the hands of the hotel industry whose many employees prefer the convenience of back-to-back shifts.
- + The BCW, working with CityDroneZ, **advocates** for legislation to create a robust drone industry that will create more jobs and provide greater safety for our citizens. This legislation would prevent local municipalities and cities within the state from passing their own local laws prohibiting or impairing the lawful use of drones; enable the lawful use of drones by public safety officials to rescue people, find lost people, respond to fires and accidents; and promote the use of drones for the delivery of life-saving devices like automated external defibrillators and medicines.
- + The BCW **supports** accelerating the distribution of matching public investment capital for early-stage life sciences companies by simplifying the process under which these burgeoning firms may access funding from the \$100 million Life Sciences Investment Capital portion of New York State's \$650 million Life Sciences Initiative (announced in January 2017). Only through greater transparency and education regarding the initial investment application process, and by fast-tracking the distribution of funds to approved companies, will Westchester County see significant growth of its life sciences and health technologies sector as we face increased competition from world-class life sciences hubs located in Massachusetts and California.
- + The BCW supports policies encouraging continued telecommunications network deployment and investment to expand high-speed connectivity necessary to conduct business in today's economy and oppose state efforts to rollback current federal policies promoting an internet ecosystem free from layers of burdensome and costly regulation. Additionally, the BCW continues to oppose call center policies that could punish any business currently operating centralized offices that handle large volumes of telephone calls for the purposes of providing consumer support, conducting telemarketing and collecting debts.

Empire City Casino by MGM Resorts

New York is a leader in the gaming industry worldwide and Westchester County is home to one of the most prominent gaming and entertainment destinations in the tristate area, Empire City Casino. With an annual payroll of nearly \$100 million and over 1000 employees, Empire City – which was acquired by MGM Resorts International in January 2019 – is critical to the economic growth of this county and the state as a whole.

Each year New Yorkers statewide directly benefit from the more than \$300 million Empire City generates for state education. Empire City provides hundreds of millions more to support the horse racing industry, as well as state and local governments. These funds are a result of a near seventy percent tax rate paid by Empire City, including ten percent directed to support the racing industry.

Competition is intensifying as neighboring states aggressively pursue new casinos and gaming opportunities that threaten New York's existing casino revenues and jobs. Surrounding states such as New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Pennsylvania have expanded or plan to expand full-gaming properties within close proximity to New York's casinos. Recognizing the need to better compete, New Yorkers approved seven full commercial casinos in a referendum in 2013. Four of the licenses have been awarded. The remaining casino licenses are not scheduled to be awarded for another several years.



Empire City Casino celebrates the arrival of MGM Resorts' Mlife Rewards program to the country's sixth largest gaming floor.

**Each year
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state education.**



Tim Cawley, president of Con Edison. Keynote speaker at the BCW's 2019 Energy Conference.

With 8 million visitors a year, Empire City has proven they can compete and draw tourists and gaming dollars to their facility. ***The economic benefits of this success for Westchester County and the Hudson Valley cannot be overstated.*** And with a full commercial license, Empire City would have the opportunity to generate significantly more revenue through poker tournaments, live table games, and onsite sports betting.

More than \$850 million of private investment has already been made in Empire City, and the property is ripe for additional development. ***The state should seize the opportunity to enable this vital economic engine to reach its full potential as a commercial casino and fairly compete with other full-gaming facilities being developed in surrounding states.***

Energy

Westchester County's energy landscape is dramatically changing. The Indian Point Energy Center, the provider of approximately 25% of our region's electricity, will fully cease operations in 2021. The BCW has continuously raised concerns over its closure and the resulting major issues Westchester County will be facing regarding reliability, increases in electric rates, as well as environmental impacts due to increases in carbon emissions, and ultimately the economic impacts the entire county will be facing. Coupled with this is the Con Edison gas moratorium in effect for the southern part of the county that went into effect in March 2019.

