



# Legislator Steve Stern's State of the 16<sup>th</sup> District



HOUSING OUR HOMELESS HEROES ACT SIGNED INTO LAW

IN THIS ISSUE

## A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION FOR OUR VETERANS

Dear Neighbors,

Many of us are making new resolutions this time of year. I have one more for all of us to add: Let us make every day Veterans' Day.

Suffolk County is proud to be home to the largest number of veterans in New York State and for our service men and women, every day should be Veterans' Day. Our freedom is not free. As we start a new year, we should all resolve to not only keep our veterans in our thoughts, but also be of meaningful assistance, especially to those former service men and women who are most vulnerable.

On any given night, hundreds of our veterans are without a place to call home. As Chairman of the Veterans and Seniors Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature, I hope all would agree with me that it is absolutely unacceptable for anyone who has gone off to protect the ground we stand on, to have to come home to sleep on it. That is why I am so pleased that Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone has signed legislation I authored, the "Housing Our Homeless Heroes Act," into law.

This legislative initiative creates new housing opportunities for our veterans by transferring vacant, tax-defaulted properties to non-profit organizations that work with veterans

and their families so that the homes can be renovated to house our service men and women. This isn't just good for our veterans - it's also good for business and our quality of life as blighted properties are given new life, raising property values. In addition, this proactive approach saves taxpayers millions of dollars by placing homeless veterans into permanent residences, rather than expensive emergency shelters.

This legislation makes good economic sense, but that is not the main reason why I wrote it. More importantly, it is the right thing to do. Veterans make good neighbors. We know that a home is not just four walls and a roof. It is a sign of security, a mark of hope and a symbol of dignity. I strongly believe it is our American duty to ensure that anyone who has ever worn our country's uniform and defended our great nation has a place to call home when they return.

Taking care of our veterans is one of my many goals for our County this year. As always, I will continue to work hard to provide fiscal responsibility for our taxpayers, protect our environment and preserve our quality of life.

Sincerely,



### Housing Our Homeless Heroes

My legislative initiative to end veterans' homelessness will help ensure that no person who has ever gone off to protect the ground we stand on will ever have to come home to sleep on it.

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### Brightening Smiles at Head Start

Legislator Steve Stern donated four computer monitors to Head Start, a nonprofit that works to enhance education for pre-school age children from low-income families.

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## AN END TO VETERANS' HOMELESSNESS

The "Housing Our Homeless Heroes Act," a legislative initiative to end veterans' homelessness, authored by Legislator Steve Stern was signed into law December 22 by Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone.

Suffolk County is proud to be home to the largest number of veterans in New York State. Unfortunately, Suffolk also has one of the largest populations of homeless veterans. The "**Housing Our Homeless Heroes Act**" is a package of legislative initiatives that protect our veterans from housing discrimination, provide additional housing resources and enhance services to streamline efforts across all government and non-profit agencies.

"When a soldier goes off to protect the ground we stand on, it is unacceptable that he or she should have to come home to sleep on it," Legislator Stern said. "Suffolk County has a strong tradition of caring for our veterans and we must lead the way in serving those who have served us and our great nation. That is why I authored the "**Housing Our Homeless Heroes Act**," which takes meaningful action to address the challenges veterans and their families face when they find themselves without a roof over their heads or struggling to stay afloat."

"We are a County that has a long standing tradition of providing high quality services to our veterans. As government leaders, we have the responsibility and the honor of ensuring we take care of the men and women who have sacrificed to protect our way of life. That is why today we have come together to sign legislation, which will increase opportunities for housing and ensure protections for veterans," County Executive Steve Bellone said.



The "**Housing Our Homeless Heroes Act**" includes four laws:

### 1. **Housing Our Homeless Heroes Act**

This law establishes partnerships with agencies and community advocates that serve our veterans and their families and initiates an informational web portal on the Suffolk County website to direct veterans to services across all levels of government and within the non-profit sector.

### 2. **Maximizing Access to Available Housing**

This initiative utilizes existing County housing assets to provide homes for our veterans and their families. This would turn over existing, vacant homes to non-profits who could then fix them up and use them to house our service men and women in need.

