

# 2015 Capital Region Business Advocacy Resource Guide

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CAPITAL REGION SMART



CAPITAL REGION SMART

## VISION

At the Center of New York's Tech Valley is the Capital Region, known for its thriving economy and vibrant quality of life.

## MISSION

Be a catalyst for growth and prosperity for our members and the Capital Region by providing leadership, advocacy and resources.

## LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY

Regional advancement: Be an impetus and resource to foster a regional perspective for the Capital Region community to realize its full potential.

Public policy: Be an advocate for policies and projects that will improve the business climate and enhance the economic vitality of the region.

Dear Valued Stakeholder:

Through engagement at all levels of government, the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber has established its reputation as the primary advocacy resource for our members, the community, and key decision-makers. In a concerted effort to promote policies and projects that will improve the business climate and enhance the economic vitality of the Capital Region, the Regional Chamber is pleased to present its 2015 Business Advocacy Resource Guide.

Within the Resource Guide you will find our Advocacy Agenda, which reflects both the diversity of the Regional Chamber's membership as well as the broad public policy issues confronting the Capital Region and New York State. You will also find a directory of elected officials, a session calendar and helpful suggestions when communicating with public officials. Throughout the legislative session, we will encourage pro-business initiatives and work against legislation that could be harmful to our community and its economy.

To help advocate or to discuss any public policy issues, large or small, please contact me by calling 518.431.1424 or emailing [marke@acchamber.org](mailto:marke@acchamber.org). Visit [www.CapitalRegionVoice.com](http://www.CapitalRegionVoice.com) for additional updates.

Thank you for working with us to secure the Capital Region's future!



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark N. Eagan". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Mark N. Eagan, CCE  
President and CEO



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# CONTENTS

- 4 .....2015 Capital Region Business Advocacy Agenda**
- Taxes/Regulations
  - Employment
  - Downtown
  - Healthcare
  - Education/Workforce Development
  - Transportation/Infrastructure
- 9 .....Tips for Communicating with Elected Officials**
- 11 .....2015 Capital Region Legislative Directory**
- 15 .....2015 New York State Legislative Session Calendar**
- 16 .....Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber Government Affairs Committee**
- 17 .....Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber Board of Directors**

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# 2015 CAPITAL REGION BUSINESS ADVOCACY AGENDA

## **Taxes/Regulations**

Continue the emphasis on making New York State and the Capital Region more competitive through mandate relief, responsible stewardship of local finances, and reducing state and local regulatory and tax burdens.

- Support broad-based tax reform
  - Reduce burdensome, outdated and complex business taxes
  - Accelerate estate tax reductions
  - Urge significant property tax relief and that municipalities keep budgets within two percent property tax cap
- Oppose prevailing wage mandates on private projects that receive public funds or financial assistance
- Support business-backed tort reform legislation
  - Amend the Scaffold Law, which imposes absolute liability on employers and property owners when construction workers are injured in elevation-related accidents, regardless of whether the worker refused to use safety equipment or was impaired by drugs or alcohol. This archaic law, long-since repealed in every other state, adds thousands of dollars to the cost of new buildings and prevents economic growth
- Support further reforms and improvements of the workers' compensation system such as modernizing the rating system through which schedule loss-of-use awards are determined by updating applicable medical treatment guidelines and eliminating or modifying the indexing of maximum weekly benefits to control growing program costs

- Oppose unfunded state mandates on local governments
  - Repeal Wicks Law, which subjects school districts and other local governments to separate plumbing, heating, ventilation, air conditioning and electrical contracts, significantly increasing project expenses from 8 to 30 percent
- Support Taylor Law reforms to encourage public employers and employees to work together to achieve labor contracts that are equitable.

## Employment

Growing private sector jobs is key to the Capital Region's economic future. Regulations have a significant impact on a company's competitive position in attracting and retaining high-quality personnel. We must encourage state and federal governments to pursue pro-employment policies.

- Support efforts to strengthen the Region's ties to the advanced materials, bio/life sciences, clean-tech/energy, homeland security/defense, information technology and nanotechnology/semiconductor industries
- Support federal immigration reform
  - Increase the availability of temporary skilled-worker (H-1B) visas
  - Increase the availability of permanent-resident visas (green cards) for STEM graduates and workers
  - Create new-startup visas for immigrant entrepreneurs who launch businesses in the U.S. and meet certain employment and financing goals

- Support the expansion of tourism sector to expand economic opportunities
- Support measures that would bring the unemployment insurance trust fund into solvency by achieving timely and affordable repayments. Avoid shifting additional tax burdens to stable employers.