The BCW supports turning to renewables as an energy source and continues to educate businesses about the various programs available to them by

The BCW supports turning to renewables as an energy source and continues to educate businesses about the various programs available to them by NYSEERDA.

NYSEERDA through roundtable discussions and energy conferences. However, while the BCW has been proactive, questions remain that the state must address in relation to its energy plan, specifically in light of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act that was enacted last year setting an ambitious mandate for the state to hit net-zero emission in just three decades. The BCW is concerned that:

- ✦ The Plan will double energy costs in the state;
- ✦ The Plan will actually raise the carbon footprint of New York State... the opposite of its stated goal;
- ✦ The Plan cannot be implemented in New York State's stated timeframe with the currently available resources or 15 year timeframe available resources; and
- ✦ With a gas moratorium in effect, only a 15% - 25% reduction of carbon emissions is possible by 2050.

The BCW will continue to ask the tough questions to ensure that Westchester's energy infrastructure can continue to support economic development that is vital to the success of Westchester for both residents and businesses.

The BCW makes the following energy policy recommendations for 2020:

Equitable Policies to Address Carbon Emissions

Fair programs to reduce all types of air emissions from all other sectors of the economy (transportation, residential, commercial, industrial) in addition to the electric generation sector;

Examining the technical and economic feasibility of meeting a 100% renewable and "carbon neutral" energy goal and the state's greenhouse gas emission reduction goal, along with associated impacts to electric system reliability, and the role of energy resources that emit zero and low levels of greenhouse gases in meeting those goals while maintaining electric system reliability.

The New York State Renewable Reclamation Projects Program

The BCW supports legislation (S.6112/A.7376) to establish the New York State Renewable Reclamation Projects Program for the development of renewable electric generation projects. New York State's goal to generate 50% of its electricity from renewables by 2030 requires a momentous effort. To meet this goal, New York must nearly double the amount of renewable energy available – and install roughly eight times more wind and solar – than exists today.

However, this laudable goal must be accomplished while also considering the costs to customers. Additionally, Westchester County is responding to natural gas supply constraints. Businesses and homeowners are installing electrified ground and air source heat pumps to meet their energy needs. In order to close the gap for this new electrical demand, it makes environmental and economic sense to use renewable electricity that is brought online and generated in the most cost effective way possible.

Additional funding for the New York State Cessation and Mitigation Fund

The BCW urges for additional funding for the New York State Cessation and Mitigation Fund to assist municipalities and localities with the loss of property tax revenue following the closure of an electric generating facility.

Elimination and Reduction of Taxes, Surcharges and Fees

New Yorkers pay some of the highest utility prices in the country, and approximately 25% of their typical monthly electric bill is for taxes, fees, and surcharges. Energy taxes often start as temporary surcharges but end up becoming permanent, and in aggregate, they cost our citizens at least \$1.6 billion annually. These taxes are regressive, burdening the lowest-income New Yorkers disproportionately.

Eliminating these taxes and fees will stimulate our economy, freeing consumers to spend on other goods and needs. With those goals in mind, the BCW favors a significant reduction in ratepayers assessments imposed by the Public Service Commission. Ratepayer funds should support the adoption of more cost effective and market driven solutions to achieving social objectives.

Develop and Construct New Electric Car Infrastructure

Of the total greenhouse gas emissions in New York City, 24% comes from vehicles, yet of 10.8 million registered vehicles in our state, only about 45,000 run on alternative fuels. New York State needs to provide more electric car infrastructure such as more charging stations along major highways and at transportation hubs to encourage more drivers to purchase electric vehicles. Additionally, local jurisdictions should accelerate permitting to facilitate such construction.

Environment

Improving and investing in Westchester's clean water infrastructure projects is a top priority of the BCW. As a member of the state-wide Clean Water Jobs Creation Coalition, the BCW will once again urge the Governor and the Legislature to continue to invest in necessary funding so that key projects can move forward throughout Westchester County through New York State's Clean Water Grant. These projects will help create new jobs and send a strong message to the business community that the county is working to make the right investments in this area for the environment and for the local economy.

