

**HEALTH COMMITTEE
OF THE
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

A regular meeting of the Health Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on Thursday, April 7, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Legislator William Spencer - Chairman.

Legislator Bridget Fleming - Vice-Chair

Legislator Robert Calarco

Legislator Monica Martinez

Legislator Tom Cilmi

Legislator Robert Trotta

Legislator Leslie Kennedy

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

George Nolan - Counsel/Suffolk County Legislature.

Sarah Simpson - Counsel/Suffolk County Legislature

Amy Ellis - Chief Deputy Clerk/Legislature

Michael Pitcher - Aide to the Presiding Officer

Elizabeth Alexander - Aide to Legislator Spencer

Chris DeLuca - Aide to Legislator Cilmi

Ali Nazir - Aide to Legislator Kennedy

Craig Freas - Budget Review Office

Dr. James Tomarken - Commissioner/Department of Health Services

Christina Capobianco - Deputy Commissioner/Health Department

Walter Dawydiak - Director of Environmental Quality/SC Health Dept.

Ann Marie Csorny - Acting Director of Community Mental Hygiene

Sarah Lansdale - Director of Planning

Katie Horst - Director/Intergovernmental Relations-CE's Office

Connie Kepert - Town of Brookhaven

Rob Weltner - Operation Splash

Dr. Rebecca Grella - Brentwood Union Free School District

Jeremy Samuelson - Concerned Citizens of Montauk

Adrienne Esposito - Citizens Campaign for the Environment

Anthony Graves - Brookhaven Town Supervisors Association

Joseph Keyes - Trustee with the Town of Brookhaven

Jordan Christensen - Citizen's Campaign for the Environment

John Turner - Seatuck Environmental Association

Dr. Chris Pinkenburg - GearHeadz Robotics Team Coach

Jade Pinkenburg - GearHeadz Robotics Team

Clayton MacKay - GearHeadz Robotics Team

Jennifer Bradley - GearHeadz Robotics Team

Rex Alex - GearHeadz Robotics Team

Julius Condemi - GearHeadz Robotics Team

Stuart Lowrie - The Nature Conservancy

George Hoffman - Setauket Harbor Task Force

All Other Interested Parties

TAKEN BY:

Lucia Braaten - Court Stenographer

(*The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m.*)

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

So good afternoon. We're going to begin the Health Committee. I'm going to ask if we could stand for the salute to the flag, to be led by Legislator Cilmi.

(*Salutation*)

Before you are seated, let's just continue standing for a moment of silence for all the men and women who are serving this country both at home and abroad.

(*Moment of Silence*)

Welcome to the Health Committee, and we have a rich agenda because of a lot of interest in a couple of different issues that are going on. But we're going to do something that's fairly rare that we usually don't do in committee, we do at our regular sessions, but I wanted to take an opportunity to recognize something that I felt was very special here in Suffolk County, and they had reached out to me. And I thank my colleague, Legislator Sarah Anker, because they are based in her Legislative District. But we are going present a proclamation this morning -- this afternoon, and it will be going to GearHeadz. And GearHeadz is a privately run first LEGO team of students from the Rocky Point area who are interested in science and technology, led by Dr. Charles Pinkenburg (sic), a local parent and Physicist at the Brookhaven National Lab.

The team has participated in numerous tournaments and competing against many other robotics teams from across Long Island. On January 30th, the team of five students were named champions at the Long Island First LEGO League qualifying tournament, competing against 34 other Long Island teams. In February, the team competed at the FLL Long Island Championship, where they presented a science project and developed a solution to an environmental hazard.

The GearHeadz Team created a unique, durable biodegradable shopping bag, which is digestible and degrades in water over the period of a month. They were named Second Place Champions, and now are preparing to compete against 72 other championship teams across the entire country in California in May.

The Suffolk County Legislature welcomes an opportunity to pay a well deserved tribute to our local youth for their dedicated service to our community. And as the Legislator from the Eighteenth District, and also on behalf of my colleague and friend, the Legislator from the Sixth District, Sarah Anker, respectfully, it gives me great pride and pleasure to present this proclamation to the GearHeadz Robotics Team for recognition of their talents, capabilities and success as they prepare to compete in the National Robotics Tournament in May.

So if the representative, or if you would all come up to the podium, I'll present you with the proclamation.

(*Applause*)

(*Proclamation was presented to the Team*)

What I'm going to ask, if a representative from the team could give us a brief description just in terms of this winning project, and so that we can understand it, especially -- the reason we're presenting this proclamation at this committee, as I'm sure as you all are aware from our 2 a.m. meeting, that plastic bags are a major issue and that's something the County's taking up that we're discussing in this committee. So this is really an appropriate place to have this information. So,

Dr. Pinkenburg.

DR. PINKENBURG:

We prepared it so Jenny, Jade and Julius will talk a minute each.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

All right. And just speak right there into the mic.

MS. BRADLEY:

Jen Bradley. Before I start, I would like to thank the Suffolk County Legislature to -- I would like to thank you for having us here today.

It's been found that 50% of all sea turtles worldwide are ingesting plastic and 85% of these encounters are fatal. Specifically, the leatherback turtle is very prone to ingestion and dying of plastic bags due to its inability to differentiate plastic bags from its main food source, jellyfish. And it also has papillae, which are cartilage-like spikes down through the back of its throat that prevent it from regurgitating or spitting out the plastic bag once it realizes what it is. And why am I telling you this? Why is this relevant? Due to contrary belief, we've actually just recently found ourselves that the Long Island Sound is, in fact, not just where injured and lost turtles wash up on the shore, turtles are coming here by will, and it's been believed to be a nursery for young turtles in migration.

MR. JADE PINKENBURG:

To combat -- to combat this problem -- oh, Jade Pinkenburg. All right. To combat this problem, we came up with the digestible plastic bag that the turtles will not be able to choke on.

Lately, we've been doing some research into starch-based plastic bags, and we made our own plastic bag that we've been passing around, and it's digestible by the turtles. As you can see in the samples that we're also passing around, the -- by changing the quantity of ingredients, we've been able to attain several different characteristics and textures of the bag, which can be kind of made to be like a shopping bag, so that can be used as a replacement for the others.

Our starch-based plastic bags are superior to other ones, because usually regular bio-plastic bags require contact with microorganisms or sunlight to biodegrade, while our plastic bag can degrade in water, or it can be underground, and it could be digested by almost any animal.

MR. CONDEMI:

Okay. So as far as feasibility -- oh, Julius Condemmi. So as far as feasibility is concerned, the raw ingredients are readily available, a main ingredient in starch. And we know that the U.S. produces a lot of corn plants, which we currently turn into ethanol. Instead of doing this, we can use the excess starch that we currently waste all the energy that the corn plant used to turn it into a complex starch. We can instead use that starch for our plastic bag.

Another major ingredient is glycerine, which is readily available as a byproduct of biodiesel. The only other ingredients are water and salt, which we can get anywhere. We also -- we found that the price of our bag would be something around 5 cents, which puts it pretty close to a competitive price range.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Well, that was fantastic. So what I'd like to do, I have a certificate for each of you. Jade Pinkenburg?

MR. PINKENBURG:

Yeah.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

All right. Clayton MacKay. Thank you, Clayton. Rex Alex. Rex. Julius Condemi. All right. And Jennifer Bradley. Let's give them all a big hand. Really --

*(*Applause*)*

You've really taught us something that's very valuable. And as we, your elected representatives, look for solutions of tomorrow, which it's great to know that the next generation is at work educating themselves, coming up with creative ideas. And it's because of you we know that our future here in Suffolk County is bright. So thank you. Thank you very much for being here.

*(*Applause*)*

I have a quick public service announcement. There's a blue Prius outside and your windows are down. So it is raining very hard and you are going to be really unhappy. So, all right.

So with that, we're going to now move on to the Public Portion, public comment, and I do have a few cards. The first speaker is Stuart Lowrie, and from the Nature Conservancy. So Stuart, please come up.

MR. LOWRIE:

Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you for being here, Stuart. As with our tradition and our rules of this body, you have three minutes to address the Legislature on any topic that you so choose.

MR. LOWRIE:

Okay. I hope to be done in much less than three minutes, and I'll be happy to yield the balance of my time to the next speaker.

But my name is Stuart Laurie. I am the Water Quality Project Team Leader for the Nature Conservancy on Long Island. I have been a Long Island and Suffolk County resident since 1994, and my home is in Sag Harbor. Many thanks for the opportunity to speak to the importance of I.R. 1207. And on behalf of the Nature Conservancy, I express our strongest support for this resolution, a Local Law to prohibit the distribution of plastic carryout bags used for retail purposes throughout Suffolk County. We thank you, as you're considering this, for your laudable efforts to reduce plastics in our environment. They pollute our waterways, they kill and threaten wildlife, and they create an unsightly litter throughout the County. We encourage your efforts to ensure the passage of the proposed law.

You've probably heard many times, and you'll here from other speakers, I'm sure, about the ecological effects of plastic, and particularly plastic bags in the environment around Long Island, in our wetlands, our lakes, our bays and harbors. All the negative impacts play out, imperiling and diminishing the quality of our environment and the quality of our lives as residents here.

I'm going to jump ahead, because I realize I'm going to take too much time here.

Plastic items designed for single use and -- are the most problematic and prevalent form of plastic pollution. And as a society, we benefit greatly from single-use plastic items, but we -- particularly from things like I.V. bags and syringes in hospitals, for example. But the vast number of single-use plastic item are empty, are simply wasteful and unnecessary. Single-use plastic bags are at the top

of that list.

As you know, single-use plastic bags have already been banned in Southampton, where I live. My anecdotal experience suggests that they disappeared with a whimper, not a protest. And I can attest to the changes I have noted even in a year. When I go to the transfer station to recycle my plastic glass and paper, I used to see the trees around the transfer station festooned with dozens of old plastic bags trapped in their branches, gradually decaying away. The last time I was there earlier in March, I noticed, to my surprise, there are no longer plastic bags hanging from all the trees up and down the road leading to and from the transfer station. This is a good result, but it's more than that.

