

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
**OF THE**  
**SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

A regular meeting of the Public Safety 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, May 3, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Legislator Kate Browning, Chairperson  
Legislator Robert Calarco, Vice-Chair  
Legislator Kara Hahn  
Legislator John Kennedy  
Legislator DuWayne Gregory  
Legislator Lou D'Amaro  
Legislator William Spencer

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Legislator Thomas Muratore, Fourth Legislative District  
George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature  
Barbara LoMoriello, Deputy Clerk, Suffolk County Legislature  
John Ortiz, Budget Review Office  
Diane Dono, Budget Review Office  
Josh Slaughter, Aide to Legislator Browning  
Bobby Knight, Aide to Presiding Officer Lindsay  
Michael Pitcher, Aide to Presiding Officer Lindsay  
Paul Perillie, Aide to Legislator Gregory  
Lora Gellerstein, Aide to Legislator Spencer  
Ali Nazir, Aide to Legislator Kennedy  
Justin Littel, Aide to Legislator D'Amaro  
Ben Zwirn, County Executive's Office  
Anthony LaFerrera, SC FRES Commission  
Jay Egan, Suffolk County FRES Commission  
Ted Nieves, Suffolk County Police Department  
Noel DiGerolamo, President of PBA  
Anthony Prudenti, DSPBA  
Russ McCormick, Sergeant-at-Arms, Suffolk Detectives Association  
Mike Sharkey, Chief of Staff, Suffolk County Sheriff's Office  
Kerry Kneitel, Suffolk County Sheriff's Office  
Richard Stockinger, Director of Suffolk County Fire Academy  
Robert Holley, Deputy Director of Suffolk County Fire Academy  
Ron Barz, Board of Directors, Suffolk County Fire Academy  
Hank Mulligan, Superior Officers Association  
Louis Viscusi, Suffolk County Correction Officers Association  
Richard Meyer, AME  
Kathy Malloy, AME  
Anthony Prudenti, DSPBA

Arthur Sanchez, DSPBA  
Laura Ahearn, Parents for Megan's Law  
Tracy Pollak, Suffolk County Police Department  
David Tyska  
Greg Fischer  
Linda Gottlieb  
Charles Scala  
Linda Levering  
James Sodergren  
Joseph Callari  
Michele O'Connell  
Frank Casiglia  
Thomas Buttaro  
Other Interested Parties

**TAKEN AND TRANSCRIBED BY:**  
Lucia Braaten, Court Stenographer

**(\*THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 10:02 A.M. \*)**

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. Good morning. We will start our Public Safety meeting. If everyone could please stand and we'll start with the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Legislator D'Amaro.

**(\*Salutation\*)**

Okay. Good morning. And we have a presentation today with VEEB, but we will start with our public portion. The first speaker is David Tyska, and next after that would be Greg Fischer.

**MR. TYSKA:**

Good morning. My name is Dave Tyska. I'm a resident of the Town of Huntington. My son was parentally concealed and abducted back in 2008. I have some paperwork, which I'll provide to the Legislators. My son was put into a home with two pedophiles, one convicted, that rapes children. Judge Andrew Tarantino, Jr., placed my son with my ex-wife, Mariane Linda Jensen, and her boyfriend, Elvis A. Frazier of Murfreesboro, Tennessee. My ex-wife kidnapped my son, when the school called me September of 2008, stating my son never came to school. I went to the house, the house was empty. My son was in no sight anywhere. I've been trying to find him since that day. On Facebook I've been told that Elvis A. Frazier tried to rape my son, my son fought back and he hit him in the head with a lead pipe. I don't even know if my son's alive.

There's no laws on Long Island that have a definition of concealment, abduction or kidnapping. As long as the child's with one of the parents, the police can't help. One officer at the Second Precinct, I commend him. He gave me a letter. I got him on the missing and exploited children list. I'm like totally lost. I can't get any help from anybody. The judicial system that was built to help our children is violating them. My son -- and I looked it all up and I got some paperwork. Judge David Freundlich was charged in 1994 with some inappropriate actions against a six-year-old child. Judge Tarantino violated -- put a child with convicted sexual offenders for weekend visits. And my son was placed with pedophiles.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Madam Chair, I think the speaker's comments are certainly out of order and should be stricken from the record.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Yes, it should. Thank you. Counsel?