- ✦ The BCW continues to ***advocate for*** legislation amending the Civil Practice Law creating the Truth in Asbestos Trust Claims. This legislation (A.53) will create transparency between asbestos trust claims and asbestos tort actions by requiring disclosure of all past, pending and anticipated trust claims. It will promote fairness, reduce fraudulent claims and guarantee that resources will be available for truly sick or injured parties.
- ✦ The BCW ***supports*** legislation (S.4003A/A5262A) creating a Low Carbon Fuel Standard in New York State that will promote innovative technologies to lower greenhouse emissions and reduce pollution from mobile transportation sources. This program would be self-funded through its credit mechanism. Each year a carbon goal would be set. Transportation fuels in use rated below the goal receive credits and fuels above the level must reduce their carbon intensity for buy credits from lower carbon fuels. Hence, higher carbon fuels with the greatest adverse impact to public health



Westchester Parks Foundation's Clean River Project, sponsored by Entergy, in the Bronx River in White Plains.

Improving and investing in Westchester's clean water infrastructure projects is a top priority of the BCW.



and the environment reward the lower carbon fuels through the acquisition of credits. This benefits all New Yorkers with cleaner air and lower carbon emissions.

- ✦ The BCW **supports** conservation and sustainability measures. Our state leads in sustainability and conservation, with the lowest per capita carbon emissions in the United States, thanks in large part to our strong nuclear fleet. As noted earlier, the BCW as a partner in the GBP is doing its part by providing a diverse group of businesses and

non-profits with the tools, training, and expertise needed to reduce carbon emissions and integrate environmentally sustainable practices into company operations.

- ✦ The BCW **supports** maintaining the current levels of funding for the Environmental Protection Fund to promote economic development; the promotion of “smart” state capital investments that protect the state’s air, land, water and natural resources; and the expansion of recreation opportunities.

Transportation

The BCW believes that a modern and well-maintained transportation network is vital to the state’s economy and serves as an important economic development tool for recruiting and retaining businesses in Westchester County.

Five years ago, the BCW joined a statewide organization “Rebuild New York” to urge for much needed funding for state and local transportation infrastructure. In a recent report TRIP, a national nonprofit transportation research organization, found that Hudson Valley bridges are most in need of repair or replacement. In fact, 13% of the bridges (329 of 2,551 bridges) in the Hudson Valley are rated in poor/structurally deficient condition. This is very disconcerting as these deficient bridges carry approximately 2.5 million vehicles per day. Additionally 64% of the bridges in the Hudson Valley (1,634 of 2,551 bridges) are rated in fair condition.

As we enter the next decade, it is clear that we need to make infrastructure funding a top priority. Addressing these needed repairs is of critical importance to the safety of the region’s residents and vitality of its businesses. More investment and a long-term commitment at the local, state and federal levels are needed to fund transportation infrastructure projects. This is essential in efforts to relieve congestion, improve road, bridge and transit conditions, boost safety, and support long-term economic growth in New York.

In addition to investing in our bridges and roads, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) which Westchester County’s residents rely on so heavily, is also in need of major investment and has been criticized for mismanagement and wasteful spending. Many believe congestion pricing will deliver much needed funding, and the BCW will be closely monitoring its 2021 rollout to make sure it does not create adverse impacts to Westchester’s businesses and residents.

Also in 2020, the BCW, in conjunction with the New York State Business Council, will be monitoring and evaluating New York State’s inclusion in the Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI), especially in the context of the emission reductions mandates of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act that was just signed into law in July 2019. The TCI is a multistate initiative to reduce carbon emissions from on-road vehicles, which continues to move forward and involves 11 northeastern states and the District of Columbia. This regional cap-and-invest program would place a cap on allowable emissions from on-road gasoline and diesel usage with the cap declining over the lifespan of the program from



More investment and a long-term commitment at the local, state and federal levels are needed to fund transportation infrastructure projects.