### 3. **End Housing Discrimination Against Veterans and their Families**

This initiative amends the County's anti-discrimination housing law to include veterans and their families, so that whether single or married with children, male or female, receiving government aid or not, our veterans are fully protected.

### 4. **Appointing a Veterans Service Officer to the Department of Social Services**

This aspect of the legislation requires a VSO (Veterans Service Officer) to work at DSS on a regular basis. VSO officers must themselves be veterans. This will ensure that when a veteran walks into DSS, he or she is met by another veteran to establish a peer-to-peer relationship, as well as have access to a professional who is fully knowledgeable of all programs and services available to veterans.

## A Year of Giving



Legislator Steve Stern visited students from Head Start, a non-profit organization, which promotes the school readiness of young children from low-income families, to donate four surplus computer monitors, which will be used to enhance computer education. The students posed for a photo, but then decided silly faces were much more fun.



The Legislator also teamed with Orlando Magic star Tobias Harris to make a slam dunk against hunger. Campers from the Tobias Harris' School of Business Basketball Camp, held at Half Hollow Hills High School East, brought in food donations each day during their week-long clinic, to help feed Long Islanders in need. The campers filled six large donation boxes to help kick start Legislator Stern's annual food drive, which collected more than 500 pounds of food.

Steve Stern donated more than 200 pounds of food, pantry items and toys to Toys of Hope, which had more than 50 boxes of food stolen from its Huntington Station warehouse just before Christmas.

*"During these challenging times, it is important to help those in need. I am thankful to be able to help Toys of Hope serve our communities when it is most needed."*





## Lending a Paw to Pets in Need

Steve Stern championed a pet supplies drive, which benefited Little Shelter Animal Adoption Center in Huntington. Residents helped the companion animals by donating food, toys and household goods to assist the shelter in their care for the hundreds of cats and dogs seeking their forever homes.



## Brentwood Student Opens Legislative Session with National Anthem

Legislator Stern welcomed Brentwood High School student Julian Santiago-Brown Priceman to sing our National Anthem before the Suffolk County Legislature. Priceman has graced the stages of world-renowned performance venues, including Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall, as a member of the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra. He has also been selected for the All-County Choir and All-County Orchestra, in which he plays the viola, by the Suffolk County Music Educators' Association (SCMEA).

## More than 500 Pounds of Food Collected For Needy Families



Steve Stern led residents in a successful food drive this year at ShopRite of Commack to benefit Island Harvest and Pronto of Long Island. The drive coincided with ShopRite's "Can Can" sale, which helped residents fill four shopping carts with canned goods and other non-perishable items for their neighbors in need. The collection netted 500 pounds of food and other household items.

## 911 Hotel Law Passes

What if when you dialed 911, the number didn't work? That's what happened last year when a 9-year-old girl attempted to call police when her mother, Kari Hunt Dunn, 31, was attacked in their Texas hotel room. The child didn't realize that she needed to dial "9" before 911 for an outgoing call. Kari died in the attack.

Legislator Steve Stern and Legislator Robert Trotta (R-Smithtown, 13<sup>th</sup> L.D.) joined the Hunt family earlier this year at the Holiday Inn Express in Stony Brook to stress the need for hotel and business patrons and workers to be able to directly dial 911 in an emergency.

"Kari's daughter did exactly what she was taught to do in an emergency. She called 911, and no one picked up. With this law, we hope that what happened to Kari will never happen to any of our loved ones here in Suffolk County," Legislator Stern said.

The 911 Hotel Law, which passed this year, requires all hotel and business phone lines in Suffolk County to have the ability to directly dial 911, without the need to dial "9," or any other number before reaching emergency personnel.

"In an emergency, seconds matter," Legislator Stern said. "Even an adult in a state of an emergency, such as a heart attack, stroke or dangerous situation, may not have the mindset to dial '9' before 911. I hope to see Suffolk County lead the way for the rest of the state and nation in this life-saving safety initiative."

