

Killian wants New York to pay taxes on land it owns in Bedford

David McKay Wilson, dwilson3@lohud.com 10:57 p.m. EDT November 2, 2016

Julie Killian said Westchester's state delegation was asleep for not pushing for the taxation of state land in Westchester.



(Photo: Mark Vergari/The Journal News)

State Senate candidate Julie Killian called on Westchester's Albany delegation Wednesday to fight for Westchester's fair share of property-tax payments that New York makes on state land.

Her calls follow publication of the USA Today Network's investigation into the state's ad hoc system of property tax payments on state land, with New York paying taxes on 90 percent of its land.

She made her statements outside Fox Lane High School in Bedford, where the state pays no property taxes on 192 acres of state land, including 160 acres at its prison complex on Harris Road. Meanwhile, the state pays the Ossining schools about \$1 million a year in property taxes on 84 acres, which includes 53 acres at

Sing Sing prison and at a state park.

"We need our Westchester legislators to stand up and fight for us," said Killian, a Republican who serves on the Rye City Council. "And that's not happening now."

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She singled out opponent incumbent state Sen. George Latimer to join in the action.

Latimer, an elected official since 1987, served on the Rye City Council before his election to the Westchester Board of Legislators in 1991. He won election to the state Assembly in 2005, a year after Putnam County won passage of a bill to tax all of New York state's land in Putnam County. He was elected to the state Senate in 2012.

"Julie Killian should be embarrassed to use the serious problems of the Bedford Central School District as a political football," Latimer said. "She has been running over eight months, and never breathed a word on this until now."

Killian said Westchester's Albany delegation dropped the ball, as bills that required the state to pay property taxes on state land in municipalities and counties have passed, but Westchester legislators haven't pushed for equal treatment here.

"If I saw bills coming across my desk helping another municipality outside of Westchester getting tax payments from the state, I would immediately go and look in my district to see if the state was compensating us," she said. "How did that not happen? They were asleep."

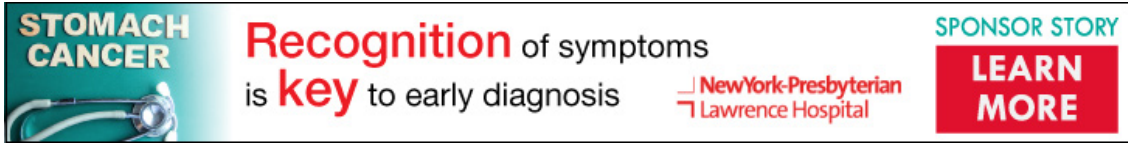
Latimer spokesman Vic Mallison said Latimer sprang to action once he learned of the issue.



"George Latimer is hardworking, but he is not omniscient," Mallison said. "We will take good ideas wherever they come from. In this case, the idea came from David McKay Wilson. We say 'thank you,' and look forward to working hard for the Bedford Central School District."


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State Sen. George Latimer, D-Rye, has filed a bill that would have NY state pay taxes on its land in Bedford. (Photo: David McKay Wilson/The Journal News)



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