When we shop at our local markets, I bring my own reusable bags, and so do a large number of my neighbors. We keep them stored in a box or bag in our cars and have them ready whenever we shop. Shopkeepers and customers alike seem to have made the transition without any trouble. I have not seen or heard or read of any serious concerns about the elimination of single-use plastic bags in my town. Instead, I've heard shoppers say how pleased they are that the local grocery store or hardware store has stopped using them.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Although I love what you're saying, I need you to wrap it up. Thank you.

MR. LOWRIE:

Plastic bags and plastic pollution in our environment is not inevitable and unavoidable. We can reverse bad decisions made in earlier times, and Suffolk County and Long Island have done this often in the past. It's time to make just such a decision now. Plastic bags should be banned. Please add your support to I.R. 1207 as you consider the measure in your committee. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you very much.

LEG. FLEMING:

Thank you, Stuart.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you.

*(*Applause*)*

Our next speaker is the Honorable Connie Keppert, and she is one of our -- one of our recent Brookhaven Town Board Members. And thank you, Connie, for being here, and we really appreciate your presence.

COUNCILWOMAN KEPERT:

You're very welcome. I am also going to speak on the plastic ban proposed legislation.

There's a lot of reasons to ban single-use plastic bags. I'm going to start out with the fiscal reasons. Brookhaven's Department of Waste Management roadside cleanup crews work full-time, five days a week, handling roadside litter along the 2000 miles of Town roads. Of course, not all of that roadside litter consists of plastic bags. But having participated in many great Brookhaven cleanups, I can attest to the fact that plastic bags are not only among the most prevalent form of litter, but are, without a doubt, the most visible form of litter within the Town.

I want to underscore that litter in the form of single-use plastic bags not only aesthetically distracts

from our communities, but that cleanup costs add to the burden of all taxpayers, both the wealthy and those that are struggling. Plastic bags are nonbiodegradable and decompose slowly, releasing toxins into the soil, and contaminating groundwater and waterways.

Plastic bags make up 90% of the floating litter in the world's oceans, and are the cause of marine death, birds, and that consume pieces of bags that have been mistaken for food. Every year, 12 million barrels of oil are used to make over 100 billion single-use plastic bags to be used in the United States.

Attempting to have Brookhaven do its part, in March 2012, I introduced a resolution to move from the use of plastic bags to paper bags for the Town of Brookhaven yard waste pickup, and that was adopted by the Town Board back in 2012. I am aware that other areas of the country have attempted to cope with some of the same economic issues that this Board is dealing with here in Suffolk County. In Seattle, for instance, to reduce the impact on those struggling economically, customers using vouchers or electronic benefit cards from State or Federal food assistance programs for grocery purchases are exempt from the charge for paper bags. So if you have not yet considered that option, you may want to do that here. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you very much. And, Connie, it's nice to see you again. Thank you for being here. And it's good to see that you're still out there making a difference. Thank you.

Our next speaker is Rob Weltner, and he is with Operation Splastic.

MR. WELTNER:

Splash.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Splash, okay. All right. Splash.

MR. WELTNER:

Yes. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak. I also support a ban on single-use plastic bags.

Operation Splash is an all-volunteer grassroots organization with 3500 members. We have six boats that go out into the South Shore Estuary and clean up garbage out of the bay. Not a very glamorous job, but very necessary. We have two chapters in Suffolk County, one in Lindenhurst off of Wellwood Avenue out of Marine Max, and one in Amityville.

Last year, our volunteers spent over 6500 hours on the bay cleaning up all sorts of trash, and during that time, removed approximately 10,558 of these critters from the South Shore Estuary Reserve. That's a lot of plastic, and that's every year. We also remove 23,420 plastic bottles, but that's another issue. The point I'd like to make is that these bags are a ticking time bomb. And just so you might understand how or why some -- I had -- one of our students asked, "Well, why would they eat a plastic bag?" And any of you have fished or been out in the ocean at night, in a pitch black night where there's no moon, these things floating in the water to a whale or a dolphin that uses echolocation, not its eyesight, to find food, this looks like a squid in the water, which is its favorite food. So once these things get eaten, it goes down and it's pretty much game over for these things.

The centerpiece of our education program with our second graders is a story about saving Inky, and I would ask that you just take a look at it on YouTube. It was made in 1995, so, you know, it's a very good, worthwhile piece to look at. It will also give you an idea why it's so important to keep

these in check.

As a lifelong Nassau County resident, I've always been envious of how Suffolk County has always led the way in the environment as far as saving the Pine Barrens, the Long Island Sound, and, you know, everything you guys do. We're always kind of lagging behind in Nassau County. And here you all have a chance to do something really great to save the life of a whale or a dolphin, and how many, you know, chances do you get to actually do that?

Our motto in Operation Splash is we're always trying to put ourselves out of business, and if you pass this bill, this will help do that. Thank you very much.

*(*Applause*)*

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you. Our next speaker is Rebecca Grella, Dr. Rebecca Grella.

DR. GRELLA:

Good afternoon, Health Committee. I'm Dr. Rebecca Grella, here on behalf of Brentwood Union Free School District. I'm both a scientist and an educator with the district, and I'm here to present you --

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

You have a video? That's you?

DR. GRELLA:

-- with some scientific evidence in the form of a video.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Okay. I don't know. We're going to work maybe to technically get that. Is that ready to go or --

MS. ALEXANDER:

Janice is coming up.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

All right. So I'm going to just maybe defer you for just a moment so we can get your video up.

DR. GRELLA:

Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

All right. Thank you, Dr. Grella, I appreciate that. So while we're waiting for the video, our next speaker is Jeremy Samuelson, with Concerned Citizens of Montauk. Thank you, Jeremy.

MR. SAMUELSON:

Thank you. Again, Jeremy Samuelson, representing Concerned Citizens of Montauk. We're a professional not-for-profit organization representing 1600 individuals, families and businesses that live, work and play in Montauk. I'm here today to support the legislation to ban the use of plastic bags. I just want to ask you to note that in East Hampton Town, this legislation or similar legislation was adopted several years ago, and it took a few years to get through, because the industry that produces these materials made a point of trying to make sure that the legislation didn't go through in East Hampton.

And we heard a series of arguments against what I would describe as just common sense legislation.

The first one was that it would present an onerous burden on working families. We then heard that there would be a need for pensioners to raid their life savings to afford these reusable bags. I'm not making this up, this is literally what we were told, this is in the public record. We were then told that it would be unworkable for retail establishments because of the cost or the storage space necessary. We were then told that workers would need to be laid off because of the additional burden of costs associated with this program. And then we were finally told, when the legislation finally passed, that actually plastic bags are better for the environment than the alternatives, either reusable bags or paper bags. This is, of course, patently absurd. Nobody has ever done a necropsy on a whale and found a paper bag or a reusable bag.

It's worth noting that, you know, nations around the world for over two decades have had legislation exactly like this in place, and, yet, their retail environments continue to thrive. Somehow it is possible in the nation of Germany to go to a store and purchase whatever you'd like and not be handed a reusable bag, and we've duplicated that again in East Hampton Town. So I would encourage you to look at the local examples in Southampton and East Hampton Town, ask yourself if those programs have been successful, ask yourself if any of the negative impacts that were predicted by industry have, in fact, come to be borne out for the residents or the employees of these institutions, if any institutions have gone out of business, or if a single worker has, in fact, been laid off as a result of the legislation that bans plastic bags. I think you will find that the answer is no.

You know, anecdotally, almost everyone now, since the legislation has taken effect in East Hampton Town, has modified our behavior, and sometimes we need government to lead the way. Sometimes we need a nudge here. You know, it's what your agency did back when DDT was the greatest environmental threat facing our region, it's what you did through the lens of public safety when you banned texting on driving. You were and continue to be national leaders. I would ask you to remember that, and I would ask you to embrace this legislation with the same open heart and care for our community that prompted you to act on those items when you did. Thank you so much.

*(*Applause*)*

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Our next speaker is Adrienne Esposito. Adrienne. I know she's around. Oh, there she goes.

MS. ESPOSITO:

Would I miss this?

*(*Laughter*)*

Thank you very much. Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director of Citizens Campaign for the Environment. I'm sure it's not going to be any shock that we strongly support this bill. But I'm not going to give you stats and numbers, and you will hear a lot of them today. What I'm going to say to is that we change, right? I mean, we no longer heat our homes and our businesses on Main Street with coal. We no longer spray DDT all over our communities and our families. We no longer put MTBE and lead in gasoline. As we know more, we do better. We adopt and change as a society, and that's what we're asking you to do to here with plastic bags.

I mean, the truth is plastic bags are a mistake of the past. Reusable bags are the solution for the future. We're asking you not to keep us stuck with the mistake of the past, to move us forward, as all those cities and counties and states and nations throughout the globe have already done. We're not asking you to be the first, we're just asking you not to be the last.

I've been around these battles for a long time, over 30 years. Every time environmentalists have worked to do something like the bottle bill or banning MTBE from gasoline, industry comes out in

droves. You've all seen it already in all the many things that you've done, and they always give you cataclysmic events that will occur. I mean, if we put nickel on bottles, we won't survive. Coca Cola came down to right here, Suffolk County, and said, "We're going to go out of the business. Jobs will be lost, sales will decrease." And what happened? Nothing. In fact, Coca Cola and Pepsi saw skyrocketing sales, they added jobs. What else did we see? We saw more jobs added in the recycling industry. It actually ended up being a gain. Litter was reduced, jobs were gained.

What happened when the Suffolk Legislator wanted to -- Legislature wanted to ban MTBE? The industry, the oil industry went nuts. They were down here. Do you remember what they told you? I'll tell you in case you weren't here. They told you that you would be the reason for skyrocketing gas prices. They couldn't possibly make a boutique gasoline, that was their phrase, just for Suffolk County, and gas prices would go up to 4 and \$5 a barrel, and life as we know it would be ruined and you're going to ruin the County. What happened? Well, you banned MTBE, you stood up to them, and then New York State banned it, and then Connecticut banned it, and then the nation banned it, and we are cleaner, safer and healthier for it, and that's really what we're asking you to do with this, to make us cleaner, safer and healthier.