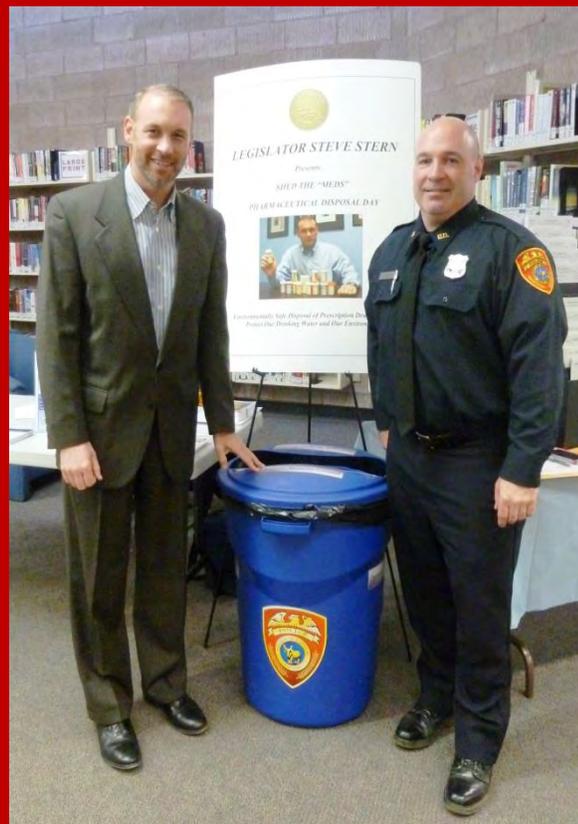
*"With this law, we hope that what happened to Kari will never happen to any of our loved ones here in Suffolk County."*

*-Legislator Steve Stern*



Legislator Steve Stern emphasizes the need for hotel and business patrons to be able to directly dial 911. Pictured from left to right: DJ and Hank Hunt, Legislator Steve Stern, Legislator Robert Trotta, hotel owner John Tsuris.

## "Shed The Meds" Protects Our Children & Our Environment



Suffolk County Legislator Steve Stern leads a "Shed the Meds" event at Commack Public Library with Suffolk County Police Officer Thomas O'Neill.

More than 300 pounds of pharmaceuticals were collected during multiple "Shed the Meds" events throughout the district in 2014.

This initiative helps to keep drugs clear of our waterways and out of the hands of our young people.

The program was expanded this year so that residents can safely and anonymously dispose of unused medications during the first Wednesday of each month at six senior centers throughout the Suffolk County Police Department's jurisdiction, including the Huntington Senior Center.

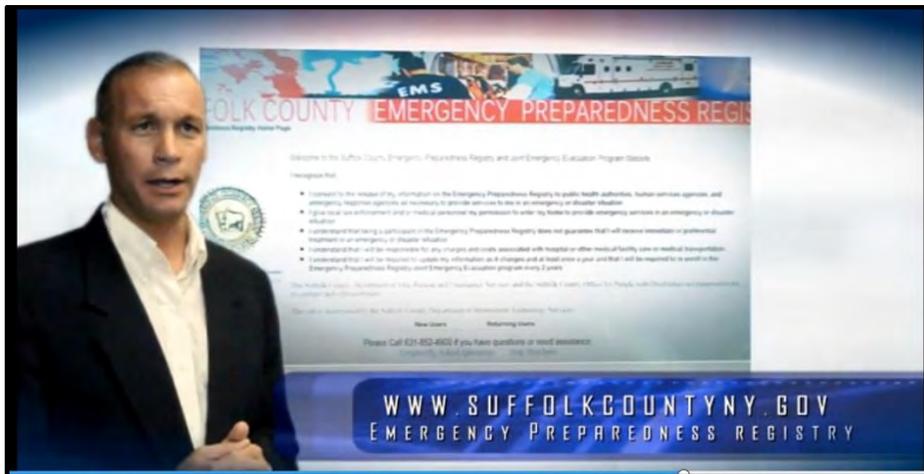
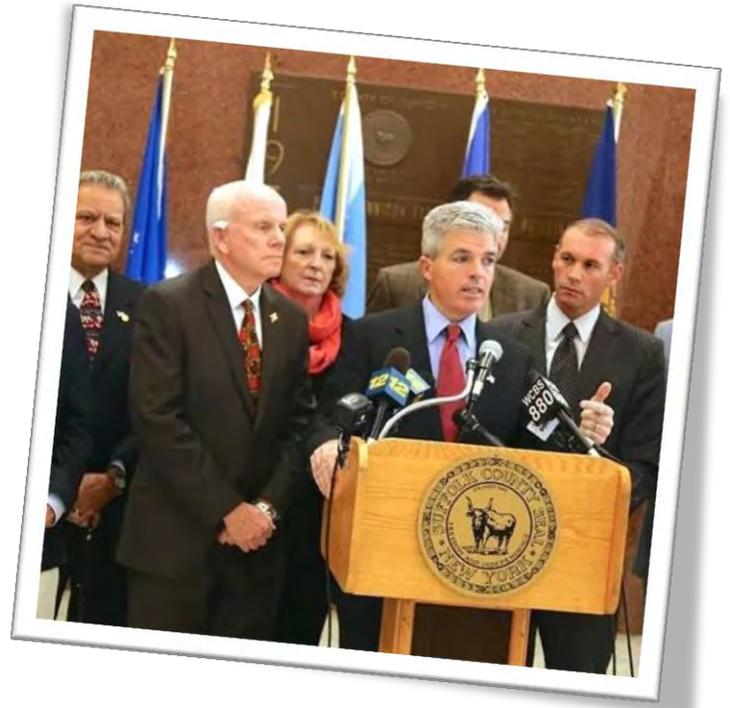
The Suffolk County Police Department will arrange for the medications to be incinerated, ensuring their proper disposal in an environmentally safe way.