## **Downtown**

Thriving downtowns and urban business districts are essential to the long-term economic health of the Capital Region.

- Support enhanced historic rehabilitation tax credits
- Adopt an asbestos remediation tax credit to promote the redevelopment and reuse of existing underutilized properties
- Extend the Brownfield remediation and redevelopment tax credits; reform the Brownfield program to include certain superfund and RCRA sites and to expedite review and approval of remediation projects
- Support integrated policies that support urban redevelopment, including transit and mobility options that include bike and pedestrian enhancements
- Ensure the availability of capital from both conventional and unconventional sources to attract investment for housing, retail, business expansion, mixed-use and other downtown projects.

## **Healthcare**

As healthcare costs and confusion rise, many employers and working families continue to experience difficulties seeking coverage. The Regional Chamber remains a trusted source for health insurance, meeting the needs and seeking reforms for individuals and small businesses.

- Support affordable and comprehensive access to health insurance and a robust healthcare system without imposing new mandates and/or taxes on businesses or individuals
- Support reforming the medical tort system to make costs more affordable and predictable.

## **Education/Workforce Development**

A skilled workforce is critical to regional job growth and prosperity. Quality education must be available to students and workers at all levels so they well equipped to enter and re-enter the job market.

- Support policies that expand access to high-quality workforce training programs and early learning programs
- Support education models to better prepare students for entry into career and/or college
  - Support efforts to improve science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education
  - Support expanded access to innovative education models and multiple pathways to graduation
- Continue to support New York's Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and assessments
- Support efforts to address teacher-quality and retention concerns
- Support evaluating the government employment and training system to better align resources for employers and job seekers
- Support increased funding for community colleges toward customized industry training and equipment.



## Transportation/Infrastructure

Quality infrastructure is essential for all businesses and residents. Without the proper investment, our economic stability, potential for job growth and competitiveness are threatened.

- Support expansion of Bus Plus (Bus Rapid Transit) in the Capital Region
- Advocate for reconstruction of Exit 4, providing direct access from the Northway/I-87 to the Albany International Airport
- Remain a leading advocate for increased flight service and competitive pricing to/from the Albany International Airport
- Support funding to reduce congestion within the Region's passenger rail system, as well as the creation of express trains from Albany to New York City
- Support upgrading the state's high-voltage electric transmission system in a manner consistent with wholesale energy markets to make pricing more competitive in upstate communities
- Support the finalization of comprehensive regulations and performance criteria for the use of horizontal hydraulic fracturing which will support natural gas development, resulting in increased jobs and tax revenue for New York State.

# TIPS

## for Communicating with Elected Officials

- Be brief. A legislator's time is limited. So is yours.
- Be appreciative. Acknowledge previous support and current action.
- Be specific. Don't be general.
- Be informative and factual. Give reasons and provide the supporting materials.
- Be courteous and polite. Treat him or her as you would want to be treated. Ask for a specific action without being demanding or threatening.
- Be reasonable. Remember it's all right to have a difference of opinion.
- Be realistic. Issues may need to be resolved through compromise.
- Be understanding. Put yourself in the legislator's position to try and understand his or her concerns and goals.
- Be knowledgeable and evaluate issues. The introduction of a legislative bill doesn't mean that it will become law. Don't get too excited about it until you've learned the who, what and why of it.

# Ways to Communicate to Your Elected Officials

## Letters

Letters are still the primary means to communicate with public officials. They are read and elicit responses. Letters can be informal or formal, typewritten or handwritten. Due to security issues, letters to federal officials, in particular, may take a longer period of time to reach them.

## Office Visits

Call in advance to set up an appointment and explain the nature of your visit. Do your homework and make sure you understand the official's position on a particular issue. You may consider inviting other individuals from like companies with similar concerns, and don't be bashful about inviting the official to your place of business. Elected officials rely heavily on their staff for guidance, information, research and more, so it is important to get to know their staff.

## Telephone Calls

Always be concise, and discuss only one issue per telephone call. If the issue is in regard to a particular bill, provide the bill number and state your position. Explain how the bill impacts your business and why you support or oppose it. Make phone calls sparingly.

