

Michael Kaplowitz

Westchester County Board of Legislators

Legislator-District 4

Michael B. Kaplowitz of Somers was re-elected to his third term on the Board of Legislators in November 2001. He represents the 4th District, which includes New Castle and parts of the Towns of Somers and Yorktown. In recognition of his long-standing, active commitment to Westchester's open space and ecosystem, and his work for two terms as Chairman of the Board's Environment Committee, Kaplowitz was named Chairman of the expanded committee—Environment & Health, and has restructured the way the Committee operates. One of his most significant reforms was to name various subcommittees, made up of legislators and citizens, to deal with critical issues such as the watershed, the County airport, household hazardous waste, and the Long Island Sound. Among other recent successes in his Committee on Environment & Health, Kaplowitz co-authored the “Smoke-free Worksite Law” and the ban on the sale of products containing Ephedra to minors. He won bi-partisan support for both measures.

In keeping with his strong belief in open government, Kaplowitz has also brought committee and subcommittee meetings into various Westchester communities to encourage even more public participation. Kaplowitz is the legislative leader in the fight against Indian Point and for the study on sewage diversion/upgrade. An attorney and certified financial planning practitioner, Kaplowitz is a member of the powerful Budget and Appropriations Committee and an aggressive supporter of tax fairness. His concern for equity isn't limited to lowering taxes and cutting costs.

His first action as a Legislator was to change the County Charter to end the unjust situation in which Yorktown residents in the Lakeland School District were paying more than their fair share of school taxes. Kaplowitz won tax fairness for nearly 900 Yorktown families who paid sewer taxes for years without ever being hooked up to sewers. He achieved the same relief for 352 Croton families in the Ossining Sewer District. During difficult 2002 budget discussions, Kaplowitz led the effort to find and cut over \$50 million in the proposed budget while retaining necessary county programs, thereby reducing the County Executive's proposed tax increase by 50%. Kaplowitz also serves as a member of the Committee on Public Safety and Criminal Justice, the Committee on Labor and the Special Committee on Energy.

Beyond his extensive committee responsibilities, he is also active in drafting key legislation that expands democratic government. For example, he authored a new law, passed by the Legislature, to ensure continuity and prevent patronage in the process of filling a vacant Board seat. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania

and the Boston University School of Law, Kaplowitz is a past president of the Institute of Certified Financial Planners. Active in numerous community and civic organizations, he is involved in the March of Dimes Walk America in April. He was on the New York State Service Council for the American Red Cross and is a past director of the Westchester Chapter of the American Red Cross and of the Partnership Fund for Aging Services. Legislator Kaplowitz and his wife Jayne live in Somers with their two daughters who attend the Somers Public Schools.