## Proposed School Zone Speed Cameras Given the Red Light

Legislator Steve Stern joined County Executive Steve Bellone and his fellow legislative colleagues to announce that Suffolk County will not implement a school zone speed camera program.

Studies of such initiatives throughout the nation indicate that these programs may not meet the County's safety goals.

"I join today with my colleagues to affirm our commitment to public safety and to ensure that County programs are designed to meet these goals without unfairly burdening our hard-working taxpayers," Legislator Stern said during the announcement.



*If you or a family member may have difficulty getting to safety during an emergency evacuation because of a physical or cognitive limitation, language barrier, or lack of transportation, enroll online in the Emergency Preparedness Registry at <https://oemapps.suffolkcountyny.gov/spns/> or call the Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services at 631-852-4900.*

## Preparing For Winter Storms

Legislator Stern created a [Public Service Announcement](#) to urge residents, especially those with limited mobility, to plan ahead for hurricanes, storms and other serious weather events.

Residents, who may need assistance in the case of an evacuation, should enroll in the [Suffolk County Emergency Preparedness Registry](#). The Registry was established to collect information emergency first responders will need to help locate and evacuate people with Special Needs or high risks during an emergency, especially when a family, caregiver or others are unable to help.

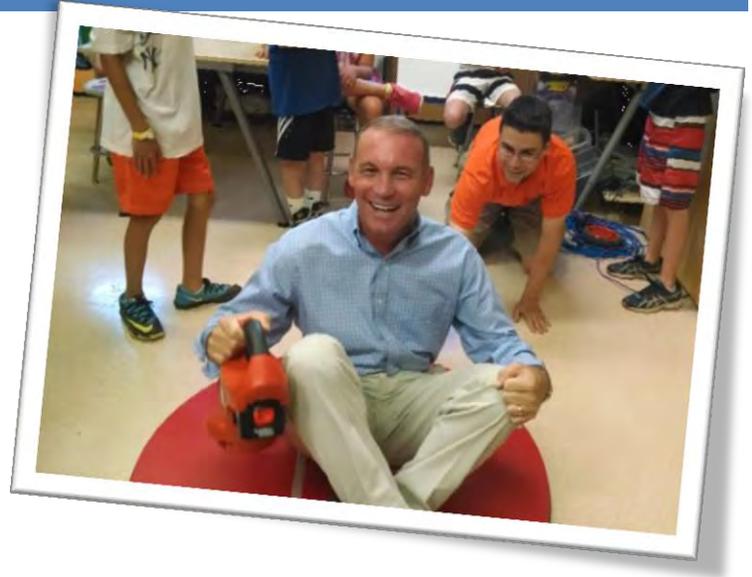
"Planning on the run is never a good idea. I encourage all of our residents with special needs to enroll in the Emergency Preparedness Registry so that they may be quickly helped to safety in case of an emergency," Legislator Stern said. "Register today to be prepared for tomorrow."