2022 to 2032; and would be funded by a gasoline tax of approximately 13 to 14 cents a gallon. The MOU is expected to be released this spring at which time TCI states will have the opportunity to formally commit to their participation in the program.

Housing

Housing is critical to attracting employers and employees to Westchester County. In 2020, the BCW will work with the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors on:

- ✦ **Supporting** the Fairness in Cooperative Homeownership Act (S.4677/A.6194) that would provide transparency and disclosure in cooperative housing by requiring co-ops to provide written notifications to an applicant, and establish reasonable time frames for co-op boards to act on applications.
- ✦ **Opposing** Wetland Oversight (S.5576/A.3658) that would increase the Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) oversight of wetlands from the current threshold of 12.4 acres or more to wetlands as small as one acre. The DEC already has authority over all wetlands determined to be of "unusual local importance," and local municipalities have the authority to regulate wetlands. The significant expansion of the state's regulatory authority, as proposed by this legislation, would create an unnecessary imbalance with significant negative ramifications for homebuyers, developers and the overall economic health of New York State.
- ✦ Additionally, the BCW **opposes** Universal Rent Control i.e. the "Good Cause Eviction" bill that would expand rent control to almost every apartment in the entire state of New York by

Affordable, accessible and quality child care is a critical component in providing a healthy and productive workforce.

capping an owner's ability to raise rents at 1½ times the Consumer Price Index. This would be disastrous for both tenants and property owners as owners would no longer be able to collect enough revenue to maintain their buildings and some would not be able to pay their property taxes. In turn, the housing supply will fall and tenants will not be able to find good, affordable apartments.

Child Care

Affordable, accessible and quality child care is a critical component in providing a healthy and productive workforce. Child care is unaffordable for nearly all low and middle income families in New York; fewer than 20% of low-income New York State families eligible for child care subsidies are currently receiving them. Child care businesses, unable to meet rising costs, are closing their doors in rising numbers. The BCW and the Child Care Council of Westchester, Inc. will be working diligently to emphasize to the Governor and the State Legislature the need for a significant investment of state dollars in child care in the 2020-2021 budget to increase child care workforce compensation, improve child care quality and expand eligibility for the child care subsidy program.



Healthcare

The BCW was proud to serve as a navigator to help enroll Westchester residents into the New York Health Exchange. The BCW will continue to educate the business community on all the aspects of the Health Exchange, including what tax credits are available for employers who offer health insurance to their employees.

The BCW will also continue to advocate for Preceptor legislation (S.4033A/A.3704). Students enrolled in healthcare education programs must participate in clinical rotations in order to graduate and sit for licensure exams, but unfortunately, there is a shortage of qualified professionals, known as preceptors, willing to accept students to provide them with this hands-on experience. The BCW believes that the Legislature should follow the example of other states by passing legislation that would provide tax incentives for preceptors to encourage them to accept students to ensure that the County remains a place where there is an abundance of primary and specialized healthcare professionals.

State (continued)

The BCW held a Single-Payer Health Insurance breakfast to alert businesses on the negative economic impact that the Single-Payer Health Insurance legislation would have. Leslie Moran, NY Health Plan Association; John Ravitz; Bill Hammond, Empire Center; former BCW Board Member Lynn Richmond, Montefiore Health System and BCW Board Member James Schutzer, JDM Benefits.



- ✦ The BCW continues to call for the adoption of strong transparency regulations for the Department of Financial Services (DFS) that sets the rates for the health insurance plans under the Health Exchange.
- ✦ The BCW **supports** the enactment of Medical Liability Tort Reform to rein in the costs of medical malpractice insurance.
- ✦ The BCW will **support** legislation that effectively addresses the rising costs of prescription drugs without price controls.
- ✦ The BCW has consistently **opposed any attempt to create a single-payer health insurance system** in New York State (New York Health Act S.3577/A.5248). The cost to implement the New York Health Act has already been documented. The increase to future New York State budgets would be catastrophic and would force the Legislature to have to close huge deficits by having to reduce funding in other important essential services. New York cannot afford and should not tear down its existing health care system that has already enrolled 4.8 million New Yorkers. Due to the implementation of the New York Health Exchange, New York currently covers 95% of its residents under a combination of private and public health plans.