And, yes, there are a lot of configurations out there. I know some of you are saying, "Why don't we do a fee? Why don't we" -- you know what, you want to solve the problem, support the ban. That's the answer to the problem. That's how we're going to get there. I know it will be inconvenient. You're right, it will be, just like the bottle bill was, just like banning MTBE was, but we got through it together and we're better for it. Thank you very much.

*(*Applause*)*

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Wow, Adrienne. Thank you. I'm impressed with your timing, too, by the way.

MS. ESPOSITO:

I planned this.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

That was amazing. All right. The next speaker is -- oh, do we have the video presentation? Is it ready?

MR. FLACK:

No, not yet. Not yet.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

All right. Almost there. Next speaker is Anthony Graves with the Brookhaven Town Supervisor Association.

MR. GRAVES:

Hi. Good afternoon. Thanks for the opportunity to speak. I'm here on behalf of Supervisor Romaine, and as the Town's lead environmental official, the Town of Brookhaven that is.

The Supervisor supports the plastic bag ban for multiple reasons, including the environmental harm they do mostly to our waterways; the tremendous expense to private businesses and local governments that have to clean up the litter that results; the aesthetic impacts to our communities from the litter; the ability of the plastic bags to hold rainwater and provide mosquito breeding sites, of particular concern, given recent information regarding the Zika virus and the fact that the Aedes genus that is the vector for the Zika virus is common in Suffolk County.

The unknowns regarding the fate of the plastic particles that plastic bags generate, as the plastic breaks down into smaller particles, it becomes incorporated into the soil. The environmental and health effects of these small plastic particles is completely unknown. The availability of reasonable alternatives, there are many reasonable alternatives to plastic bags that do not have the same degree of environmental harm. These include reusable plastic bags and paper bags. Paper bags, it's noted, are biodegradable. The fact that plastic bags are manufactured from petroleum products, creating demand for petroleum-based products contributes to the environmental and health impacts associated with the petroleum industry.

On a local note, plastic bags have disrupted operations at our material recycling facility on a number of occasions, because they clog up the conveyor belts and gears.

And then this is based on my personal observation. I wanted to note that I enjoy offshore fishing, and over the past 30 years or so, I've gone on five or six trips a year that venture from 30 to 100 miles south of Fire Island out in the ocean. While I enjoy many things about being out there, such as huge schools of dolphins, sighting of whales, and, of course, catching fish, there's something that I see that has consistently bothered me and that's plastic shopping bags far out at sea. The plastic shopping bags and mylar balloons, I could confidentially state that one of those is in sight at any given time when you're 75 to 100 miles off the coast. So that's why you're trolling. That means you're passing hundreds and hundreds of these on every offshore trip, and that's just my individual observation. If you multiply that by the amount of area out there, it tells you that there's millions of bags out in the ocean.

And, finally, I just wanted to note that if we could get all that stuff out of Costco without using bags, we can probably adapt to going to the grocery store and not having bags. Thank you for your time.

*(*Applause*)*

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you very much. We appreciate your testimony, and please pass on our regards to the Supervisor.

MR. GRAVES:

I will.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you. Our next speaker is Joseph Keyes, Trustee from the Village of Patchogue.

TRUSTEES KEYES:

Good afternoon. And thank you, everybody, for having me back. I was here a few weeks ago, so I will be brief, because I extended my three minutes by far last time, so I'll be polite this time.

LEG. FLEMING:

You get three more.

TRUSTEE KEYES:

I'm back -- I'm sorry?

LEG. FLEMING:

You get three more, a fresh three.

TRUSTEE KEYES:

I can start fresh. Legislator Calarco says I owe him about a minute-and-a-half, so I'll be quick.

*(*Laughter*)*

I'm back, actually, because Mayor Pontieri encouraged me to come back to confirm on the record that both he and the entire Village Board strongly urge you guys to pass the bag legislation. As you know, we passed ours back in June of 2015. It takes effect Labor Day of this year. We allowed ample time for the merchants to exhaust their inventory of what they had on hand. We are anxious for it to start. We're more anxious for you guys to pass it, for obvious reasons. But, you know, I just briefly want to say that the arguments that I heard last time I was here, in my own personal opinion, offered very little. I think they were made by people who either don't quite understand the purpose of the bill, or they're just trying to confuse you into misunderstanding the purpose of the bill. It's got nothing to do with replacing plastic for paper. We don't want to bring more paper, that's not the purpose of the bill. It is a reuse, reuse, reuse with the cloth bag over and over.

As far as the fee, I differ maybe in opinion from some. I think it's almost necessary. We don't waive the penalty for not wearing a seatbelt because it's a hardship on the poor. It's a penalty. I know it's maybe a little different in comparison, but I think the fee is just another means of a forced compliance and I don't see anything wrong with that. Seatbelt law was forced compliance, traffic violations, fees and penalties are forced compliance. They protect lives. I believe the ban on the bag protects the quality of life for all of us involved.

So I know you've heard all the arguments, I'm not going to say anything different. The speakers that preceded me, I kind of mirror everything they say, so I'm not going to repeat that. Thank you again. I made it. Have a good afternoon.

*(*Applause*)*

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you once again for coming out. And, you know, we appreciate the Village helping us and weighing in on this issue to let us know your experience. Thank you.

The video is ready, but I only have two more cards. So I'm going to do those cards, and then we'll have our last speaker, will be Dr. Grella with her video presentation. So we have -- looks like Justin Christensen, if I have --

MS. CHRISTENSEN:

Jordan.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Oh, Jordan. Jordan, okay. Jordan with Citizen's Campaign. Hi, Jordan. Thank you.

MS. CHRISTENSEN:

Sorry. Once again, apologize for my handwriting on the card. I'm Jordan Christensen. I'm with Citizens Campaign for the Environment. You heard from me last time, you've heard from Adrienne. We, obviously, strongly support the bill and urge you to pass it. So I'll be brief.

All I wanted to do is give you a quick rundown of some of the local environmental, and then also the potential economic impacts of the bill. So I know we talk about this a lot on a global scale, plastic pollution in our oceans and the long lasting impacts, but the truth is it's also a very local problem for us.

So, first off, just a quote from the Riverhead Research Foundation. "It's fairly common to find plastic and single-use plastic bags in the crop seas of turtles, seals, dolphins and whales." And I'm

also going to pass around a couple of pictures taken on the South Shore by Dr. Artie Kopelman at CRESLI of seals that are being strangled by plastic bags locally. And I only have six of each copy, so you guys might have to share. Sorry about that. But, I mean, we know we see the litter. We know that when it rains, these things go into our storm drains, and, of course, they're ending up in the Long Island Sound, the Peconic, the Great South Bay.

And a quick note on the economics. One of the big issues is that on the way to becoming ocean litter, these plastic bags are getting caught in storm drains and causing localized flooding. Actually, back in 1998, Bangladesh had floods that submerged two-thirds of their country, which is why they ended up banning the bag, but that was largely an economic issue for them, as well as a public safety issue.

And as far as some of the economic impacts you heard last time, I would just like to counter them with some of the studies out in California which have essentially the same bill. So in Santa Monica, San Jose, L.A. County, studies found a slight positive impact of the bag bans that they have, and they also have the charge on paper. So not only did municipalities save money because they weren't cleaning these bags out of storm drains or landfilling them, San Francisco saved \$3 million. New York City, they spend \$10 million every year getting rid of the bags. But they also had decreased flooding. They had an increased market for reusable bags in San Francisco, and in L.A. County, they found that almost 4 to \$5 million in savings over the course of the year for the County in groceries in the form of lower prices, because grocers were no longer putting the penny-and-a-half or two cents for all the bags into the price of the groceries.

So this makes economic sense and public health sense, but it also makes economic sense, which is why I would urge you to pass it as soon as possible. Thank you.

*(*Applause*)*

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Very well spoken, Jordan. Thank you once again for being here. George Hoffman with the -- with Setauket Harbor Task Force.

MR. HOFFMAN:

Good afternoon. For the record, my name is George Hoffman, and I'm with the Setauket Harbor Task Force. We're a clean water and healthy harbors environmental group that's located in western Brookhaven.

I spoke at the last meeting of the full Legislature about two weeks ago supporting the ban on plastic bags. In addition to all of the just common sense environmental reasons why we want to get plastic bags out of our waste stream, I did talk about the proud tradition of this Legislature in terms of being a leader on environmental initiatives. There's been several really great initiatives that this Legislature has crusaded on, and in a lot of ways have set the standards for the state and for the nation. But the one I want to focus on, has been mentioned a couple of times today, and that's the bottle bill.

I actually was working here as an Aide for the County Legislature back in the '80s and I remember numerous nights of debates, they would go to 3, 4, 5 in the morning from the industry. You know, it was the beverage, the supermarkets saying basically some of the same issues that we're hearing here on the plastic bags, that it would add more cost to their product, that they had no room for handling the deposit on the bottles. They even raised safety issue about bottles coming back that were not clean and there could be all types of disease and virus. This Legislature decided to continue the course. I think it was very important. Once the Legislature passed that bill, New York State soon followed behind it, and now in almost all the states of this country, we have a really well

functioning bottle deposit bill.

So I just want to urge you to continue the course here. I think it's really important what we're doing. And I want to commend you, both individually and as an institution, for your strong environmental leadership over the last 45 years. Thank you very much.

*(*Applause*)*

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you, George. John Turner with the Setauket or Seatuck Environmental Association. Thank you.

MR. TURNER:

Thank you, Chairman Spencer. It is the Seatuck Environmental Association, although we do have some environmental education programs in Setauket as well.

I appreciate the opportunity on behalf of Seatuck to provide some comments to you today. I happen to serve as a conservation policy advocate for the organization, and start off by indicating to you our very strong support for the adoption of Introductory Resolution 1207. We've, I think, indicated that support in a letter that you got previously, Enrico Nardone, the Executive Director provided, and in that letter spelled out the rationale for why we think it's a great idea for the County Legislature to adopt this. It's largely in keeping what you've heard other speakers already mention in terms of the very positive environmental results that will occur and have occurred in other places that implemented similar identical bills to the County proposal.

