

8/1/18-WANT TO KNOW THE CONDITION OF NEW YORK'S ROADS AND BRIDGES? THEN YOU'RE OUT OF LUCK. THE CUOMO ADMINISTRATION IS SUPPOSED TO ISSUE AN ANNUAL REPORT RATING THE STATE'S ROADS AND BRIDGES, BUT FOR THE SECOND YEAR IN A ROW THEY'RE REFUSING TO DO SO. THE COUNTY BY COUNTY BREAKDOWN WAS PUT INTO PLACE JUST TWO YEARS AGO AS PART OF A WIDE RANGING AGREEMENT ON INFRASTRUCTURE SPENDING. SO FAR THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE HASN'T EXPLAINED WHY THEY'RE IGNORING THE LAW.

8/3/18-YOU COULD SOON BE ENTITLED TO THREE MONTHS OF PAID LEAVE FOR A DEATH IN THE FAMILY. A BILL CURRENTLY SITTING ON GOVERNOR CUOMO'S DESK WOULD EXPAND NEW YORK'S PAID FAMILY LEAVE PROGRAM TO INCLUDE THE LOSS OF A CHILD, SPOUSE, DOMESTIC PARTNER, PARENT, GRANDPARENT, OR GRANDCHILD. SUPPORTERS SAY THE MOVE IS NECESSARY TO HELP PEOPLE RECOVER FROM THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE. IF THE GOVERNOR SIGNS THE MEASURE NEW YORK WOULD BECOME JUST THE THIRD STATE TO MANDATE PAID BEREAVEMENT LEAVE.

8/3/18-NEW YORK HAS BEGUN THE PROCESS OF LEGALIZING RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA. GOVERNOR CUOMO MADE THE ANNOUNCEMENT YESTERDAY, SAYING A WORKING GROUP COMPOSED OF HEALTH OFFICIALS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT HAS STARTED DEVELOPING LEGISLATION. THAT FOLLOWS A REPORT LAST MONTH FROM THE STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT THAT RECOMMENDED LEGALIZING THE POSSESSION, USE, AND SALE OF MARIJUANA. THE NEW PANEL'S LEGISLATION COULD BE APPROVED AS EARLY AS NEXT YEAR.

8/6/18-HEALTH INSURANCE RATES ON NEW YORK'S STATE EXCHANGE ARE SET TO JUMP A WHOPPING 8.6 PERCENT NEXT YEAR. THAT'S THE AVERAGE INCREASE APPROVED BY THE STATE'S INSURANCE COMMISSION IN THE LATEST ROUND OF PRICE ADJUSTMENTS. BUT SOME LOCAL PLANS WILL RISE EVEN MORE. THAT INCLUDES FIDELIS, WHICH HAD A NEARLY 14 PERCENT INCREASE APPROVED BY REGULATORS. OFFICIALS SAY RISING MEDICAL AND PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS ARE DRIVING THE PRICE HIKES, WHICH ARE SOME OF THE LARGEST IN THE ENTIRE NATION.

8/7/18-IF YOU SWEAR YOUR POWER BILL GROWS EVERY MONTH, YOU'RE RIGHT. NEW YORK RESIDENTS ARE NOW PAYING MORE FOR ELECTRICITY THAN ANYONE ELSE IN THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES. THE ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION SAYS THE AVERAGE PRICE PER KILOWATT HOUR IS 20-POINT-62 CENTS. THAT'S AN INCREASE OF OVER TWO CENTS IN JUST THE LAST YEAR. JUST ACROSS THE STATE BORDER IN PENNSYLVANIA RESIDENTS ARE PAYING JUST OVER THIRTEEN CENTS, AND WASHINGTON STATE HAS AN AVERAGE PRICE OF NINE CENTS A KILOWATT HOUR.

8/8/18-PRESIDENT TRUMP IS COMING TO UTICA. OFFICIALS WITH THE WHITE HOUSE CONFIRMED THE VISIT YESTERDAY. THE PRESIDENT WAS ALREADY SCHEDULED TO FLY IN TO FORT DRUM ON MONDAY TO SIGN THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT. AFTER THAT HE'LL REPORTEDLY BE ATTENDING A PRIVATE FUNDRAISER FOR CONGRESSWOMAN CLAUDIA TENNEY. IT'S THE FIRST VISIT TO THE CITY BY A PRESIDENT IN SEVENTY YEARS. THE EXACT LOCATION OF THE EVENT HASN'T BEEN ANNOUNCED. TENNEY IS BEING CHALLENGED BY STATE ASSEMBLYMAN ANTHONY BRINDISI.