The BCW urges the Legislature and Governor to improve the New York Health Exchange so that those New Yorkers who have not yet enrolled in the program have the opportunity to identify and select a health care plan that will work for themselves and their families. The unintended consequences that the passing of the New

Preparing New York State's students to acquire the skills needed to attend college and/or prepare them to enter the work force will continue to be a top priority for the BCW.

York Health Act will have to the economy of our state will jeopardize providing the quality health care that all New Yorkers deserve the right to have.



Education

Preparing New York State's students to acquire the skills needed to attend college and/or prepare them to enter the work force will continue to be a top priority for the BCW. Four years ago, the BCW joined a statewide coalition of civil rights, education, parent and business organizations to continue to engage in serious conversations on how schools can raise the achievement levels for their students in a responsible, reasonable and inclusive manner.

The BCW will continue to **advocate** that all changes in these areas be designed to increase parent confidence in the process, as well as get more feedback from teachers on how these new programs are implemented. Employers in Westchester County need to know that our education system is giving students the tools they need to compete and succeed in an increasingly competitive global market.

The BCW additionally:

- ✦ **Supports** legislation that improves access by increasing funding for AP, IB, and dual enrollment courses; provides families with early information on benefits of AP coursework; eliminates barriers to enrollment; and eliminates enrollment disparities.
- ✦ **Supports** resources to sustain and expand new and existing New York State P-TECH programs and similar career pathway-oriented secondary education programs.
- ✦ **Supports** maintaining high education standards and expanding STEM curriculum for career and college readiness.
- ✦ **Supports** increasing access to advanced coursework that is crucial for college and career preparation in school districts with limited resources, including Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment, and early college high school programs, all of which allow students to earn college credits in high school.



- ✦ **Supports** providing funding to ensure low-income students have access to cost-free AP exams and expand access to AP computer science courses.
- ✦ **Supports** a uniform AP credit policy for all public New York higher education institutions.
- ✦ **Supports** increasing the aid-eligible salary for Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) Career and Technical Education (CTE) instructors and increasing the amount of special services aid provided to the Big 5 School Districts for CTE programs.
- ✦ **Supports** continued funding for charter schools, including facility aid funding for charter schools outside New York City; and opposes further restrictions on the establishment of charter schools.

Higher Education

Having an educated workforce is critical to maintaining Westchester County's economic vitality and the BCW believes that higher education should be accessible and affordable in order to meet the needs of the many companies that call the Lower Hudson Valley home. To that end, the BCW believes the Legislature should improve the state's successful Tuition Assistance Program by increasing the minimum and maximum awards and permitting graduate students to participate in it. The Legislature should modify the Enhanced Tuition Awards Program to attract additional participants by removing government-imposed caps on tuition charges and residency and employment requirements. The Legislature should also maintain the Bundy Aid Program, a successful program that helps make college more affordable, and the Higher Education Capital Matching Grant Program, which

The BCW is proud of the work of the county's for-profit colleges and what they have accomplished and continue to accomplish.

creates jobs while simultaneously helping schools to modernize and enhance their facilities.

The BCW is concerned that the Governor's proposed For-Profit College Transparency and Accountability Initiative will hold Proprietary Colleges to higher standards than the other three sectors of higher education, namely SUNY, CUNY and Independent Not-for-Profits. While it was mentioned in the Governor's address, but not in his budget bills, the BCW is concerned that restrictions will result in the closure of Proprietary Colleges and decimate the for-profit sector (degree and non-degree schools) in New York. The BCW is proud of the work of Westchester's for-profit colleges and what they have accomplished and continue to accomplish in helping to educate Westchester's and New York States' future workforce. These institutions of higher education have a proven record of accomplishments that should not be questioned; they should not be penalized in any way. The BCW will be actively engaged as the dialogue continues on this issue.