I know that Anthony Graves, who has spoken on behalf of the Town of Brookhaven, shared with you kind of an anecdotal story about his experience of seeing plastic bags and mylar balloons offshore when he goes out deep sea fishing. I want to share just one experience I've had where I like to do is clamming. And I was clamming last year in the Great South Bay in a secret spot I won't mention to anybody. But in the process of clamming, and just, you know, digging in the sand, in the spit, in half an hour, I came across four buried plastic bags. And I have to say that that is very disheartening and disturbing for a variety of reasons. The most notable thing, that if I found that number of bags, which I'm not sure it represents what's out there, but nevertheless, it's some indication about the incredible abundance of plastic in the environment. What kind of impact could that be having on a wide variety of wildlife, and in, ultimately, us humans that are at the top of at least most food chains.

And so when you take a look at the really significant adverse impacts of plastics on the marine environment, on animals, ultimately on people, if you take a look at, again, the literature that indicates when these plastic bags do break down, they photodegrade into microscopic plastic particles, the havoc that they are likely wreaking in -- are wreaking on food chains and the food web is very alarming. And I think it's to your great credit. I'd like to applaud Legislator Spencer for your introduction of this measure, and to other sponsors of the bill, and to urge its adoption.

The last point I'll make is, again, to make it anecdotal, I the other day -- I happen to live in Nassau County, soon to live in Setauket in Suffolk County, but I'm driving from the Sunrise Mall west over to the Montauk Parkway, and in that process, I counted 37 bags that were adorning the trees and fences. I call it Long Island Spanish moss for the way it adorns the trees along our roadways. So it's really a bill whose time has come. You know from the track record and experience of the many, many dozens of countries and other municipalities that have adopted this legislation what kind of the problems were. And I think your legislation is spot on in terms of having a dual approach of the ban on the single-use plastic bags, while at the same time putting in place the fee. That will drive, again, a reduction in overall use of bags.

So, again, Seatuck Environmental Association strongly supports it and urges its adoption.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you.

*(*Applause*)*

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Where is your association? You're not in Setauket. Where are you?

MR. TURNER:

Well, I'm sorry, I didn't say. We're in Islip, New York. Actually, the Environmental Association is located at the Scully Estate, Suffolk County Preserve, a wonderful preserve located on the west side of South Bay Avenue in Legislator Cilmi's district, who is quite familiar with it and comes down on a regular basis to enjoy the preserve. So we're in Islip on the west side of South Bay Avenue.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Wow. Thank you for what you do. It looks like Legislator Cilmi grabbed the mic. Do you have a comment?

LEG. CILMI:

I was just going to say that's Suffolk County Environmental Center, which --

MR. TURNER:

Yes.

LEG. CILMI:

Which this Legislature set aside some funding to support some years ago. I think Cameron Alden was the Legislator back then.

MR. TURNER:

Right, yeah.

LEG. CILMI:

They do a great job.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

I'm very excited to be working with your Legislator to make sure we do the right thing.

MR. TURNER:

We've enjoyed -- we've met with Legislator Cilmi, had a very, I think, useful dialog. I mean, to some extent, we agree to disagree on certain elements of it. But I think he raised some really valid and good points that --

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

At the end of the day, in all seriousness, he is very thoughtful and hardworking.

MR. TURNER:

Yeah.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

And we're going to work on this together. Thank you. All right. Dr. Grella, we saved the ultimate,

I guess, testimony with the video. So how long is the video?

DR. GRELLA:

The video is 2 minutes and 37 seconds.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Beautiful, that's perfect. That --

DR. GRELLA:

I could even talk you through the video. But first, before we start the clock, my name is Dr. Rebecca Grella. I'm here on behalf of Brentwood High School. I'm a scientist and an educator.

What I have here that I brought to the meeting is a plastic bag and a piece of sandpaper, and the plastic bag and the piece of sandpaper went through an intensive abrasive wave action, which meant that my students sat and scrubbed paper bags -- plastic bags over a petri dish to obtain the purple plastic particles that you see in the mouth of this organism on the screen. This is the *Nematostella vectensis*, also known as the Starlet sea anemone. It is an anemone. It is what Nemo lives in in *Finding Nemo*. "I live it an anemone."

*(*Laughter*)*

It is an cnidarian, it is a jellyfish. We've spoke of organisms consuming these jellyfish for food, mistaking jellyfish -- plastic, rather, for jellyfish.

And what you see here is an organism, the *Nematostella vectensis*. The organism is about three centimeters in length. Right now, what you're looking at is his head, the head of the organism, with the oral entrance at here, and then the tentacles, the stinging tentacles like that of a jellyfish.

If we press play on the video, we're going to see this in 16 times motion, where the piece of plastic, that purple piece of plastic is ingested into the oral cavity or the head of the organism. It goes down the pharynx. Now this organism has a pipeline, kind of like a tube for a digestive system that goes straight, right through the organism. The purple -- the purple piece of plastic actually does go to about mid section of the organism. So as we're watching it, we'll just watch it wiggle around.

The stinging tentacles, the cells of the organism are called nematocysts. The nematocyst normally sting a moving prey like brine shrimp. What's being ingested right now is a piece of fish food. We had to actually fake the organism into believing that the same surface area, which was less than 1.5 millimeters, was like that of a fish flake. So right now, what's inside the body cavity is not only the plastic chard, which is the abrasive chard from the plastic bag, but also a flake of food. So for those of you that could imagine this on a grand scale, this could be a sea turtle eating a piece of plastic. But, more importantly, this could be us eating a shellfish, a piece of shellfish, a *Crassostrea virginica*. We're known for our oysters, we're known for our clams. This is just a little bit larger piece of plastic that comes off of this bag. The smaller pieces of plastic are filtered through the shellfish that we eat, which, in turn, wind up in us.

Now, for those of you that are unaware of the harmful -- the harm of a plastic bag, a plastic bag is much like a kitchen sink where it absorbs everything. You throw all your stuff in the kitchen sink, well, chemicals do absorb to the plastic. The plastic is not just plastic being ingested by the organisms, other harmful toxins in the environment that are absorbed by the plastic.

So what I'd like for you to think of is looking at this metaphor contract, the peristaltic contraction that you're seeing in the organism is exactly what we would be experiencing if we were eating

shellfish that were contaminated with some sort of toxin or plastic, we just wouldn't know it.

Long-term exposure to these plastics are not beneficial to human health, and they are known to cause cancer. So, as a Health Board, I think it's very imperative for you to consider the facts that plastics, there are multiple, really multiple -- you know, there are multiple issues here to address, and right here is an organism ingesting this plastic.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you, Dr. Grella. Just a question for you with regards to some of the arguments out there, is when we talk about pollution. And the heavier plastic bags, and bottles, and paper, they are toxic to the environment, create just as big of a footprint. But the difference, are you indicating with the plastic, thin plastic bags, is that they are a threat to the wildlife, that the thick plastic bags and paper bags are not because they're small and ingested?

DR. GRELLA:

Paper will biodegrade, the plastics will not biodegrade. Over time, wave action can turn a macroplastic into a microplastic. So I do have another video that's on this YouTube channel that the kids made with me and a pamphlet here showing you the ingestion of a microplastic. So you passed a bill on microplastics. The microplastics are found in facial scrubs and toothbrushes, and they will no longer be in use starting 2017. But point being macroplastics do become these microplastics. And I don't think people are aware of the fact that plastic are -- plastic is a plastic is a plastic. Unless we come up with a -- of a more biodegradable plastic or a plastic that's based on something that is nonharmful, like these students here, we have a ways to go.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you, Doctor, appreciate it. Thanks for the video. That was very enlightening.

*(*Applause*)*

Legislator Fleming has a comment.

LEG. FLEMING:

Yeah. No. Thank you, Doctor. I really appreciate your presentation. And I just wanted to make a couple of points that I haven't heard so far. I'm very proud to see my constituents, Stuart Lowrie from Nature Conservancy, and Jeremy Samuelson is from the Concerned Citizens of Montauk here. They both come from towns that banned plastic bags. But it wasn't just the Town of Southampton and the Town of East Hampton. In my district, it's also the Village of Sag Harbor, the Village of East Hampton, the Village of Southampton and the Village of Quogue. So it's happening. And we've heard from Patchogue. It's happening and it's coming across, and now it would be appropriate for us to just get on board, I think.

But with regard to the health -- with regard to the health aspects, one thing that I haven't heard -- and I appreciate your examination of what happens to the bags in the marine environment, but I just recently heard reported that the plastic is being credited, so to speak, for the migration of invasive species in the estuary system. So we're having a really tough time with invasive species of plants that are depriving the bays of oxygen, and that are destroying habitats for marine life that we're accustomed to, including shellfish, in our bays and in our economy. And what we found -- what they're finding now is that invasive species are basically hopping on board the plastics.

DR. GRELLA:

The floating island hypothesis.

LEG. FLEMING:

Yeah, exactly. But it's happening even within our estuary system. So it's a way of -- you know, that's the thing about pollution. And I think it's so great that people are looking for alternative ways of creating convenient bags, or ways of recycling bags. But what we really need to do is just reduce the introduction of contaminating products into our waste stream. We're on an island. We have to carry our trash out, if we don't bury it, if it doesn't have another -- if we can't get rid of it. So there are very real economic costs to carrying any kind of solid waste that we're creating off the Island. So any kind of unnecessary pollutants that we can get out of the waste stream is going to take us forward and is going to save us money.

And if you'll recall, at that long meeting we had, the General Meeting, there was a retailer who actually agreed with me, that in the long run, this is going to save retailers money, because we're shifting them away from the use of paper or plastic or the heavier plastics.

And I know for those who are concerned, senior citizens, folks who are concerned that this is going to be inappropriate -- inconvenient, I just pulled out from my bag two bags that I always have that just unfold. And this bag was actually given to me as a gift in December of 2014, when we passed the plastic bag ban, and I've been using it almost every day ever since, except when I throw it in the washing machine. So they last forever. There are all different versions. This has a little toggle switch. But -- not switch, but clip. But, anyway, I just wanted to add those thoughts.