8/8/18-THE STATE GAMING COMMISSION IS REPORTEDLY CLOSE TO RELEASING REGULATIONS FOR SPORTS BETTING IN NEW YORK. OFFICIALS SAY THE MEASURE WOULD ALLOW PROFESSIONAL SPORTS BOOKS AT ALL FOUR OF NEW YORK'S LICENSED CASINOS. THAT COMES AFTER A MAY DECISION BY THE SUPREME COURT LEGALIZING SPORTS BETTING. IF THE STATE MOVES FORWARD WITH THE PROPOSAL IT COULD BE A BOON FOR THE AREA THANKS TO THE

STATE'S GAMBLING COMPACT WITH THE ONEIDA INDIAN NATION. THAT AGREEMENT GAVE THE TRIBE EXCLUSIVE GAMBLING RIGHTS TO A TEN COUNTY AREA.

8/9/18-UTICA RESIDENTS COULD VOTE REIMPOSE TERM LIMITS IN THIS FALL'S ELECTION. OR, MAYBE NOT. LAST NIGHT THE CITY'S COMMON COUNCIL VOTED UNANIMOUSLY AGAINST A MEASURE TO CUT TERM LIMITS FROM 12 TO 8 YEARS. SUPPORTERS HAD GATHERED ENOUGH SIGNATURES TO PUT THE MEASURE BEFORE THE COUNCIL, BUT THEY ACTUALLY WANTED A NO VOTE. THEY SAY RESIDENTS CAN NOW GATHER ANOTHER ROUND OF SIGNATURES TO PUT THE REFERENDUM TO A PUBLIC VOTE. BUT THE CITY'S ATTORNEY SAYS THERE ISN'T ENOUGH TIME FOR THAT TO HAPPEN.

8/9/18-IS THE REPAIR SHOP FIXING YOUR CAR LEGIT? THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE THE ANSWER IS NO. AN AUDIT FROM THE STATE COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE FOUND THAT CLOSE TO A QUARTER OF THE REPAIR SHOPS OPERATING IN NEW YORK WEREN'T PROPERLY LICENSED OR REGISTERED. THAT INCLUDES MANY THAT DISPLAY THE FAMILIAR GREEN D-M-V SIGNS SAYING THEY'RE REGISTERED REPAIR SHOPS. INVESTIGATORS FOUND MANY OF THE SIGNS EXPIRED YEARS AGO, AND SOME WERE OUTRIGHT FORGERIES USING FAKE REGISTRATION NUMBERS.

8/9/18-WILL PRESIDENT TRUMP HOLD A RALLY AT GRIFFIS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON MONDAY? THAT'S THE RUMOR FLOATING AROUND ON SOCIAL MEDIA LAST NIGHT. SO FAR HE'S ONLY OFFICIALLY CONFIRMED TO BE ATTENDING A FUNDRAISER FOR CONGRESSWOMAN CLAUDIA TENNEY. TICKETS TO THAT EVENT, BEING HELD AT AN UNDISCLOSED LOCATION IN UTICA, START AT ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS. BUT SOME SUPPORTERS OF THE PRESIDENT ON FACEBOOK SAY HE'LL ALSO BE MAKING A PUBLIC APPEARANCE AS PART OF THE VISIT.

8/10/18-NEW YORK STATE NEEDS TO GO GREEN. THAT WAS THE MESSAGE FROM HOWIE HAWKINS, THE GREEN CANDIDATE FOR GOVERNOR. HE WAS IN UTICA YESTERDAY TO TOUT HIS CANDIDACY WITH A NUMBER OF APPEARANCES ACROSS THE AREA. HE'S THE FOURTH GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE TO VISIT THIS ELECTION YEAR, COMING AFTER LIBERTARIAN LARRY SHARPE, DEMOCRAT CYNTHIA NIXON, AND REPUBLICAN MARC MOLINARO. THE ONLY CANDIDATES WHO HAVEN'T MADE AN APPEARANCE ARE INDEPENDENT STEPHANIE MINER AND...GOVERNOR CUOMO HIMSELF.