## Email

Depending on the legislator, email can be an effective way to communicate when issues are time-sensitive and the need for action is critical. Keep your message short and to one screen, so the official doesn't have to scroll his/her way through the text. Always provide complete contact information in your email, including mailing address, phone and fax numbers and email addresses.

# 2015 Capital Region Legislative Directory

## FEDERAL OFFICIALS

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### U.S. SENATOR

#### **KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND**

478 Russell Senate Bldg. | Washington, DC 20510  
202.224.4451 | [www.gillibrand.senate.gov](http://www.gillibrand.senate.gov)

### U.S. SENATOR

#### **CHARLES SCHUMER**

313 Hart Senate Bldg. | Washington, DC 20510  
202.224.6542 | [www.schumer.senate.gov](http://www.schumer.senate.gov)

### CONGRESSMAN

**CHRIS GIBSON** | 19<sup>th</sup> Congressional District  
1708 Longworth HOB | Washington, DC 20515  
202.225.5614 | [www.gibson.house.gov](http://www.gibson.house.gov)

### CONGRESSWOMAN

**ELISE STEFANIK** | 21<sup>st</sup> Congressional District  
512 Cannon HOB | Washington, DC 20515  
202.225.4611 | [www.stefanik.house.gov](http://www.stefanik.house.gov)

### CONGRESSMAN

**PAUL TONKO** | 20<sup>th</sup> Congressional District  
2463 Rayburn | Washington, DC 20515  
202.225.5076 | [www.tonko.house.gov](http://www.tonko.house.gov)

## NEW YORK STATE OFFICIALS

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### GOVERNOR

#### **ANDREW M. CUOMO**

State Capitol | Albany, NY 12224  
518.474.8390 | [www.governor.ny.gov](http://www.governor.ny.gov)

### ATTORNEY GENERAL

#### **ERIC T. SCHNEIDERMAN**

State Capitol | Albany, NY 12224  
518.474.7330 | [www.oag.state.ny.us](http://www.oag.state.ny.us)

### COMPTROLLER

#### **THOMAS P. DINAPOLI**

110 State Street | Albany, NY 12236  
518.474.4044 | [www.osc.state.ny.us](http://www.osc.state.ny.us)

# 2015 Capital Region Legislative Directory

## NEW YORK STATE SENATE

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### SENATOR

**NEIL BRESLIN** | 44<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
Albany Office | Capitol Rm. 414 | Albany, NY 12247  
518.455.2225 | breslin@nysenate.gov

### SENATOR

**HUGH FARLEY** | 49<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
Albany Office | LOB Rm. 711 | Albany, NY 12247  
518.455.2181 | farley@nysenate.gov

### SENATOR

**KATHLEEN A. MARCHIONE** | 43<sup>rd</sup> Senate District  
Albany Office | LOB Rm. 306 | Albany, NY 12247  
518.455.2381 | marchione@nysenate.gov

### SENATOR

**GEORGE AMEDORE** | 46<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
Albany Office | LOB Rm. 311 | Albany, NY 12247  
518.455.2350 | amedore@nysenate.gov



# 2015 Capital Region Legislative Directory

## NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY

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### ASSEMBLYMEMBER

**PATRICIA FAHY** | 109<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Albany Office | LOB Rm. 452 | Albany, NY 12248  
518.455.4178 | fahyp@assembly.state.ny.us

### ASSEMBLYMEMBER

**PETER LOPEZ** | 102<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District  
Albany Office | LOB Rm. 402 | Albany, NY 12248  
518.455.5363 | lopezp@assembly.state.ny.us

### ASSEMBLYMEMBER

**JOHN T. MCDONALD, III** | 108<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Albany Office | LOB Rm. 417 | Albany, NY 12248  
518.455.4474 | mcdonaldj@assembly.state.ny.us

### ASSEMBLYMEMBER

**STEVEN F. MCLAUGHLIN** | 107<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Albany Office | LOB Rm. 533 | Albany, NY 12248  
518.455.5777 | mclaughlins@assembly.state.ny.us



## 2015 Capital Region Legislative Directory

### ASSEMBLYMEMBER

**ANGELO SANTABARBARA** | 111<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Albany Office | LOB Rm. 833 | Albany, NY 12248  
518.455.5197 | santabarbaraa@assembly.state.ny.us