I'm sorry to keep you at the podium, but I really appreciate what you've brought forward. There's just an awful lot that hasn't been discussed, because it's just an idea that's time has come.

DR. GRELLA:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you. Thanks, Dr. Grella. That's all the cards that I have. Is there anyone else that wishes to be heard? Seeing none, we're going to close. Oh, yes. Please come up, and after you -- just state your name, please. We know we presented you with a proclamation. It's not to see, you Doctor.

DR. PINKENBURG:

My name is Chris Pinkenburg. Since I heard my home country, Germany, so we went through this in Germany about 20 -- no, 30 years ago now. So plastic bags were banned. It was a big uproar, because, yeah, what do you do with shopping? So, as it turns out, our forest, there's no plastic bags anymore. And what the shops actually do nowadays, they sell you durable plastic bags. So it's still plastic, but it's more durable, and they can use them as reusable shopping bags. That works very well. The problem is whenever we come back to Germany, we go shopping, we're like, "Forgot the bag again."

LEG. FLEMING:

There are things in your bag now.

DR. PINKENBURG:

Exactly. We buy one of those, and we are basically set for the holiday over there. So it's perfectly feasible. In the beginning, there was resistance, but it worked out very well, and I can only recommend that it would be great if you can get this in Suffolk.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thanks for offering your testimony and your perspective.

(*Applause*)

Thank you very much. So that's all our speakers. At this time, we're going to close the public comment, and we're going to move on to our agenda. But what I'd like to request that we do, when we have appointments, we usually take them out of order. And we do have an appointment to the Disability Board, Stephanie Baldwin, who's here with us. So I'm going to ask for a motion to take **1264 (Approving the appointment of Stephanie Baldwin to the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board Group D (Co. Exec.)** out of order. May I have a second?

LEG. FLEMING:

Second.

LEG. CILMI:

Second.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Second by Legislator Flemming. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote: Approved to Take out of Order 7-0-0-0)**

We have the motion before us. So, Stephanie, would you mind coming forward and just taking a moment to introduce yourself? If you could just tell us your name. Well, we know your name, but just where you're from, and any comment that you have. And if you'd like to sit at the table, we usually extend that courtesy to those who are coming for appointments.

And I'll ask for a motion to approve. May I have a second?

LEG. CILMI:

Second.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Tom Cilmi is the second. So on the motion, we have Ms. Baldwin before us, so thank you for being here.

MS. BALDWIN:

I just want to thank you so much for having me. And my name is Stephanie Baldwin and I am a resident of Suffolk County for about three years now.

The Disability -- Suffolk County Disability Advisory Board appointment is very important to me. I was born with cerebral palsy and I've had many challenges to overcome. And even here, standing before you today, is really a dream come true for me. I've always wanted to be here and to be appointed to a Board. But, actually, I'm an attorney, and it's taken me a long time to get here, but I'm here. And I have really spent a good majority of my life advocating for others, and I plan to do that as a Board member.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Well, thank you, first of all, for being willing to come and help us out and be a part of this committee. We appreciate just what you've been able to overcome and be successful as an attorney. And you will provide inspiration to those who are -- who are working with disabilities to, you know, let them know just that there's nothing that they can't accomplish. And you really serve as a beacon of hope to us all, so thank you. And I appreciate and are looking forward to working with you.

Are there any other comments? If not, all those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote:**

Approved 7-0-0-0)

Congratulations. Your appointment is passed unanimously. It does have to go in front of the full Legislature on Tuesday, which will be really the official approval, but you don't have to appear there again. Congratulations.

MS. BALDWIN:

Thank you is so much.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you. Thank you.

(*Applause*)

TABLED RESOLUTIONS

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

So we're going to go back to our Tabled Resolutions, and the first one is ***I.R. 1000 - A Local Law to increase awareness of dry cleaning chemical use (Hahn)***. I'll make a motion to table. Public hearing is still open. Seconded by Legislator Martinez. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion is tabled unanimously. (***Vote: Tabled for Public Hearing 7-0-0-0***).

I.R. 1020 - A Local Law to ban the sale of formaldehyde for use in holding tanks (Spencer). This has been vetted. I'm going to make a motion to approve. The public hearing is closed. The Health Department has had a chance to look at this. And I'm going to ask for a motion to approve, seconded by Legislator Kennedy.

On the motion. And we do have actually from the Town of Huntington -- would you like to come forward before us, please -- is here to also address this.

And I just wanted to give a little bit of information to my colleagues who may have some consideration or concerns. And thank you for being here. Can you state your name for the record?

MR. LITZKE:

My name is Bob Litzke. I'm an employee with the Town of Huntington. I work for the Department of Maritime Services. And it became an issue with the changeover in our sewage treatment plant technology, and it came to our attention that we're actually putting chemicals into holding tanks, which then end up getting pumped into the sewage treatment plant. Those chemicals affect the -- I guess the process or the balance of how the waste is treated, and eventually that material gets pumped out into Huntington Harbor, and we felt that that was not a good way of doing business.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

So thank you very much for that information. I just want, as the sponsor of the legislation, to just kind of give a brief summary of why and what is going on. And so the issue is, is that formaldehyde is among a group of chemicals that we would consider embalming chemicals that are on recreational boats, they're in porta-potties. And usually what happens with them is that when there's any live organic matter, as soon as it hits this embalming solution, it immediately ceases all life, it kills it. And there are a few other chemicals that we've listed in this particular legislation. And that has been the way that we have provided sanitation, especially to areas where there is stagnant waste, particularly holding tanks in boats. Well, now, what has happened over the past few years is that there has been what they call green products, and these work in an enzymatic fashion, that they don't have the chemical composition. They're not in the embalming class of chemicals. And what they're able to do is they are also just as effective and their cost has come down.

So the Town approached my office with regards to the concern here, is that with boat -- recreational boating, and they have holding tanks where they utilize either a pumpout boat or pumpout stations, and they empty their waste into these stations, these stations, when these holding tanks contain formaldehyde-like chemicals, they can only go to sewer treatment plants with scavenger sites, so -- such as Bergen Point, the Town of Huntington. I think there's maybe one in Riverhead. I may have my facts wrong, but there's a few, and not every sewer treatment plant is a scavenger site.

Well, now what happens is that along the coast, there are a lot of different pumpout sites, and because now these chemicals can only go to a specific scavenger site, that means there's less availability, there's more expense, they have to be trucked to one site. And so one of the things they would like to do is to use other sewer treatment plants, but the DEC won't permit it, and as long as the holding tanks contain these formaldehyde-containing solutions.

So the benefit of this legislation now will allow the Town to petition the DEC so that they can use some of their other sewer treatment plants. That will provide more options for recreational boaters, that will provide more service, and, also, it's an opportunity to decrease the amount of formaldehyde actually on the waterways.

So we did have some counter -- some concerns from the American Chemical Association that understands what we're doing here. So it's a very specific request. This legislation doesn't interfere currently with what's happening in porta-potties, you know, which is another source of formaldehyde, which may be something that has to be addressed. But this protects our water. This is backed by the recreational boating community, and which is the Greater Huntington Boat and Yachting Club. It's also support by the Marina community. AMI has come out, and they're the ones that are in retail selling these products. So this is something the Town wants, the boaters want, the Marina community wants, so -- and we've had it vetted through the Health Department. I know the Health Department, as far as -- you know, they expressed just enforcement of concerns with -- if they needed another staff member. But, in this particular case, the Town is motivated as far as preventing boaters from using the formaldehyde. So they will assist in there, so the boaters will be -- want to be able to use the pumpout stations, so this will enforce them using the green products.

So I hope I have explained it. I apologize if it was too long. And, Legislator Cilmi, I maybe answered your question, but I saw you reaching for your microphone.

LEG. CILMI:

Thanks, Mr. Chairman. The -- I was just curious about your outreach on this bill. We have the Town of Huntington represented here. You mentioned the Town of Huntington Boat --

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Greater Huntington, but then we went out to the East End, and AMI, which I think is -- represents all of Long Island, the marina community. They've written a letter of support supporting this, and they're the ones that are actually retail for selling these products and they represented that. That's --

LEG. CILMI:

How about the other towns, have the other towns weighed in?

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

As far as with -- the Greater Huntington Boating and Yachting Club is 50 yacht clubs. They're from all over Long Island. It just happens to have that name, but there are other towns that are

involved.

LEG. CILMI:

But townships, have there been other townships that -- have you reached out to other townships to ask about this bill?

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Not individually, but there has been, I think, a -- as far as the information being disseminated, I don't think other towns have -- well, I take that back. Let me see who's here. Well, we do have Walter and Dr. Tomarken who are also here. Dr. Tomarken, would you be able to come up for me, please?

LEG. CILMI:

While Dr. Tomarken is coming up, my concern is that we don't pass this -- pass this bill, and then, you know, sometime, a month or two or three down the road, we start hearing from folks who didn't know about this and who have, you know, maybe some valid concerns about the legislation.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Sure. I mean, we did quite a bit of due diligence, I mean, the usual process as far as hitting those that use the product and those that sell the product, and kind of reaching out. But as far as --

LEG. CILMI:

Boaters that use the product.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Right.

LEG. CILMI:

Right?

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

And vendors that sell the product.

LEG. CILMI:

Marinas that sell the property.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Right, and they're in support of this. But from a municipal outreach, it came to me from a municipality, but it didn't seem that if those two affected parties were in agreement, I didn't do any specific outreach to any individual towns necessarily, because I felt I had covered the standards.

LEG. CILMI:

Right. How did you reach out to the boating community specifically?

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Once -- they actually came to me, which the --

LEG. CILMI:

Well, there's lots of boaters on Long Island, so --

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Sure.

LEG. CILMI:

How did -- who's "they", this particular yacht club?

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Well, this isn't a yacht club, actually. This is the association, like the Board of Supervisors. This is a representative for 50 yacht clubs, their leadership came. So they have stakeholders and they represent over so many thousands of families who are boaters. So it's not one yacht club, it's the Association of Yacht Clubs.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. And they wrote you a letter in support in an official capacity and --

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Yes, they did.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

So this, we have -- thank you for being here, and I know that you -- we had tabled this for a little while, while we looked into it. And did I express accurately just kind of the Health Department's position, really being more from the enforcement issue?