**MR. TYSKA:**

So that's the way it is? My son's dead and nobody cares. I'd like to provide this paperwork for the facts, because we're doing a movie called *Lawless America* in June and we're going to -- I commend Legislator Ed Romaine for helping the parents of children that have been victimized by our system. And I just pray that you find in your hearts to help pass this because too many children are being murdered. And we have a website called *Do Not Move Your Businesses or Family to Long Island*, because if your child is abducted, Long Island politicians and nobody will help you. Thank you. I'm going to hand in the paperwork.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Thank you, Mr. Tyska. Next is Greg Fischer.

**MR. FISCHER:**

Hi. My name is Greg Fischer. I'm a Riverhead Town resident. With me today is my daughter, {Annalee}, and she and her brother Clark were abducted for 25 months and there have been repeated abductions since. During that time the children were never put into NCIC. The Federal law is very clear and says a report must be taken immediately and must be entered within two hours. Local police and other authorities broke that law hundreds of times. There have been frequent reconcealments, abductions lasting anywhere from a day to a week. Again, local authorities refused to put the children into NCIC. Thus, since it's nondiscretionary, I'm sure there's personal liability involved for all the officers and officials.

However, I'm here to speak in favor of 1331 today, which is just a definition of child concealment. There's been some myth about this in the past saying it conflicts with State law. It certainly does not. It proposes no penalty. There is strictly a definition of child concealment; proposes no penalty. Therefore, it cannot conflict with Penal Law. It does not conflict with Penal Law in any way.

As well, in all of New York State Code, Education Law, you take any part of it, Public Health Law, there's no definition of child concealment. So this is unique, not different than how we define cell phone usage, how we define trans fats, or took other initiatives in Suffolk County. This is an idea whose time has come. In New Jersey, California, many other states, the second the child is concealed it's a felony, so the authorities can put their resources into play and those children could be recovered. In front of my daughter, I'm not going to mention all the harm done to her and her brother except to say she was taken at eight months old, came back racked with cavities, certainly a sign of neglect. So I urge you to pass 1331. There are many other parents that have had their children abducted.

I've brought with me today Ms. Linda Gottlieb, who's a Suffolk County Resident, who's an expert in the field of alienation, and abduction is one of those tools used in alienation. And this event does create great harm that lasts a lifetime. I urge you to pass this. It's no different than naming a street or having a proclamation. It's to create awareness. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Thank you. Next speaker is Linda Gottlieb.

**MS. GOTTLIEB:**

Good morning. Thank you for this opportunity to speak here.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

You have to put your -- push the button.

**MS. GOTTLIEB:**

Thank you. Good morning. Thank you for this opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Linda. I'm a resident of Huntington Station, Long Island. I am a family therapist. I am also the author of this newly published book, *The Parental Alienation Syndrome*, and I'm also an adult child survivor of parental alienation, along with my sister. I can only tell you that for many years we were wracked with depression, poor relationships. I don't want to go into details, I don't have the right to speak for my sister, who's not here, but I can tell you the years of therapy that were involved before we both survived.

What does parental alienation have to do with the Child Abduction Law? Concealment -- excuse me. Child concealment is one of the greatest alienating tactics employed by the custodial parent. If that parent really respected the child's relationship with the other parent, they wouldn't conceal and hide the child from that parent. The intent is to sever the relationship. And when a relationship is severed with the child, the hole that is left in the child is filled with not good things.

In my book, I documented six -- 56 children from 32 families from my practice and what happened to them when the relationship was totally severed. They fill that psychological hole with drugs and alcohol, criminal activities, antisocial behaviors, truancy, and defiance of authority, because when you show disrespect for a parent, it's transferred to all other relationships. The stories are really heart-breaking, and the results to these children, it's really not in the child's best interest to be concealed from a parent. I will leave here the statistics.