## Soaring to New Heights with Park Shore Science Academy

Legislator Steve Stern toured the Park Shore Day Camp Science Academy and viewed the da Vinci Surgical Robot, which is used by surgeons for complex medical procedures, as well as tested a hovercraft.

The program's director, Julian Aptowitz, teaches physics at Half Hollow Hills High School West and is the Coach of the award winning HHH "Thundercolts" Robotics team. The program provides instruction in Earth science, marine science and robotics, providing varied enrichment learning for campers. Students at the Academy have had the opportunity to use the da Vinci Robot, as well as a 3-D printer.

"I applaud Bob and Chuck Budah's passion and foresight in developing this outstanding program to better prepare our young people for the workplace and world they will help to create. Thanks also to Dr. Schwartz for providing students with the opportunity to experiment with this extraordinary technology," Legislator Stern said. "STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) programs, particularly hands-on inter-active learning for young children, will not only prepare our students for tomorrow's careers, but spark creativity, curiosity and a love of learning that will serve them well throughout their lives."



## Steve Stern Hosts HHH Legislation Committee



Legislator Steve Stern welcomed members of the Half Hollow Hills Parent-Student Teacher Association, Legislation Committee to the Suffolk County Legislature for a mock debate, in which the young leaders had the opportunity to experience the role of playing a legislator for the day.

## LOCAL HEROES



### Teen Raises \$115,000 to Battle Rare Nerve Disorder

Alexandra Tobin, a Dix Hills student who suffers from a rare nerve disorder mounted a campaign both to increase awareness about the condition and to raise money to help others, with donations of more than \$115,000. Legislator Steve Stern awarded her a Proclamation for her outstanding work.



### 10-Year-Old Saves Commack Neighbors from Fire

Legislator Steve Stern honored 10-year-old Christopher Schneider and his father, Russell, who saved their neighbors from a house fire. Christopher alerted his father to smoke billowing out of his neighbor's house and called 911 for help. He and his father helped extinguish the flames with garden hoses to contain the damage as firefighters came to the rescue.

### District 16's 2014 "Woman of Distinction"



Legislator Steve Stern surprised Loretta Sehlmeier, with a proclamation for her exemplary service to our community. Loretta has been a dedicated volunteer with Island Harvest for 14 years. Surrounded by cheering volunteers, she was named the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative District's "2014 Woman of Distinction," an honor reserved for an individual who has made an outstanding commitment to help others in our community.

Demonstrating compassion and dedication to those in need, Loretta captains neighborhood food drives, organizes volunteers, conducts outreach regarding hunger awareness in schools and businesses and works as a food rescue volunteer. She also helps local animal rescue organizations and serves as a Eucharistic Minister at St. Matthews Roman Catholic Church, bringing communion to the sick and homebound.

## LEGISLATOR STERN REAPPOINTED CHAIRMAN OF THE WAYS & MEANS AND VETERANS & SENIORS COMMITTEES

Legislator Steve Stern is pleased to announce that he has been re-appointed as Chairman of the prestigious Ways & Means Committee for 2015.

The Ways & Means Committee has jurisdiction over all matters relating to the day to day operations of County government, including tax issues, real estate transactions, settlement of litigation claims, ethics and elections.

Legislator Stern has also been named Chairman of the Veterans & Seniors Committee for the tenth straight year, in recognition of his dedication to the needs of our veterans and their families and his hard work on behalf of our seniors.

In addition to his two Chairmanships, Legislator Stern will serve as Vice-Chairman of the Economic Development Committee and as a member of the Public Works & Energy Committee, as well as the Budget & Finance Committee.



*"I am honored to have been chosen by Presiding Officer Gregory to continue to lead the Ways & Means Committee and to continue my service as Chairman of the Veterans & Seniors Committee," Legislator Stern said. "The decisions made by the Ways & Means Committee affect every aspect of life in Suffolk County and I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that Suffolk County Government continues to address our challenges, improve efficiency and protect our quality of life."*



*Legislator Stern is proud to be the only Suffolk legislator selected to chair two committees.*

# Legislator Steve Stern

1842 East Jericho Tpke.  
Huntington, NY 11743

631-854-5100

<http://suffolkcountyny.gov/do16/home.aspx>

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## EASY ACCESS TO YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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The following list of telephone numbers is provided for your convenience in contacting Suffolk County government offices for information and assistance.