DR. TOMARKEN:

It's just the potential, because you never know how many complaints we'll get. And just to be aware that if it got to be overwhelming, then we might need additional support. But we don't think that will happen, but I can't predict.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Okay. Thank you. And from your research and looking at this legislation, and having discussion that we had, was it reasonable that the enzymatic products that are out there on the market are fairly equivalent in terms of their safety and effectiveness, that it was not an unreasonable substitution, and they make up a vast majority of the market?

DR. TOMARKEN:

I'll let Amy Juchatz, our Toxicologist, answer that.

MS. JUCHATZ:

Okay. The information that we had, I guess, you know, we're not really the users of these products. So there was some literature that we found that seemed that their -- the limits of their usability, that they may be a little more finicky than some of the chemical biocides. But, again, there were certainly reports in the literature they were effective. So, you know, I think that's -- again, we're not the user community, so I think that's information really from the users that could relay their experience with those products a lot better than we could.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Any additional thoughts or comments?

MS. JUCHATZ:

No.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you. And it's a brief letter, but I'll just do the highlights, because they do not only represent

the -- they really claim to represent the boating community. So it's, "AMI is an organization primarily in Suffolk County, represent over 100 marinas throughout Suffolk County in marine-related businesses. It was great to hear that we agree on many issues facing Suffolk County in the marine issue" -- "marine industry. I would like to take this opportunity to lend our support to I.R. 1020. Your proposed ban on formaldehyde and chemicals used to treating holding tanks specifically in boats across Suffolk County. We feel this legislation would protect the health and safety of those that use our waterways around Suffolk County, and would also help stop the potential health hazard to the residents in our County." And it goes on. So that's -- so I tried to do some due diligence here. So any other concerns? Seeing none -- oh, Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Correct me if I'm wrong. Formaldehyde is a solvent, so why would anybody think that using organic enzymes would be more harmful than using formaldehyde? I would think that the enzymes are preferred for our waterways.

MS. JUCHATZ:

Right. I would think that that is definitely true. And they would be -- the enzyme-based products would be more environmentally friendly than formaldehyde.

DR. TOMARKEN:

I think what she may have been referring to is how effective are they.

MS. JUCHATZ:

Yes.

DR. TOMARKEN:

Because they're there to reduce the odor, and if it doesn't do that, people are not going to be unhappy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Is it solely the odor that boaters are worried about, or is it the digestion of the waste?

MS. JUCHATZ:

I think it is the --

LEG. KENNEDY:

I'm not a boater.

MS. JUCHATZ:

It's mostly for odor control while it's on the boat, and then that waste is then pumped out and then eventually goes to a treatment facility. So, yes, thank you for the clarification if I was unclear. It's really in terms of the usability for the boater, that the -- some of the reports that we saw in the literature seem to indicate that some of these -- the enzymatic ones were a little bit more finicky in terms of their ability to control odors while on the boat, that they had some, you know, limits in terms of their usability. But there certainly were other reports where users were, you know, saying that they were effective. So, again, I think that that's really a -- would be better to get that answered from people who are experienced in using the product on boats.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

So I'm going to ask if you all would remain with us as we cover the agenda, because there are a

couple of other, I think, resolutions that there might be a couple of questions. So just make yourself comfortable, if you don't mind.

So I have a -- I'll make a motion to approve. Do we have a motion and a second?

MS. ELLIS:

Yes, we have a motion and a second.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

All right. All those in favor? Any in opposition? Any abstentions? **(Vote: Approved 7-0-0-0).**

Thank you very much, everyone. I really appreciate that, your consideration on that bill.

I.R. 1151(A Charter Law to elicit public input and require legislative approval of fee changes (Cilmi), adopting a Local Law to elicit public support and require legislative approval for fee changes.

LEG. CILMI:

Motion to approve.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

There's a motion to approve.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

And second by Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. FLEMING:

Motion to table it.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Motion to table by Legislator Fleming, seconded by Legislator Calarco. Two motions. Anything on the motion? I think we have to debate it less here.

LEG. CILMI:

I think we sufficiently discussed this at the last meeting.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Motion to table goes first. All those in favor? Any opposed?

(Opposed: Legislators Cilmi, Kennedy and Trotta)

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Any abstentions? The motion, I think, is tabled. What is it?

MS. ELLIS:

Four. ***(Vote: Tabled 4-3-0-0/Opposed: Legislators Cilmi, Kennedy and Trotta)***

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

I.R. 1207 - A Local Law to prohibit the distribution of (plastic) carryout bags used in retail stores (sales) (Spencer). I'll make a motion. We've heard some extensive testimony, but I am working with the Administration. We are hearing from a lot of -- because there's implementation concerns, and they have asked if we would continue to -- continue to look at this. I see the overwhelming, I think, support, but there are definitely voices that are still being heard. So I will make a motion to table for one cycle, as I promised. Second?

LEG. FLEMING:

Second.

LEG. TROTТА:

(Raised hand).

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Seconded by Legislator Fleming. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion is tabled (***Vote: Tabled 7-0-0-0***). Really wanted to go for that there (laughter).

I.R. 1236 - A Local Law to regulate the use of the term "Organic" in dry cleaning establishments in Suffolk County (Hahn). The sponsor asked for a motion to table on this. I think there are some technical -- she wanted this one moved?

LEG. FLEMING:

Yes.

LEG. CALARCO:

Motion.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

All right. Motion to approve by Legislator Fleming, seconded by Legislator Calarco. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion is approved. (***Vote: Approved 7-0-0-0***)

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

I.R. 1255 - Amending the 2016 (Adopted) Operating Budget to accept and appropriate additional State Aid from the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (NYS OASAS) to various contract agencies (Co. Exec.). Is this 100% funded, Craig? Can this be placed on the Consent Calendar?

MR. FREAS:

I believe so.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

We'll take the money. I'll make a motion to approve and place on the Consent Calendar, seconded by Legislator Flemming. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Take the money. (***Vote: Approved 7-0-0-0***)

I.R. 1260 - Amending the 2016 (Adopted) Operating Budget to transfer and reduce funding to various contract agencies (Co. Exec.). So I'll make a motion to approve for the purposes of discussion, seconded by Legislator Calarco. On the motion. Can either -- well, I'll ask Craig. Can you just give us a brief description for the public record on this and what's happening in this?

MR. FREAS:

There are a number of funding sources, or there are a number of Mental -- agencies within the Health Department's Division of Community Mental Hygiene Services that are funded either by New York State OASAS in this case, or by New York State Office of Mental Health. More or less, the money is being moved around between and among these various agencies. All -- some of the funding is being reduced. The reduction in funding is being matched by a reduction in expenditures to the various contract agencies. These are all contract agency spendings. There's no fiscal impact for the resolution.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Are there any contract agencies that are -- have reached out to us in opposition to this reduction in funding? Is this unilateral, or is this just money that was not expended? Is this a clawback? Can someone address that from --

MR. FREAS:

Again, to the best of my knowledge, it wasn't a clawback, it's just a reordering of funding. This typically happens, I want to say, every quarter or so with respect to Office of Mental Health and OASAS funding.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

So, Dr. Tomarken, I saw your motion.

DR. TOMARKEN:

Yeah. I think the Acting Director of Community Mental Hygiene, Ann Marie Csorny, can address the issue.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Hi, Ann Marie. How are you?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

Good, thank you.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Good. We're not losing any mental health services in Suffolk County as a result of this change and a reduction in funds?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

No. This is actually an increase in funding. Some of it is moving some money to different agencies -- you know, within agencies. Some of it is moving money to make various programs whole. So, no, we're not losing any money.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you.

LEG. CILMI:

Question on the bill, please.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Legislator Cilmi.

LEG. CILMI:

Why does the title of the resolution say "reduce funding"?

MR. FREAS:

Some of the agencies are losing funding, some of them are gaining funding. There's a net. The net -- there's a net reduction. My understanding, there's a net reduction of \$289,000 total, although some of that money is moving to other contract agencies.

LEG. CILMI:

Wait. Hang on a second, Craig. I'm sorry. You said there's a net reduction of \$289,000?

MR. FREAS:

I'm sorry. My understanding of the resolution was that there was a reduction of \$289,677 among the various agencies.

LEG. CILMI:

Ann Marie, do you see that, or no?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

So we're talking about -- we are talking about a number of different agencies and money being moved from one agency to another for various reasons. The idea are, for several reasons, to mount new programs that are -- will meet more people's needs. The first is that -- the first one is Catholic Charities is moving money within their own agency. The second is Pederson-Krag will be losing their gambling money. The State has pulled back the funding for that.

LEG. CILMI:

Oh, perfect timing, just when we're debating a casino in Suffolk County.

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

So no. Well, actually, what they're doing is the State is going to be mounting their -- a new regional Gambling Assistance Program throughout the region, which will -- instead of people going to the site where the Pederson-Krag mounted their program, it will be countywide or region-wide between Nassau and Suffolk County. They will be training counselors to meet the needs of residents all over the County. So that would be a State-direct contract. So in that way, the County is not going to have the money come through us, it will be a State-direct contract, but we will still maintain the services. In fact, the services would be expanded.

South Oaks funding has been moved to another agency. And we received additional funding to expand the Prevention Resource Center to provide a regional program at the State's request. And then the State kicked in more money when we were able to move some of the money from South Oaks over to Hope For Youth and do a prevention program in the Town of Babylon. So it is a gain of money.

LEG. CILMI:

So, all right. So are we or are we not losing 200-plus thousand dollars net?

MR. FREAS:

The agency funding is being reduced. The aid to the -- the aid to the agencies is being reduced by that 289,000 some-odd dollars. However, the contracts are being reduced by an equal amount, that's why there's no fiscal impact.