8/13/18-PRESIDENT TRUMP ARRIVES IN DOWNTOWN UTICA THIS AFTERNOON. WHILE THE LOCATION AND TIME OF HIS FUNDRAISER WITH CONGRESSMAN CLAUDIA TENNEY HASN'T BEEN OFFICIALLY RELEASED, IT'S BEING WIDELY REPORTED THE EVENT IS TAKING PLACE AT THE DOUBLETREE HILTON, THE FORMER HOTEL UTICA, BETWEEN FOUR AND SIX THIS AFTERNOON. TIGHT SECURITY AROUND THE EVENT SITE MEANS YOU'RE LIKELY TO ENCOUNTER TRAFFIC DELAYS AND DETOURS IF YOU'RE TRAVELING ANYWHERE NEARBY WHEN THE PRESIDENT IS IN TOWN.

8/13/18-NEW YORK IS SITTING ON FOURTEEN BILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF YOUR MONEY. THAT'S HOW MUCH IS CURRENTLY IN THE STATE'S UNCLAIMED FUNDS ACCOUNT. THE MONEY COMES FROM OLD BANK ACCOUNTS, BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS, AND PROPERTY SALES. CLOSE TO HALF A BILLION DOLLARS WAS CLAIMED LAST YEAR, BUT THE SIZE OF THE ACCOUNT CONTINUES TO GROW. TO FIND OUT IF THE STATE IS HOLDING ON TO ANY OF YOUR MONEY YOU CAN VISIT THE DATABASE AT THE COMPTROLLERS WEBSITE AT OSC-DOT-STATE-DOT-NY-DOT-US.

8/13/18-GOVERNOR CUOMO CONFESSED TO A FEDERAL CRIME LAST WEEK. DURING A SPEECH HE RECOUNTED AN EAGLE SWOOPING DOWN DURING A CANOE TRIP, DROPPING A FEATHER AS IT FLEW BY. CUOMO SAID THAT FEATHER IS CURRENTLY DISPLAYED ABOVE HIS FIREPLACE. BUT THE POSSESSION OF EAGLE PARTS BY NON-NATIVE AMERICANS, INCLUDING FEATHERS, IS

PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW. THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE SAYS HE'LL RETURN THE FEATHER TO THE WATERWAY OR DONATE IT TO A FEDERAL REPOSITORY.

8/14/18-PRESIDENT TRUMP'S VISIT TO UTICA IS NOW IN THE HISTORY BOOKS. THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE LINED THE STREETS DURING HIS APPEARANCE AT A FUNDRAISER FOR CONGRESSWOMAN CLAUDIA TENNEY. EVEN MORE WATCHED ON TELEVISION. WHILE THE EVENT WAS ORIGINALLY CLOSED TO THE PRESS THAT CHANGED AT THE LAST MINUTE, WITH TRUMP'S SPEECH BEING BROADCAST BY THE WHITE HOUSE POOL. AND IT MAY NOT BE THE LAST TIME THE PRESIDENT VISITS THE AREA. STAFFERS ARE REPORTEDLY WORKING ON A PUBLIC RALLY AT GRIFFISS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN OCTOBER.

8/14/18-GOVERNOR CUOMO WILL DEBATE CYNTHIA NIXON, HIS CHALLENGER FOR THE DEMOCRATIC GUBERNATORIAL NOMINATION, LATER THIS MONTH. OFFICIALS ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY THE FACE OFF WILL BE MODERATED BY WCBS AND TAKE PLACE AT HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY ON AUGUST 29TH. THE EVENT MARKS A DEPARTURE FOR CUOMO, WHO REFUSED TO DEBATE HIS PRIMARY OPPONENT FOUR YEARS AGO. NIXON HAS BEEN HOUNDING CUOMO TO COMMIT TO AT LEAST ONE DEBATE SINCE DECLARING HER CANDIDACY BACK IN MARCH.

8/15/18-VOTERS IN UTICA HAVE APPROVED THREE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS. OFFICIALS SAY THE MEASURES ALL PASSED WITH OVER SIXTY PERCENT OF THE VOTE, BUT THE OFFICIAL TALLY WON'T BE COMPLETE UNTIL IT'S APPROVED BY ELECTION OFFICIALS. IN ALL THE MEASURES AUTHORIZE DISTRICT OFFICIALS TO SPEND 15- MILLION DOLLARS TO COMPLETE REPAIRS AND UPGRADES TO ATHLETIC FACILITIES, WITH THE STATE PAYING OVER SEVENTY PERCENT OF THE COST. STILL UP IN THE AIR IS HOW MUCH OF A TAX INCREASE WILL BE NEEDED TO PAY THE TAB FOR THE PROJECTS.