Criminal Justice

Last year's state budget included a bail reform package that is **already** proving to be a contentious issue that will likely be revisited during the 2020 Legislative session. The reforms bar judges from imposing bail as a condition for release on most misdemeanors and non-violent felonies; and also included changes to speed up the evidentiary discovery process.

The intentions in passing the reforms last year were commendable, as economic status should not dictate whether someone stays behind bars pending trial. However, the decision to specify a limited number of offenses where judges can set bail or remand, and then require pretrial release for all other offenses, with no judicial discretion on defendant flight risk or potential danger to the community was a major error.

There are now cries that the reforms went too far and that judicial discretion is needed to assess whether a person is too dangerous to be released. As the legislative session gets underway, the BCW will be monitoring this issue closely as a flawed criminal justice system will impede economic development.

Federal

The BCW will continue to work with our Congressional delegation on numerous issues in 2020:

- ✦ The BCW has consistently urged Congress to adopt common-sense tax reform to simplify the process and lower rates for businesses and individuals. The tax reform bill that passed in December of 2017 tried to accomplish some of those goals, but unfortunately there are many areas of concern for New York state taxpayers. The new limits on state and local tax deductions will have a chilling effect on the state's economy and the BCW urges Congress to continue to monitor this fluid situation.
- ✦ The BCW **supports** investing in federal R&D programs that help businesses develop new technologies that then create new private sector jobs.
- ✦ The BCW once again calls on Congress to **reduce** federal regulatory burdens to ease bureaucracy with which businesses and nonprofit organizations alike continue to struggle.
- ✦ The BCW **urges** for additional funding for the STRANDED (Sensible, Timely Relief for America's Nuclear Districts) Act to assist municipalities and localities with the loss of property tax revenue following the closure of an electric generating facility.
- ✦ The BCW continues to **support** the reauthorization of the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, which provides an increased focus on the academic achievement of career and technical education students and strengthens the connections between secondary and postsecondary education.
- ✦ The BCW recognizes how important it is that Westchester County is home to more than a dozen colleges and universities. These schools admit students who take advantage of generous institutional aid packages and financial aid provided by New York State and the federal government. As Congress works to reauthorize the Higher Education Act, the BCW urges our elected officials to ensure that financial aid programs are strengthened so that a college education remains accessible and that a final bill promotes student choice, preserves the independence of accreditation, and does not include additional burdensome reporting requirements and unfunded mandates.

The BCW urges support for The Excellence in Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Expansion Act.

- ✦ Many of Westchester's colleges and universities engage in fundamental research and it is essential that Congress continue to appropriate funds that accomplish this goal, which spurs innovation and stimulates the economy.
- ✦ The debate over immigration reform is ongoing and as we enter the beginning of a Presidential election year, there are many candidates offering different viewpoints and platforms on this issue. The BCW advocates that politics should not get in the way of common sense policy and urges the federal government, and the candidates, to focus on reforms that protect our county's security, but not lose sight of the important role that immigrants have in creating economic prosperity for our country.
- ✦ Since launching in 2017, Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs) have dramatically increased access to comprehensive, community-based mental health and addiction treatment. The BCW urges support for The Excellence in Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Expansion Act (S. 824/ H.R. 1767), which would renew the CCBHC demonstration program in the original eight states for two years and expand it to 11 additional states. CCBHCs are crucial in ensuring that all people have timely access to high-quality and comprehensive behavioral health care.



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TOP This 550,000 sf apartment complex will be built on the site of a vacant corporate office building at Westchester Park Drive in Harrison with occupancy in 2022. The complex will feature 450 rental apartments, 6,000 sf of retail/ local service space, a fully enclosed parking garage with electric charging stations and a half-mile walking trail around the 10-acre property.

ABOVE Peekskill Central Fire Station at Main and South Broad Streets. Opened Fall, 2019. Consolidating the operations of five separate fire stations, allowing their alternative reuse and/or sale for private redevelopment.

COVER Downtown, New Rochelle.



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