



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

## **Mayer, Otis Push for Immediate Relief for Hurricane Ida Victims**

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(Albany, NY) – Ahead of the April 1 budget deadline, New York State Senator Shelley B. Mayer and Assemblyman Steve Otis urged the Legislature to pass two new bills they sponsor which would create a “Hurricane Ida Relief Fund” and enhance the State Building Code to limit future flooding caused by natural disasters.

If passed, [S.8135](#)/A.9249 would create the “Hurricane Ida Relief Fund.” Under this legislation, the fund would provide up to \$50 million in financial assistance to individuals, households, and business owners who suffered Ida-related damages that were not compensated or reimbursed by FEMA or by insurance. Applicants would be able to receive up to \$10,000.

The other bill, [S.7582](#)/A.9216 would ensure threats in coastal and flood-prone areas are accounted for by amending the State’s Building Code to address the increased likelihood of flooding and other coastal hazards due to climate change. The bill would also add the Director of the Office of Emergency Management and a technical expert in flood mitigation to the State Building Codes Council.

**Senator Shelley B. Mayer said:** “Our community was devastated by Hurricane Ida in September. We must be more proactive in preventing flooding in the future and immediately address the damages of individuals and businesses who did not receive sufficient aid from insurance or FEMA. It is our responsibility to ensure the voices of our constituents, who were so very badly impacted, are heard, and that relief is provided to them while we address systemic climate challenges.”

**Assemblyman Steve Otis said:** “We have been hard at work identifying existing federal and state programs to assist with flood recovery, prevention and mitigation. The goal of these proposals is to provide additional tools in the form of state assistance and building code resilience.”

Senator Mayer and Assemblyman Otis are also working together to push for a new state grant program to provide assistance to municipalities to help fund stormwater projects. Both legislators agreed that particularly after the impact of Ida, investment in stormwater projects is an essential investment in all of our communities. The program is included in the Environmental Bond Act proposal which will be before the voters in November.

**Westchester County Executive George Latimer said:** “Each year, we are seeing the deleterious impact that ‘once in a hundred’ year storms are having on our community. It is clear that these storms are not just rare phenomenon, but rather the real time impact of Climate Change. Both of these bills will provide much needed relief to those impacted most. First, it will help speed up the Ida recovery efforts from that storm which devastated our region. Secondly, moving forward we must have greater planning foresight to minimize a storm’s impact and this is a major step toward that goal. I commend Senator Mayer and Assemblyman Otis for their efforts to advance both of these causes.”

**Village of Mamaroneck Mayor Tom Murphy said:** “I am so grateful that Senator Mayer and Assemblyman Otis are sponsoring this much needed legislation. This law will help long suffering residents of Mamaroneck protect their property and lives against future disasters. Mamaroneck is lucky to have representatives in Albany who always have our backs!”

**Village of Port Chester Mayor Luis A. Marino said:** “As the Mayor of the Village of Port Chester, I am incredibly supportive of the Hurricane Ida Relief Fund Bill as introduced by Senator Mayer and Assemblyman Otis. Our residents and local

businesses were impacted severely by Hurricane Ida and any opportunity for funding that can be made available through the State of New York to help restore commerce and community for our people in this village is vital.”

**Village of Rye Brook Mayor Paul S. Rosenberg said:** “Due to climate change, severe storms and flooding is becoming the new normal. We are so lucky to have Shelley and Steve as advocates for Rye Brook in Albany. They have been working tirelessly to help our residents get the assistance that they need.”

**Save the Sound New York Ecological Restoration Program Manager Katie Freidman said:** “Even as we are still recovering from Hurricane Ida, we need to be forward-thinking about investing in nature-based resilience to keep Long Island Sound communities safe from increased precipitation, sea-level rise, and other effects of climate change. We also need to protect and restore ecosystems that provide critical flood protection to New Yorkers. These bills will support communities impacted by storms and help us make thoughtful decisions about how, where, and what we build as we focus on how our natural and built environments interact.”

**Sustainable Westchester Executive Director Nina Orville said:** “Building Codes should reflect anticipated conditions that structures will exist under during their decades of useful life. Flooding is a frequent occurrence in many coastal areas in Westchester already and with sea levels projected to rise by a foot by 2050, it is critical that building codes reflect those projections to appropriately protect residents and communities.”

**Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter Conservation Director Roger Downs said:** “No one should ever drown in their own home. And yet such tragedies are becoming more commonplace in New York as increasingly severe flooding events and storm surges inundate our communities. The Sierra Club applauds Senator Mayer and Assemblyman Otis for advancing legislation that will protect New Yorkers from future floods by not only making our buildings more resilient to the climate crisis, but by tackling the root causes of flooding, which include protecting wetlands and other natural infrastructure.”