8/16/18-GOVERNOR CUOMO STEPPED INTO A FIRESTORM YESTERDAY AFTER SAYING THAT AMERICA WAS NEVER THAT GREAT. THE REMARK CAME AS HE WAS CRITICIZING PRESIDENT TRUMP'S "MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN" SLOGAN AND THE AUDIENCE AUDIBLY GASPED AFTER HE SAID IT. WITHIN MINUTES VIDEO OF HIS REMARKS HAD GONE VIRAL. THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE LATER RELEASED A STATEMENT SAYING HE BELIEVES AMERICA IS GREAT, BUT HASN'T REACHED ITS MAXIMUM POTENTIAL FOR GREATNESS.

8/16/18-THE STATE IS PLANNING A MAJOR CRACKDOWN ON ILLEGAL TOBACCO SALES. OVER HALF THE CIGARETTES SOLD IN THE STATE ARE SMUGGLED IN AND DON'T HAVE TAX STAMPS, LOSING NEW YORK MILLIONS IN TAX REVENUE. THE SOURCE OF THAT MISSING MONEY IS THE \$4.35 TAX ON EVERY PACK OF SMOKES. THAT HUGE PREMIUM IS WHAT MAKES SMUGGLING CIGARETTES SO LUCRATIVE. THE NEW INITIATIVE WILL TEAM TWELVE DIFFERENT AGENCIES TO TRACK DOWN ILLEGAL SALES AND SEIZE FUNDS AND ASSETS CONNECTED TO SMUGGLING OPERATIONS.

8/17/18-IF YOU WANT TO VOTE IN NEW YORK'S PRIMARY ELECTIONS YOU'D BETTER BE REGISTERED BY THE END OF TODAY. VOTERS HEAD TO THE POLLS JUST FOUR WEEKS FROM NOW ON SEPTEMBER 13TH TO DECIDE THE PARTY LINES FOR GOVERNOR, ATTORNEY GENERAL, AND LEGISLATIVE SEATS. THE ACTUAL DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS THE 19TH, BUT THAT FALLS ON A SUNDAY. THAT MEANS TAKING CARE OF REGISTRATION TODAY IN PERSON OR BY MAIL. YOU'LL FIND ALL THE DETAILS, INCLUDING PRINTABLE FORMS, AT ELECTIONS DOT N-Y DOT GOV

8/21/18-THE STATE IS MAKING IT EASIER FOR VETERANS AND THE DISABLED TO APPLY FOR CIVIL SERVICE JOBS. A NEW WEBSITE WILL PRE-SCREEN THOSE GROUPS FOR POSITIONS IN THE STATE BUREAUCRACY AND ALLOW RESIDENTS TO UPLOAD THEIR RESUMES AND TRANSCRIPTS

DIRECTLY INTO A STATE DATABASE. IT'S PART OF A PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS THE STATE TO HIRE DISABLED WORKERS FOR ENTRY LEVEL POSITIONS WITHOUT REQUIRING THEM TO TAKE A FULL CIVIL SERVICE EXAM. MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE AT CS-DOT-NY-DOT-GOV.

8/21/18-AND THEN THERE WERE THREE. DEMOCRAT CHRISTOPHER SALATINO HAS BEEN TAKEN OFF THE BALLOT FOR THE 119TH ASSEMBLY RACE. HIS PETITIONS WERE CHALLENGED BY FELLOW DEMOCRAT MARYANN BUTTENSCHON, AND THE STATE'S SUPREME COURT RULED HE DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH VALID SIGNATURES TO QUALIFY FOR THE RACE. SALATINO SAYS HE PLANS TO APPEAL. IF HE'S UNSUCCESSFUL BUTTENSCHON WILL FACE OFF AGAINST THE WINNER OF THE REPUBLICAN PRIMARY BETWEEN DENNIS BOVA AND FREDRICK NICHOLS.

8/22/18-THE BATTLE OVER TERM LIMITS IN UTICA HAS TAKEN ANOTHER TURN. YESTERDAY SUPPORTERS OF A BALLOT MEASURE TO REIMPOSE AN EIGHT YEAR CAP ON CITY OFFICIALS ATTEMPTED TO TURN IN THEIR PETITIONS. BUT THE CITY CLERK REFUSED TO ACCEPT THE SIGNATURES, SAYING SHE COULDN'T CERTIFY THEM FOR SIXTY DAYS. BUT SUPPORTERS DISPUTE THAT. THEY'RE ALREADY PLANNING TO FILE A LAWSUIT IN AN EFFORT TO GET THE TERM LIMIT QUESTION ON THE BALLOT IN TIME FOR THIS FALL'S ELECTIONS.