For my book, I interviewed 10 of Suffolk County's most esteemed matrimonial attorneys, one of them, Evie Zarkadaz, who is a law guardian. She stated that she believes that alienation should be criminalized because of the damage that it does to the children as a result, it's criminal. Barbara Burkhardt, who is one of our best forensic evaluators, has also stated that these -- what happens to these children is absolutely unbelievable. Her agency has many contracts with Suffolk County Social Services, Crime Victims, and the courts, and she says that those children who are sexually abused, beaten, raped, they don't hold a candle to the damage that alienated children suffer from the loss of a relationship. I will leave this --

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Ms. Gottlieb, your time is up.

**MS. GOTTLIEB:**

I'll leave the statistics with you. I hope you read them, and I hope you pass this law, which will go a long way to ending parental alienation. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Thank you. Next is Charles Scala.

**MR. SCALA:**

Good morning. My name is Charlie Scala, and I'm a security guard for the Department of Social Services. And although I've only been with the County for some eight years, I came to the job with over 30 years experience in the field of security, 20 as a supervisor. And I will have to tell you that in all my years in this field, I've never worked with a better group of professionals than the security guards at the Department of Social Services. And although that's our title, security guard, I'm sure that by listening to my colleagues earlier in the week, you've come to appreciate that our position is more of a law enforcement or public safety position.

Now, I'm not going to talk about budgetary concerns or fiscal concerns, because I know we could talk about that for hours. But what I am here to talk about is something that each and every one of us in this room cannot argue with, and that is the safety and protection of our employees at the Department of Social Services and the families that come to our buildings for much-needed services. Now, interestingly, as I said before, their safety cannot, absolutely cannot take a back door to any other issue, even budgetary issues. And interestingly, even the County Executive has to agree with that. And the reason why I'm confident in saying that is because there is not one law enforcement agency in Suffolk County that was affected by this layoff, and rightly so.

Now, as I mentioned before, and as you probably know, many of our responsibilities as security guards deal with different aspects of public safety, but one particular one that I want to mention specifically is our responsibilities in regard to Child Protective Services. And in conjunction with

that, I'd like to just give you an experience of an incident that happened in the Riverhead Center a few years ago. Myself and my partners were on duty and we were alerted to the fact that there was a possibility of a child unattended in the parking lot. Now, it was July, it was a typical summer day, the temperature was 96 degrees. My partner and myself, we went out to investigate and there we found a six-week-old child left unattended in a van in 96 degree weather with no other ventilation in that van but a two-inch space. My partner immediately stayed with the child. I responded back into the facility where I was able to locate both the parents. The father was sitting in the air conditioned lobby while the mother was in interview. The child was immediately removed from the van. As a result, the Riverhead police were called and CPS was immediately notified. Subsequently, both parents were arrested for Endangering the Welfare of a Child, and CPS was assigned to monitor that case to ensure the protection of that child.

Now, obviously, anybody would have done the same thing in a situation like that, but what I'm trying to emphasize is that the security guards at the Department of Social Services are trained and experienced to deal with this situation on a daily basis. Now, when we were hired as employees of social services, it was emphasized how important our responsibility was as mandated reporters. I ask you, is a security that works for an agency, who is under no obligation to get involved in a situation like that, going to give the same kind of attention to that critical situation?

So, in conclusion, I just want to ask the Legislature to think about this: If you had a close family member, someone very close to that worked as an employee of Social Services, wouldn't you want the very best protection and safety for them? And the families that come into our buildings who so desperately need the services that we afford them, do they deserve anything less? I thank you.

*(\*Applause\*)*

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Thank you. Next is Linda -- okay. I'm sorry.

**MS. LEVERING:**

Good morning. It's Levering.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Levering? Okay.

**MS. LEVERING:**

Levering, yes. My name is Linda Levering. I wrote it down so I have to read it. I'm a retired Suffolk County Department of Social Services employee. I worked for the Department for 23 years, and always with direct public contact. My last several years were spent supervising the Eligibility Unit and acting as assistant center manager in the Coram Center.