Legislator

# Steve Stern

1842 E. Jericho Tpk., Suite P  
Huntington, NY 11743  
Phone: (631) 854-5100 Fax: (631) 854-5103  
E-mail: [steve.stern@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:steve.stern@suffolkcountyny.gov)

### SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

Alcohol and Substance Abuse . . . . .	853-8500
Board of Elections and Voter Registration . . . . .	852-4500
Child Abuse Hotline . . . . .	800-342-3720
(to report suspected abuse, 24 hours a day)	
Child Protective Services . . . . .	854-9030
Child Support Enforcement Bureau . . . . .	853-2000
Civil Service . . . . .	853-5500
Commissioner of Jurors . . . . .	852-2300
Community Development . . . . .	853-5705
Consumer Affairs . . . . .	853-4600
Cooperative Extension . . . . .	727-7850
County Clerk . . . . .	852-2000
County Executive . . . . .	853-4000
District Attorney . . . . .	853-4161
District Court - Second . . . . .	854-1121
District Court - Third . . . . .	854-4545
District Court - Fifth . . . . .	854-9676
Domestic Violence Crisis Intervention/Referral Hotline . . . . .	666-8833
Domestic Violence, Rape and Sexual Assault Crisis Hotline . . . . .	360-3606
Economic Development . . . . .	853-4800
Foster Care . . . . .	853-5437
Health Services . . . . .	853-3036
Human Rights Commission . . . . .	853-5480
Industrial Development Agency . . . . .	853-4802

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Labor - Employment and Training . . . . .	853-6600
Legal Aid Society . . . . .	854-0401
Minority Affairs . . . . .	853-4738
Mosquito Spraying Hotline . . . . .	852-4939
Office for the Aging . . . . .	853-8200
Office for People with Disabilities . . . . .	853-8333
Parks and Recreation . . . . .	854-4949
Planning . . . . .	853-5189
Police Department - First Precinct . . . . .	854-8100
Police Department - Second Precinct . . . . .	854-8200
Police Department - Third Precinct . . . . .	854-8300
Police Headquarters . . . . .	852-6000
Police Non-Emergency . . . . .	852-COPS
Probation . . . . .	852-5000
Public Works . . . . .	852-4010
Real Estate . . . . .	853-5900
Real Property Tax . . . . .	852-1551
Sheriff's Office . . . . .	852-2200
Social Services . . . . .	854-9935
Soil and Water Conservation . . . . .	727-2315
Stop DWI . . . . .	853-5715
Suffolk County Community College - Admissions Information . . . . .	451-4034
Transportation . . . . .	852-4880
Treasurer . . . . .	852-1500
Veterans Services . . . . .	853-8387
Victims Information Bureau . . . . .	360-3606
Women Services . . . . .	853-8284
Youth Bureau . . . . .	853-8270

**LEGISLATOR STEVE STERN  
(631) 854-5100**

***This is our district . . .***

The 16th Suffolk County Legislative District (L.D.) includes Commack, Dix Hills, East Northport, Elwood, Melville and South Huntington in the Town of Huntington, Deer Park in the Town of Babylon and Brentwood and North Bay Shore in the Town of Islip. The district is bounded roughly by Clay Pitts Road to the North, Sunrise Highway to the South, New York Avenue to the West and Washington Avenue and Awixa Creek to the East. It consists of (62) election districts (E.D.s) with 49,307 registered voters. The 16th L.D. has 6 E.D.s in the Town of Babylon, 39 E.D.s in the Town of Huntington and 17 E.D.s in the Town of Islip.

**CONSTITUENT CONCERN FORM**

Your Name

Your Address

City

Zip Code

Daytime Phone

Evening Phone

E-Mail

Fax

Please describe your concern:

Detach and mail this form to:

**Suffolk County Legislator Steve Stern  
1842 E. Jericho Tpk., Suite P  
Huntington, NY 11743**

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