LEG. CILMI:

I understand that. But if -- but if we're talking about money -- monies allocated to dealing with these issues, you're saying, I think, that's 200-plus thousand dollars less than what we currently were spending, we're going to be able spend. I recognize that's matched with a reduction of --

MR. FREAS:

That's correct. I would point out that it's among five different agencies. And, as Director Csorny just mentioned, that the State's looking to probably -- well, no, I don't want to say that. The State is continuing to move these -- this funding around, and this happens in the course of the year, it's typical. I can't say whether we're permanently losing this funding or not.

LEG. CILMI:

Anything to add to that? Here's what I see. And my question, I'm going to -- these questions are in the following context: I had a meeting two months ago, maybe, with some folks from OASAS, who, when I asked the question, "Why do you think we've seen an increase in opiate use, particularly heroin," said to me, "We don't think there has been one." So it's troubling to me, to say the least, that the State would reduce funding from OASAS for these services when we -- clearly, we have a rise in mental issues related to mental illness. We have a reduction in the ability to treat mental illness. And we have seen an incredible rise, in my view, of drug use. And so I don't really feel comfortable with the 200-plus thousand dollar reduction in funding.

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

So I hear what you're saying, and I can't speak to what the staff from OASAS had said to you in your meeting. But what I can say to you is in our meetings with the local field office and the staff from OASAS up in Albany, they did come down and meet with us about the Gambling Prevention Program that they're looking to do. They explained to us how it works. They're doing it in Queens. They piloted it in Queens County and it was very effective. They are kicking in more money to operate the program. So while the money would not come directly through Suffolk County, we are going to have more services, because they would be putting more money to develop a program that would allow for gambling services countywide.

In respects to the Prevention Resource Center, they also put in more money and allowed us to develop another program, a prevention program in the Town of Babylon area. So in some -- while there is a reduction in money coming through the County, there is not a reduction in services to the County.

LEG. CILMI:

If you believe what the State says. Our experience has shown us what, Ann Marie?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

I'm not going to answer that.

LEG. CILMI:

Right, I'm sure. I'll answer it for you. Experience has shown us that the State saying that they're going to come -- that they're going to expand services means just the opposite. So I don't believe the State when they say that they're going to take this on in a measurable way. I don't --

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

What I can say to you, Legislator Cilmi, is that they have, in fact, already began the process. We've met with them around the Prevention Resource Center. They've increased the efforts that they've done. We've met with the Prevention Resource Program, and they are on their way to doing that. With regards to the gambling program, that has not been mounted at this point, but they did bring to us the Queens team that is doing it. So I have to believe there was some validity to their dialogue when they were presenting it to us.

LEG. CILMI:

You said a Queens team?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

Yes. They had piloted the gambling program in Queens County, and so they brought that team to show us how it could work here regionally.

LEG. CILMI:

So do they expect to have an office in Suffolk County?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

That is my understanding. They would have an office in either Nassau or Suffolk and/or what -- actually, how it would function is they would have a point person, and that person's job is to meet with -- develop a network of providers who have to go through extensive training to be counselors to help people reduce their gambling, or to be knowledgeable about gambling and how it impacts their life if they're interested in participating. And then from there, they would -- when someone called, or they go out and network at the various Gamblers Anonymous programs, to connect people to these therapists, and they're going to pay them directly.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Legislator --

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. I'm done. Thank you, Ann Marie, for your response.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Ann Marie, hang on one second. I think Legislator Fleming has a question, please.

LEG. FLEMING:

Hi. Good afternoon. I'm just a little confused. What's the source of the State funding?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

For which? Oh, OASAS, New York State OASAS.

LEG. FLEMING:

Okay. So all of the monies that's being -- all the adjustments that you're making are as the result of a reduction in OASAS State funding?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

Actually, it's not all as a result -- there's a number of different pots of money that are being moved that are all OASAS funding, right? So they're being moved for different reasons, some within the same program or within the same agency to a different program. Some are being moved because the State is going to provide a -- the program as a direct service. And in others, we were able to move it to provide services in other areas.

LEG. FLEMING:

But are these adjustments being made because you've learned that the OASAS funding is being reduced? Which came first, the chicken or the egg? Are you reducing expenditures in programs because the funding levels are being reduced, or are we saying to the State, "We don't need the funding levels that were originally intended for these programs because we're cutting or changing the programs"?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

We're not reducing -- the County or the Division isn't seeking to reduce any funding. Again, as I said, some of it is being moved within an agency so that agency can provide services to better meet needs. Others is the State is looking to mount a program for gamblers, that would be a regional

program. So they're looking to take the 80,000 some-odd thousand dollars back from the County from a program that has had a census of one individual in the last year attend it, so it has been underutilized. So the State is looking to bring that back and use a -- go with a program that has shown some success in another County and mount that here. So --

LEG. FLEMING:

I guess I hear that, but I did hear from our BRO that this -- the net fiscal impact is going to be a reduction of \$200,000 in State Aid, no?

MR. FREAS:

(Nodded yes).

LEG. FLEMING:

Yes.

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

Yes.

LEG. FLEMING:

So that's true. So my question is, is that being driven by the needs of the County that have been demonstrated to no longer need that level of funding, or is it being driven by OASAS Program says, "You're cut 200,000, find how to do it"?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

So, again, OASAS has decided that they felt that the money that they funded us for the gambling program would be better spent in the regional program that they'd like to do, and the same thing with the Prevention Resource Center.

LEG. FLEMING:

So it was generated from the State --

DIRECTORY CSORNY:

Correct.

LEG. FLEMING:

-- telling you, "I don't want to give you this money that was originally allocated for this program"?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

What they're looking to do is make it in a regional type program and mount a program that they think is more viable.

LEG. FLEMING:

And do we at the County, or do you at the administrative realm of the County agree that that's true, or could we repurpose these \$200,000 to the, for instance, heroin epidemic that we're experiencing?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

So the -- part of the money was gambling money, so that couldn't be repurposed to that. It would be staying with the gambling prevention, so -- and they -- so that's part of it. The other part of it is that it went to a Prevention Resource Program and it's -- so the money is still coming in. You know, I think the thing is -- I think there's -- I don't have my eyeglasses on. I'm sorry, I came up here without them, so it's hard for me to see my notes. But, in many ways, this is a gain of -- we've increased -- we've gotten a new prevention program in the Town of Babylon that we didn't have, so that's new. We've increased the funding for the Prevention Resource Center, so that's new.

As far as the reduction in funding, I think the other part of it is that the State -- it's the State's funding and it's their decision to do this. As far as repurposing it to the heroin epidemic, it's not that we're not in discussions with them all the time about funding, and we will continue to be.

LEG. FLEMING:

Okay. Thank you.

DIRECTORY CSORNY:

Sure.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

I'm so sorry. Legislator Cilmi has another question.

LEG. CILMI:

I don't think it's for -- I don't think it's for Ann Marie, though, it's more of a fiscal question. Sorry, Ann Marie.

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

No problem.

LEG. CILMI:

So I just want to make sure that -- I'm thinking about this as we're chatting about it, and if -- just, Craig, tell me if I'm correct here, okay? So the State reduces funding to us.

MR. FREAS:

You're correct.

LEG. CILMI:

So far, right? Now, if we were to vote against this, sort of indicating our displeasure at the State's reduction in funding --

MR. FREAS:

They're not -- they're still taking their money back.

LEG. CILMI:

And that would mean that there's a fiscal impact to us, right? I mean, how --

MR. FREAS:

Yeah. I would --

LEG. CILMI:

What would we do, then? We would have to --

MR. FREAS:

I would say that the answer to that question is yes. We would then have to decide on our own to fund the program at the level that it's currently funded, if the program were to be funded at all.

This -- these adjustments by the State for this funding is relatively common. It happens more commonly in appropriation 43-30, which is a community service support program, where the funding is for -- as a practical matter, is a 100% State pass-through. It happens less often in 43-10, which is primarily substance abuse programs, which we may have a larger or a smaller piece of the County's own contribution to those programs, as we do in 43-20, which is the mental health clinics

and so forth. But, again, these programs, we find the contractor -- I don't want to say at the behest of the State, but it's a very cooperative -- not a perfect, certainly, but arrangement with the State. And there we are acting much more as the State's agent in this case than we might with, say, certain other -- certain other contract agencies.

LEG. CILMI:

Right. So, in my view, what we have here is we have the State taking money -- taking money away from services that are needed services. They say they're going to supplement what they're currently doing to address the needs. I'll say that I don't believe them. I think that in many ways they're doing a terrible job addressing the mental health and substance abuse needs here and -- but, as you said, this is -- this is effectively a State -- these are State programs that we're administering. And without a fiscal impact to us, we have no choice but to approve this resolution, is basically -- is basically what you're saying. And so I'll support the resolution, although I'm really disgusted at any reduction of funding from the State when it comes to mental health and substance abuse.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Legislator Fleming.

LEG. FLEMING:

I guess my question -- so I'm looking. The Pederson-Krag Center is a substance abuse treatment center.

LEG. CILMI:

(Nodded yes).

LEG. FLEMING:

And their funding is basically gutted. The 2016, it's not a lot of money, 87,000, but they lost 82,000. According to this calculation, they're left with \$4,000. I don't know --

LEG. CILMI:

Through the Chair, and I don't know this for a fact, Health Department could speak to this, but many, many of these types of agencies receive multiple lines of funding in our budget. So just because you're looking at one line and you're seeing such an extraordinary reduction doesn't necessarily mean that the agency has been cut out from County funding all together.

LEG. FLEMING:

No, I understand that. But I'm just saying, from the perspective of someone who's trying to make a decision about priorities and where funding goes and doesn't go, that within this, the Catholic Charities is attributed with having an increase and a reduction. So, as Ms. Csorny said, you know, it moved within. For this resolution, all we're told is Pederson King (sic) loses \$82,000. So, I mean, I appreciate your saying it's going to happen whether we approve it or not and we should approve it, but I don't feel comfortable. I would -- first of all, I would rather have it, I suppose, more clearly articulated in terms of where -- what the origin of these cuts are. But, secondly, I -- you know, if -- I think you're right, Tom, that, you know, gambling may be a difficult problem, but heroin and opiate abuse is a terrible scourge that's getting worse.

So this seems to be moving in the wrong direction. And maybe I'm missing it. I'm brand new and I don't have a lot of backup, but I don't feel comfortable just going along because you got to.