While many of the clients we serviced were people who were down on their luck, just trying to hold their families together for another month, there were many more who were no longer functioning members of society. Our doors would open every day with a deluge of desperate, hungry, tired and angry individuals mixed in with mothers and small children, highly intoxicated men and women, yes, even at 8 a.m., petty thieves, the mentally, and an overwhelming number of undomiciled sex offenders who all -- who spent all day every day in our lobbies, and I'm sure you're aware of that. Our guards did not wait for problems to erupt. Many of our security force had 10, 15, even 20 years of experience with Social Services and they got to know our clients very well, as we did. They knew how to handle with -- who they needed to handle with kid gloves and who they needed to keep away from whom. They would see problems brewing and come to the supervisors and ask if we could expedite Mr. Jones to get him out of the center because he was getting agitated, or could Mrs. Smith sit in a private booth in the back because she had seen her abuser in the parking lot. They

were there while our examiners were interviewing clients for public assistance and food stamps, and if voices would get a little loud, they would be right there standing outside the booth, and usually just their presence would alleviate any problems. But, occasionally, when that wasn't enough, they would ask the examiners to leave and they themselves would talk to the clients, and most times were able to calm them down. If they were not able to at that time, it was the security force who would escort these people out of building to ensure our safety.

Over the years I've watched security guards be verbally abused, kicked, punched, spit upon and ridiculed, but through it all they always had the safety of the employees and the clients at heart. We worked as a team to keep the process moving along and to keep our centers safe for everyone. I can no way imagine that a private security force would be able to do what these men and women have done and continue to do. Working at or just above minimum wage, the turnover alone would be incredible. And how many people would put their own lives at risk for such a low paying job? While I myself am no longer at risk in our overburdened, overcrowded centers, I still have many friends there for whom I worry. Without the protection of a competent and caring security force, I fear that we will be reading some tragic stories in the news some day soon. Please reconsider this layoff and help protect the employees of DSS and the clients who need their help. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Thank you. And the next one is James -- I am sorry -- Sodergren?

**MR. SODERGREN:**

Yes.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay.

**MR. SODERGREN:**

Good morning, and thank you for allowing me to speak this morning. My name is James Sodergren. I'm a lifelong resident of Central Islip, and I'm also a 36-year member of the Central Islip Fire Department, and now currently serving my third term as one of the Fire Commissioners of the Central Islip Fire District. I've been employed by Suffolk County for the -- just about 24 years. I started working here in 1988 as a security guard, making not too much money. And as a security guard, in 2001 I became a senior guard. The most important thing about my job here is safety, safety of the employees, safety of the citizens that come to the centers to take care of business.

Usually, in the center, the first person that a client will see, or citizen coming into the center will see, is a security guard. We're in the lobby, we're trying to straighten out lines when they come in in the morning. It's daunting in the morning. The people, when you open up the doors, they rush in and they want to be first on line. We control the lines, we make sure that they get their -- the paperwork that they need. We make sure they're on the right lines.

Applying for public assistance is a very frustrating and daunting experience for people, especially first-time people that come, in the applicants. Although services can be available to Suffolk County citizens, it's -- many of Suffolk County's neediest families with children, individuals who are homeless, substance abuse issues, mental and physical illnesses, young and elderly alike, keeping them and the staff safe is the utmost important thing. This starts the minute they walk in the center. Being a security guard not only about keeping the peace and diffusing situations before they get out of control, observing situations of possible danger, taking action to assist citizens and help them navigate the system as calmly as possible.

I've sat in interview rooms and interview booths with staff and suicidal clients who have relayed to the staff or the interviewer that they want to commit suicide and kill themselves. One of our first

things we would do is to call the police, but in the meantime, someone's got to talk, and sit and talk with this person and try to bring them down. I'm not a -- I'm definitely not a psychiatrist, that's for sure not, but I'll sit there and I'll tell the people that, you know, it's -- although it's -- it doesn't look good and things aren't going the way that you would hope they would go, that it's not as bad as it is, and it's not as bad as that, to take one's life. All right?

