



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

State Senators Mayer and Harckham Hold Food Drive in Bedford

PETE HARCKHAM July 26, 2020

| ISSUE: **CORONAVIRUS; COVID-19; FOOD BANKS, HUNGER PREVENTION, FOOD INSECURITY**



Bedford, NY – New York State Senators Shelley Mayer and Pete Harckham held a food drive yesterday at Fox Lane Middle School in Bedford, NY and collected close to 1,500 pounds of food, which was donated to the Community Center of Northern Westchester and the Antioch Baptist Church of Bedford Hills.

A number of elected officials from around the county participated in the food drive as well and showed their support for Mayer and Harckham's effort, including County Executive George Latimer, County Legislator Kitley Covill, Town of Bedford Supervisor Chris Burdick,

Town of Lewisboro Supervisor Peter Parsons, Bedford Town Council Member MaryAnn Carr and Lewisboro Town Council Member Jennifer Castelhana. The Bedford Teachers Association partnered in the event and supplied volunteers.

“Fox Lane is in the northern part of my district, but people need food everywhere in Westchester,” said Mayer. “I truly appreciated seeing how people stepped up and how generous they can be.”

“This community really responded to the call,” said Harckham. “Increased food insecurity is an unfortunate by-product of the pandemic. There are people who never needed help from food pantries before, or who aren’t eligible for any government benefits. No one should go hungry in the Hudson Valley, and it’s heartening to see folks wanting to help each other.”

Harckham has held five food drives in the past few weeks—one each in Sleepy Hollow, Peekskill, Mount Kisco, Mohegan Lake and Brewster—and collected about 30,000 pounds of food items and over \$9,500 in cash donations so far. Hundreds of residents from the 40th Senate District have volunteered to help at the food drives as well—“a real grassroots show of support,” said Harckham.

Mayer has participated and contributed to food drives and distributions throughout the 37th Senate District, from Port Chester to New Rochelle to Yonkers and Mamaroneck—“and will continue to do so,” she said.

The food drive in Bedford was a “Drive-Thru, Drop Off” event. No food was distributed; it was only collected. Volunteers wore protective face masks when collecting bags and boxes of food from the vehicle, and there was no need for drivers to get out of the vehicles.

“I was so thrilled that the community turned out to support families who are struggling to put food on their tables by making these donations,” said Clare Murray, executive director of

the Community Center of Northern Westchester. “Also, a big thank you to the many incredible volunteers who pooled their efforts to help us collect the food and pack it all up.”

Murray reported that the Community Center of Northern Westchester’s food pantry is providing food assistance to over 1,200 families each now compared with 600 families a month at this time last year.