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## **Madden Concludes Luggage Drive in Benefit of Local Charities**

**Kingston, NY** —Democrat and NYS Assembly Candidate Gabi Madden, in partnership with local advocate Denise Augustus, collected over one hundred suitcases to donate to local organizations in benefit of foster children in Ulster and Dutchess Counties. Through Luggage of Dreams, Augustus and Madden coordinated a luggage drive in honor of National Foster Care Day (May 7th) and National Foster Care Month (May) and asked community members to donate lightly used and new luggage. The drive was spearheaded as a response to the troubling fact that foster kids often have to travel between homes with personal belongings in garbage bags.

“I’ve always prioritized putting words into action, and results over rhetoric. This is what representation is all about, being attuned to your district needs and helping fulfill those needs in any and every way possible. Sometimes it’s just a matter of listening to people, connecting the dots, and getting activated.” **said Madden**, “ I sincerely thank everyone who contributed to this drive, its is the people that make the lasting difference in our communities, who go the extra mile, stay the extra hour, and make the ordinary, extraordinary.”

**Augustus added**, “I grew up in the foster care system and looked forward to one day giving back to foster kids, giving them things that other kids enjoy but we didn’t have. Traveling between homes with personal items in garbage bags was a norm I grew up with until I aged out of the foster system. It wasn’t until I was sharing my experience with Gabi recently, that I realized that this was a norm that didn’t need to continue and that I could personally help change by raising community awareness.”

Luggage has been received by KidsPeace, Children’s Home of Kingston, and Family of Woodstock, with more to be distributed to local charities in the coming days. Madden noted that this drive highlighted our community’s desire to support and uplift our neighbors and kids who may need a shoulder to lean on, and encouraged everyone to get involved with our youth in Ulster and Dutchess.

Assembly District 103 includes the towns of Red Hook and Rhinebeck in Dutchess County as well as the towns of Esopus, Gardiner, Hurley, Kingston, Marbletown, New Paltz, Olive, Rosendale, Saugerties, Ulster, Woodstock, and the City of Kingston in Ulster County.

[VIDEO & PHOTOS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD HERE](#)

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