### ASSEMBLYMEMBER

**DANIEL STEC** | 114<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Albany Office | LOB Rm. 940 | Albany, NY 12248  
518.455.5565 | stecd@assembly.state.ny.us

### ASSEMBLYMEMBER

**PHIL STECK** | 110<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Albany Office | LOB Rm. 219 | Albany, NY 12248  
518.455.5931 | steckp@assembly.state.ny.us

### ASSEMBLYMEMBER

**JAMES TEDISCO** | 112<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Albany Office | LOB Rm. 404 | Albany, NY 12248  
518.455.5772 | tediscoj@assembly.state.ny.us

### ASSEMBLYMEMBER

**CARRIE WOERNER** | 113<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
*\*permanent office info not available at time of print*  
[www.assembly.state.ny.us/mem/Carrie-Woerner](http://www.assembly.state.ny.us/mem/Carrie-Woerner)  
woerner@assembly.state.ny.us





# New York State Legislative Session Calendar



## January - June 2015

The New York State Legislative Session Calendar establishes a schedule for the 2015 Legislative Session and provides dates important to the legislative process. The Session Calendar is intended to afford Members flexibility in conducting legislative business in Albany and planning activities within their home districts. The Session Calendar will foster orderly and timely consideration of legislation. Unforeseen events may require modification of the Session Calendar.

January						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

- January 7** 2015 Legislative Session convenes
- January 12** Start of sessions
- January 19** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- January 21** Governor's State-of-the-State Address
- February 1** Final Day for Submission of Executive Budget
- February 16** Presidents' Day
- April 1** Beginning of new Fiscal Year
- May 25** Memorial Day observed

Indicates session day

Indicates legislative activity/budget hearing



## GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The Government Affairs Committee works with the Chamber's professional staff to help identify and analyze issues, define objectives and make policy recommendations to the Board of Directors.

### 2015 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Chair: Marcia White**

Saratoga Performing Arts Center

**Rich Barlette**

NYISO

**John P. Calareso Jr., Esq.**

The Calareso Law Firm, PLLC

**Nancy Carey Cassidy**

Picotte Companies

**Bob Davey**

TD Bank

**Steve Ferraro**

SaxBST

**Kim Fine**

Albany Medical Center

**Peter Gannon**

Arsenal Business & Technology Partnership

**Neil Levine**

Whiteman Osterman & Hanna

**David Mahoney**

Noble Gas Solutions

**Kevin J. McCoy**

Marvin & Company, CPAs, PC

**David W. Meyers, Esq.**

Meyers & Meyers, LLP

**Ann C. Moynihan**

Documentation Strategies, Inc.

**John Mucha**

Time Warner Cable

**Maureen J. O'Brien-Thornton**

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

**Kevin O'Connor**

FirstLight Fiber

**Richard P. Sleasman**

CBRE – Albany

**Michael B. Whalen, Jr.**

M&T Bank - Albany

# ALBANY-COLONIE REGIONAL CHAMBER

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Hudson Valley Community College

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*Managing Partner*

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Bechtel Marine Propulsion Corporation

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*President*

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*Principal*

Bradley Agency, LLC

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*President*

Latino Publishing & Communications

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NBT Bank, NA

**William Lia Jr.***President*

Lia Auto Group, Inc. / Vent Fitness

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Pinnacle Human Resources, LLC

**Ed Mitzen***President*

Fingerpaint

**Philip Morris***Chief Executive Officer*

Proctors

**Stephen Obermayer***Chief Financial Officer*

BBL Companies

**Susan Radzyninski***Director of Marketing*

EYP Architecture &amp; Engineering, PC

**James Reed, MD***President and CEO*

St. Peter's Health Partners

**Michael Russo***U.S. Government Relations & Regulatory Affairs*

GlobalFoundries

**Robert Schofield***Partner*

Whiteman Osterman &amp; Hanna, LLP

**Dean Skarlis***President*

College Advisors of New York, Inc.

**Paula Stopera***President and Chief Executive Officer*

CAP COM Federal Credit Union

**Marguerite Vanden Wyngaard, PhD***Superintendent of Schools*

City School District of Albany

**Marcia White***President & Executive Director*

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**Charles Williams***Vice President*

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