MR. FREAS:

I want to point out something that maybe we're -- I didn't make clear, in that the loss -- the loss, quote, unquote, in the narcotics addiction control revenue is, for the most part -- it's going directly

to South Oaks. We're no -- as we mentioned, that we primarily act as the State's agent in this case. We're not acting as the State's agent anymore. The State is more or less administering the program themselves, so they're not passing the money through us anymore. It's still going to South Oaks, it's just not going through the Suffolk County budget.

LEG. FLEMING:

Is that true for the Pederson-Krag Center?

MR. FREAS:

That one I'm not sure about. I think Director Csorny sort of spoke about that one a little bit earlier.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Okay.

LEG. CILMI:

Is it -- may I, Chairman, Mr. Chairman? Ann Marie, the Pederson-Krag money that we're talking about, is that the gambling money?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

Yes, it is.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. And so that has nothing to do with substance abuse, correct?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

It has to do with addictions, so --

LEG. CILMI:

Right, but not heroin or --

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

Correct.

LEG. CILMI:

So Craig from Budget Review mentioned that while some money was taken away for other substance abuse for South Oaks, that the State was funding them without passing through the County. Is that what's happening with the Pederson-Krag money?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

Yes. So the State is going to do a State-direct contract to operate a regional gambling program, treatment program, in both Nassau and Suffolk Counties. That's what -- the Queens model that I spoke about. They came down, they spoke with us about what it would look like, so that's what's going to happen. So the County, while the money, the 84,000 will not come through us any longer, they will still have services here, they will mount those services.

LEG. CILMI:

And are you satisfied as the Acting Director of that division that there will be no reduction in services, then?

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

I believe that it will be an addition in services, because --

LEG. CILMI:

An addition in services.

DIRECTORY CSORNY:

Well, because the Pederson-Krag program, while a good program, unfortunately, it was at one site, and we are a large county, and so people from out east weren't going to drive to the Smithtown or Hauppauge office where they offered it. This program that the State is offering to do trains clinicians all over the County. So someone who lives in Montauk and has a gambling problem could see a clinician in Montauk, versus having to come to Smithtown or Hauppauge or Huntington to go to the Pederson-Krag Gambling Program. The program was only -- had a census of one person in the last year, so it was money that wasn't being utilized either.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. So, I mean, given that statement, given your expertise, I have to -- I have to trust your testimony here, and, you know, combine that with the fiscal reality, and I'll support this resolution. And I hope you're right and I hope the State does come through with the program that they're talking about.

DIRECTOR CSORNY:

Me, too. And I'm going to work --

LEG. CILMI:

If we can serve more people, clearly, that's better than serving fewer people.

MS. CAPOBIANCO:

Excuse me, Legislator Cilmi. Christina Capobianco --

LEG. CILMI:

Hi, Christina.

MS. CAPOBIANCO:

-- Deputy Health Commissioner. I just wanted to clarify. If you take both bills together, 10 -- 1255 and 1260, there's a net increase in State Aid for the Narcotics Program of 180,000.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay.

MS. CAPOBIANCO:

So there's no reduction. The 1260 bill does reduce State Aid. But taken together, the Narcotics Program, the net increase is actually 180,000, approximately, in State Aid for the Narcotics Addiction Control Program.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Next time lead with that. You would have saved us a half an hour of discussion.

*(*Laughter*)*

So we're putting money in the --

MS. CAPOBIANCO:

I apologize. We didn't realize they're companion bills.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

We were really about to table this.

LEG. KENNEDY:

You're going to hate me. I just want to ask one question. I have on my research that under State Aid Narcotics Addiction Control in 1260, we are losing 206,725. When we put the two of them together, we got it, but that's --

MS. CAPOBIANCO:

I'm sorry, Legislator Kennedy, I didn't hear your question. I apologize.

LEG. KENNEDY:

What you were saying is if you took the two bills together, that there's a net gain, correct?

MS. CAPOBIANCO:

Correct.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. But we are distinctively losing under Narcotics Addiction Control 206,725, correct?

MS. CAPOBIANCO:

We are, but on 1255, we're gaining 469,741.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. One agency is, right. Okay, got it.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Legislator Fleming.

LEG. FLEMING:

Christina, can I just ask what, if any, detriment would be suffered by these programs or the County if we tabled this for one cycle to clarify and let the Department maybe make it a little clearer of a presentation?

MS. CAPOBIANCO:

Well, it's State Aid, so if we don't get the money appropriated, then we can't enter into the contracts and start paying the providers, so that would be the detriment. We can't get the program started.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Okay.

DR. TOMARKEN:

We can still offer --

MS. CAPOBIANCO:

I mean, if you have any questions --

DR. TOMARKEN:

-- a more detailed explanation.

LEG. FLEMING:

I'm sorry?

DR. TOMARKEN:

We can still offer a more detailed explanation.

LEG. FLEMING:

I'm comfortable with that, if we discharge it, and by the time we have a vote at the General Meeting, we have a clearer presentation. It would be very much appreciated by this Legislator. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

So, Legislator Fleming, it sounds like -- are you offering a motion to discharge without recommendation?

LEG. FLEMING:

I would offer it. I don't know if everyone's --

LEG. CILMI:

I'll second, that's fine.

LEG. FLEMING:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Seconded by Legislator Cilmi. So we have a motion to approve and a motion to discharge without recommendation. The motion to discharge does take precedence, so we'll take that vote. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? So the motion to discharge is carried. **(Vote: Discharge Without Recommendation 7-0-0-0)**

So we hope that the Health Department and the Administration and Budget Review will get Legislator Fleming any clarifying information. And if you would share that with the rest of the committee, we would appreciate it.

LEG. FLEMING:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Thank you. All right. We almost had -- we made it to the appointments, but we're there. We already did **1264**.

So **1266 - Approving the appointment of Meesha Johnson (to the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board Group D (Co. Exec.)** -- is that a reappointment or an appointment? Is Meesha here? No. So motion to table, or is she -- unless we can discharge it, if she wants to appear at the General Meeting. What's the Administration's position?

MS. HORST:

If you could table this.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

That's fine to table? Okay.

MS. HORST:

She's currently in the hospital.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

So motion to table by Legislator Calarco, seconded by Legislator Fleming. All those in favor?

Opposed? Abstentions? Meesha Johnson's appointment is tabled. **(Vote: Tabled 7-0-0-0)**

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

1267 (Approving the reappointment of Roy Probeyahn to the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board Group D (Co. Exec.) Approving the reappointment to the Disabilities Board. I'll make a motion, seconded by Legislator Fleming. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote: Approved 7-0-0-0)**

I.R. 1268 - Approving (the appointment of) Beverly Cody to the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board (Group D) (Co. Exec.). Motion by Legislator Martinez, seconded by Legislator --

LEG. CILMI:

(Raised hand).

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

-- Cilmi. I'm sorry, Cilmi. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion is carried. **(Vote: Approved 7-0-0-0)**

1269 - Approving the reappointment of Valerie Lewis to the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board (Group D) (Co. Exec.).

LEG. CALARCO:

Motion.

P.O. GREGORY:

Motion by Legislator Calarco, seconded by Legislator Kennedy. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion is carried. **(Vote: Approved 7-0-0-0)**

I.R. 1283 - Accepting and appropriating 50% State grant funds from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation in the amount of \$4,000,000 for the Suffolk County Septic/Cesspool Upgrade Program Enterprise (SCUPE) administered by the Suffolk County Department of Health Services, Division of Environmental Quality and to execute grant related agreements (Co. Exec.).

LEG. CALARCO:

Motion.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Motion. Seconded -- motion by Legislator Calarco, seconded by Legislator Fleming. This is 50%, but can this be placed on the Consent Calendar? No, it can't. All right. It's \$4 million. All right. Walter, can you tell us just a brief description of what we are -- what this is?

MR. DAWYDIAK:

I can. Thank you, Dr. Spencer, Members of the Committee. Walter Dawydiak, Director of Environmental Quality.

This is a \$4 million New York State grant that's been awarded to Suffolk County. The money was secured by the County Executive and the Leadership Team, led by Sarah Lansdale here to my left from Economic Development and Planning, as well as the Health Department and the Department of Public Works. And the purpose is to develop projects to reduce septic nitrogen loading.

We've already come a tremendous way in piloting and demonstrating septic technologies and setting the framework for training, as well as implementation. We have 19 demonstration systems in the

ground, and they're beginning to function well. They'll be approvable as of right this coming summer. This money will let us complete a wastewater plan, do what we need to as a Health Department to set up the institutional framework to move forward in terms of monitoring, technology review and assessment, and it also provides significant funding for digitizing historic records and data management systems, which are critical to the long-term success of any such programs. Sarah, do have anything to add?

DIRECTOR LANSDALE:

I just want to thank Walt and his entire team for leading this, and note that the match that's here, the 50% match that the County has to provide is funding that we've already spent for wastewater and water quality upgrades on projects throughout the County. So this is not obligating the County to spend any additional new money.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Wait. So you got us more money for money that we already spent on these projects?

DIRECTOR LANSDALE:

That's right, yes.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Wow.

*(*Applause*)*

Sarah, how come only -- any time you show up good things happen? Is that --

*(*Laughter*)*

Walter, Sarah, Dr. Tomarken, thank you. And, you know, really, what a great -- did you apply for this, you sought this out?

DIRECTOR LANSDALE:

This was money set aside in the State budget the past two years, so this is \$4 million for the County in the State budget.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

But you had to track it down and apply for it, right?

DIRECTOR LANSDALE:

Absolutely, yes.

CHAIRMAN SPENCER:

Wow. Very nice job. Really, you know, please accept our deepest appreciation and congratulations for really coming up with very limited funds in this environment, so thank you. Thank you.

So we have a motion and a second. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion is carried. **(Vote: Approved 7-0-0-0)**

Thank you. We've completed the Health Committee before 4 o'clock, which is unexpected. Thank you very much. We hope everyone has a nice day. More to come on plastic bags. Looking forward to approving it next time.

(*The meeting was adjourned at 3:54 p.m. *)