

Hon. April Baskin

Chair, Erie County Legislature District 2

As a Buffalo native, April N. McCants-Baskin is a devoted community advocate for equity and social justice. A graduate of Buffalo's Academy for Visual and Performing Arts High School, she attended Buffalo State College and holds a B.A. in Theatre Arts from SUNY Empire State College. She is also a proud mother of two.

In 2017 April was elected to represent District 2 of the Erie County Legislature. District 2 is the most diverse district in Erie County, as it contains the region's wealthiest and poorest neighborhoods, as well as being home to immigrants and refugees from dozens of nations from around the world.

Immediately upon taking office Baskin was selected to serve as the Majority Leader. A year later, her colleagues elected her Chairperson of the Legislature in spring 2019, making her the youngest person and the first freshman to serve as Chairperson in the history of the Erie County Legislature. She was re-elected to serve as Chairwoman in 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023.

As Legislative Chair, Baskin has worked diligently to reform the county's jail system, has led initiatives to implement body cameras for Erie County Sheriff Deputies, as well as increased the number of surveillance cameras in the county's detention facilities. She created the Erie County Corrections Specialist Advisory Board which enables members of the public to provide input and oversight into the management of Erie County's jails. Under her leadership Baskin spearheaded a successful campaign to end the shackling of youth detainees in Family Court, and most recently, she worked with the Sheriff's Office and the Department of Health and Department of Mental Health to implement a new Medically Assisted Treatment program for detainees who are struggling with drug addiction.

Baskin worked with specialists from the University at Buffalo to implement the County's Department of Health "Lead it Go" program, which expands services for children who have been poisoned by lead.

Chairwoman Baskin was the chief coordinator and lead sponsor of the Office of Health Equity Act, a new County office whose sole focus will be on the social determinants of health, while developing programs and policies to address racial inequities in healthcare.

In 2019 Baskin established the annual Urban Initiatives which secures funding for communities in the urban core during the county's budget process.

Baskin reformed the county's outdated Minority and Women's Business Enterprise policies. She passed the 2021 MWBE Modernization Act which increases set-aside percentages, helping to level the playing field for minority and women entrepreneurs in underrepresented communities. She partnered with leaders in the private sector to develop community

initiatives which empower Black and Minority Owned Businesses to receive capital, resources, and mentoring.

Chairwoman Baskin led the charge in a statewide advocacy campaign for a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) to be attached to the new stadium deal between Erie County, New York State and the Buffalo Bills NFL team. Her leadership and advocacy during the negotiations of this deal, landed Erie County residents their first ever National Football League Community Benefits Agreement, which includes a community investment of \$100 million dollars.