

VICTORIA

GU

State Senate

— District **38** —

## October Updates & Commuter Rail Forum

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Although we're not officially "in session", we (legislators and advocacy groups) still have meetings about bills, and I made my way up to Providence to research some bill ideas that people in my district brought up over the last year (there are 45 of them!). If you have any ideas on what we should work on, feel free to reach out to me! Keep in mind the bill deadlines are mid-February each year.



## Let's Talk about Commuter Rail for South County

Alex Berardo (RI Association of  
Railroad Passengers)  
Zell Steever (Groton Resiliency and  
Sustainability Task Force)  
Westerly Town Officials TBA

Plus, a survey on improving 95X  
bus service (Westerly/Providence)

Wed Nov 8th, 6-7:30pm  
Westerly Education Center  
23 Friendship St, Westerly  
RSVP: [bit.ly/westerly-rail](https://bit.ly/westerly-rail)

# Commuter Rail Forum

Time/Date: Nov 8th, 6-7:30pm

Location: Wilcox Library - Auditorium (44 Broad St, Westerly)

In the last ten months I've had people in the area reach out to me and say they had to turn down a job or limit their job search because of lack of access to a car. Join me and the RI Association of Railroad Passengers for a town hall meeting to discuss Connecticut's latest study on connecting their commuter rail to Westerly Train Station. This expansion could help people commute to work, reduce congestion, and strengthen the downtown business district.

RSVP and submit questions here: [bit.ly/westerly-rail](https://bit.ly/westerly-rail)

**Plus, attendees will get a chance to fill out a RIPTA survey for improving the Bus 95X trip schedule (Westerly/Providence with a possible new connection in Warwick/CCRI)**

RSVP to Forum



## Mental Health Town Hall Recap

Earlier this month, I spoke at the 2nd mental health forum hosted by Mary Scialabba. We appreciate people coming to share their experiences. The town of Westerly announced that 68 Pierce St will be a resource center staffed part time by a Gateway mental health worker (I'm told Tuesdays 4-8pm and they will also respond to email [resourcecenter@westerlyri.gov](mailto:resourcecenter@westerlyri.gov)), and 988 is a 24/7 crisis line. Follow along with more news and resources at [Westerly Mental Health Resource Center](#)

## In the News

### Update on Watch Hill Lighthouse

Representative Spears, Representative Cortvriend, and I received a lot of correspondence from our districts and people concerned about the Watch Hill Lighthouse transfer, so we had a meeting with Senator Reed's office last month to check up on it. Here are two articles that summarized what we learned:

[https://www.thewesterlysun.com/news/westerly/road-research-will-precede-watch-hill-lighthouse-transfer-reed-backs-extra-time/article\\_ce7687e6-6ebb-11ee-bfc3-cfc2731c4f3c.html](https://www.thewesterlysun.com/news/westerly/road-research-will-precede-watch-hill-lighthouse-transfer-reed-backs-extra-time/article_ce7687e6-6ebb-11ee-bfc3-cfc2731c4f3c.html)

<https://thepublicsradio.org/article/watch-hill-lighthouse-transfer-on-hold-now-amid-questions-over-shoreline-access>



## Let's cap off 2023 with a fundraiser + holiday party!

It's hard to believe that it's been a year since the last election. Let's all get together again and celebrate the highs and lows of 2023. This fundraiser will be in Westerly near the Charlestown border, and the location will be provided after you go to [actblue.com/donate/gu-dec2023](https://actblue.com/donate/gu-dec2023)

Proceeds will go to Friends of Victoria Gu, for the 2024 election.

## Past Meetings / Events



## Bradford Community Cookout

Stopped by the Bradford community cookout and the food pantry (open Saturday mornings, 70 Bowling Lane, Bradford RI). Great to see the neighbors and we appreciate the outreach efforts by Westerly Police Department to build relationships in the community





## Sunday Fundays

For several Sundays in the fall and spring, we've enjoyed a block party of sorts in downtown Westerly (music, free mini golf for kids, etc), courtesy of the [Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce](#). Two Sundays ago, lion dancers performed in the street to celebrate Koi Restaurant's 10th anniversary!



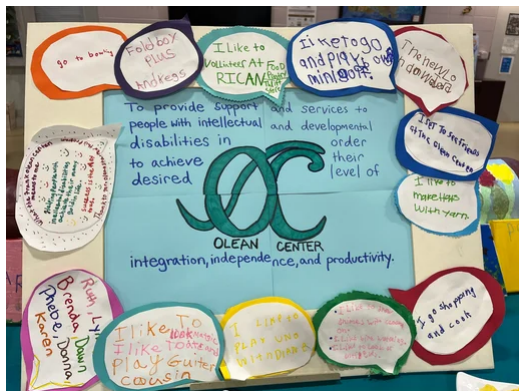
## Atlantis Rising

Spent part of the long weekend at [Atlantis Rising International Sand Sculpture Competition](#)! This one on the right reminds me of one of my favorite kids' book series. Props to the artists and South County Tourism Council.



## Pushing for Commuter Rail

In September, I joined over a dozen other advocates from the Westerly area to speak in favor of bringing Connecticut's Shoreline East commuter rail to Westerly.





## Direct Support Professionals (DSP's) Week at the Olean Center

In September I joined the [Frank Olean Center](#) to recognize Direct Support Professionals (DSP's) Week. DSP's make a difference every day in the lives of people with disabilities. I've talked to a number of people who've had a DSP help them or their kids navigate school, work opportunities, get transportation, and so much more. Thank you to all the direct support professionals, for all the ways you help.

## Upcoming Events / Places I'll Be

- Mon Nov 6th 12pm: I'll be a guest judge at the RISD ADU Design Competition (169 Weybosset St, Room 103, Providence)
- Mon Nov 13th 7pm: I'll be joining a Charlestown Town Council meeting to hear about any priorities they would like the state legislature to help with
- Wed Nov 15th 8am: My usual monthly conversation with Frank Prosnitz on WBLQ Radio (1230AM).
- Fri Nov 17th 8:30am: South County Hospital Presentation to local legislators
- Mon Nov 20th 5pm: Ribbon Cutting to celebrate the expansion of Wood River Health in their Hope Valley location.
- Commission Meetings: I'll continue visiting some local town commissions to keep up to date with what they're planning and share any relevant state resources. If you'd like me to join a meeting, please reach out!

[victoria4ri@gmail.com](mailto:victoria4ri@gmail.com)

### Erika Niedowski Memorial Electric Bicycle Rebate Program

This program is in memory of Erika Niedowski in honor of a dedicated public servant, journalist and clean energy advocate. She passed away in 2020.

An electric bike can take you farther and faster than a conventional bike, while still providing exercise and the exhilaration of biking.

The Erika Niedowski Memorial Electric Bicycle rebate helps increase access to zero emission electric bicycles, making them more affordable and accessible to Rhode Islanders.



# Programs You Can Apply For

Exciting e-bike rebates announced. Apply before they run out! In addition to being fun to ride, e-bikes have a lot of potential for solving what's called "first-and-last-mile problem" for commuters - you could ride one to the nearest bus stop or train and carry it with you on the bus/train, then bike to your final destination.

e-Bike Rebates:

<https://drive.ri.gov/erika-niedowski-memorial-electric-bicycle-rebate-program>

EV Rebates:

<https://drive.ri.gov/ev-programs/drive-ev>

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