8/23/18-THE FIGHT FOR THE 22ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT IS HEADING INTO THE HOME STRETCH, AND NOW THE CANDIDATES DISAGREE EVEN MORE THAN USUAL. CONGRESSWOMAN CLAUDIA TENNEY AND ASSEMBLYMAN ARE NOW BATTLING OVER DEBATES. CLOSE TO A DOZEN DEBATES HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN SCHEDULED ACROSS THE DISTRICT, BUT ONLY TWO ACTUALLY FEATURE BOTH CANDIDATES. THE REST ARE SPONSORED BY GROUPS THAT ONLY ONE OF THE CANDIDATES HAS AGREED TO SHOW UP FOR. AS OF NOW THE ONLY CONFIRMED DEBATES WILL HAPPEN IN NOVEMBER.

8/24/18-A JUDGE WILL DECIDE THE FUTURE OF TERM LIMITS IN UTICA. SUPPORTERS OF A MEASURE TO CAP ELECTED OFFICIALS IN UTICA AT EIGHT YEARS OF SERVICE FILED SUIT AGAINST CITY CLERK MICHELLE GEORGE THIS WEEK AFTER SHE REFUSED TO CERTIFY THEIR LATEST PETITIONS. SHE SAYS STATE LAW REQUIRES A SIXTY DAY WAITING PERIOD BEFORE SHE CAN ACT, WHICH WOULD STOP THE MEASURE FROM APPEARING ON THIS FALL'S BALLOT. NOW THE STATE SUPREME COURT WILL DECIDE WHICH SIDE IS RIGHT DURING A HEARING NEXT WEDNESDAY IN UTICA.

8/29/18-THE PUBLIC WILL HAVE A CHANCE TO WEIGH IN ON LEGALIZING RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA USE IN NEW YORK. THE STATE ASSEMBLY PLANS A SERIES OF FOUR HEARINGS ON THE SUBJECT. SOME OF THE TOUGHEST QUESTIONS STILL FACING LEGISLATORS ARE HOW TO MANAGE CULTIVATION AND TAXATION. NEW YORK CURRENTLY ALLOWS ONLY AUTHORIZED COMPANIES TO GROW MARIJUANA, BUT MARIJUANA ADVOCATES SAYS THAT LEADS TO A MONOPOLY ON PRODUCTION CONTROLLED BY BIG BUSINESS.

8/29/18-GOVERNOR CUOMO AND CYNTHIA NIXON WILL FACE OFF IN A DEBATE TONIGHT. THE EVENT COMES JUST OVER TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE PAIR WILL GO HEAD TO HEAD IN THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY. WCBS IS HOSTING THE EVENT AT HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY. THIS MARKS THE FIRST TIME CUOMO HAS AGREED TO A DEBATE WITH HIS PRIMARY OPPONENT SINCE BACK IN 2002. CUOMO DICTATED THE TERMS OF THE DEBATE, DEMANDING THAT BOTH CANDIDATES ARE SEATED AND THAT HE DOESN'T HAVE TO SHAKE HANDS WITH NIXON.

8/30/18-THE RACE FOR THE 22ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT IS A STATISTICAL DEAD HEAT. THAT'S ACCORDING TO A NEW SPECTRUM NEWS/ SIENA COLLEGE POLL. IT FOUND DEMOCRATIC ASSEMBLYMAN ANTHONY BRINDISI LEADING CONGRESSWOMAN CLAUDIA TENNEY 46-44 PERCENT AMONG LIKELY VOTERS, WELL WITHIN THE POLLS 4.8 PERCENT MARGIN OF ERROR. THE POLL ALSO FOUND VOTERS WANT REPUBLICANS TO MAINTAIN CONTROL OF THE HOUSE BY A WHOPPING 53 PERCENT TO 40 PERCENT MARGIN.

8/30/18-THE CHECK IS IN THE MAIL. THAT'S THE MESSAGE FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION AND FINANCE. FOR YEARS THE STATE HAS BEEN LATE IN ISSUING THE ANNUAL STATE REBATE CHECKS FROM THE STAR PROPERTY TAX AND MUNICIPAL TAX FREEZE PROGRAMS. BUT THIS YEAR OFFICIALS SAY THEY'RE AHEAD OF SCHEDULE AND HAVE ALREADY SENT OUT OVER 350-THOUSAND CHECKS. THE AGENCY ESTIMATES ALL TWO MILLION CHECKS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED BY THE MIDDLE OF OCTOBER. YOU CAN CHECK THE STATUS OF YOUR REBATE AT TAX-DOT-N-Y-DOT-GOV.