Situations can get out of the control quickly there and result in physical altercations, people getting hurt. In the beginning of the year we had a situation in the Southwest Center where we were alerted earlier that a person coming from emergency housing had a nine millimeter handgun with him. We were on the lookout for the client because they were bringing him from housing. We alerted the police to be on the lookout and make sure they were on their way here to our center. When the client got there, when the housing client got there, we gave police a description of the gentleman, and he had entered the center, and us with no metal detectors or anything, we can't really stop him because we don't know if he has a gun. But when the police got there and he exited the building, the police asked him to stop and he took off. And on him, they caught -- they arrested him with a nine millimeter handgun. Of course, the arrest did not stay because he had the clip in his pocket, it wasn't loaded at the time, but he brought the gun into the center.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Your time is up, so can you wrap up?

**MR. SODERGREN:**

Okay. All right. I'd just like to thank you all for giving me an opportunity to speak again, and I appreciate it. Thank you.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Kate.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Thank you.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Kate, I just want to know the center he works in.

*(\*Applause\*)*

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Sorry. Would you like to come back? Mr. Kennedy has a question for you.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Thank you. Thank you very much for being here and speaking. I'm just curious to find out, since you are a guard that's been, I believe, in service with us, you said 24 years or so?

**MR. SODERGREN:**

Yes.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

What center are you working in now?

**MR. SODERGREN:**

Right now, I'm in the Southwest Center, it's the Deer Park Center. Originally, a couple of years ago, they closed the Wyandanch Center.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Yes.

**MR. SODERGREN:**

And they closed the South Shore Center and combined those two centers and it's located in Deer Park.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

So I'm curious. Since we've had, you know, some changes with the way our center configurations are going, with your experience, somebody who's been there for almost a quarter century, what's the effect been? What have you seen when it comes to, you know, handling volumes of folks or types of occurrences that may go on with our locations?

**MR. SODERGREN:**

Well, in the Southwest Center it's a huge building. The crowd is a lot of times unbearable. It's very packed sometimes. On a normal day we would have four guards there, four to five guards there. It doesn't always happen that way. Usually there's maybe four of us, but it's a very crowded center and very busy.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

And you're open -- the doors are open at eight o'clock in the morning and you're saying it's packed then?

**MR. SODERGREN:**

At eight o'clock in the morning there's probably close to 30 people outside, between housing people that are being dropped off from the shelter that night. They're there already at eight o'clock when we open the doors. When we lock the doors at three o'clock, we have to man the doors there. We have to open the door manually and close it manually to let the people in and out at the end of the day, or they'll just, you know, continue to come in after three o'clock when we lock it.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Okay. And so may even -- not only are you dealing with applicants for benefits, but you're even assisting some of our staff if they're needing to get out to their vehicles or things like that?

**MR. SODERGREN:**

Yes.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Okay. All right. Thank you, sir. Thank you for being here.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Thank you.

**MR. SODERGREN:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Next is Joseph Callari.

**MR. CALLARI:**

Good morning. My name is Joseph Callari. Just bear with me. I haven't written the statement to say to you, but I do have a lot to say.

I'm here today because I want to address some of the public safety issues with the privatization of the security guards. Like I said, currently, I'm a seven-year employee of Suffolk County. Prior to coming to the County, I worked for the State since 1991, working for the University Police Department as a supervisor in security there. So I have a wealth of knowledge background in these positions.

I'm not sure if the Legislature is aware that my position in DPW security was created directly relating to 9/11. There was no security in the County Exec's building, or the County Center in Riverhead, or in the court complex for that matter. Okay? So these positions were created post 9/11. Now what we're going to do is take the professional trained staff that we have and put in a private guard, which we all know does not have the same qualifications that the County security guards are currently required to have.

Prior to getting the job, we're required to have a police background done, fingerprint, a physical, a medical, and I don't believe that will be required at all of any contract guard that is hired by the County. Okay? Specific incidents that I feel that you will never get a contract guard to do, one instance in the Dennison Building, we had a gentleman walk into the building with a black powder rifle that we stopped him from coming into the building. Will you get a contract guard to intervene with a gentleman with a weapon like that?

Like I said, recently, we had a Planning meeting where we had two Tea Party members almost come to blows. Legislator Gregory was present, and I believe Kara Hahn, Legislator Hahn was also present at that meeting, and they see that, you know, firsthand themselves what we do, you know, on a daily basis.

The Cohalan Court Complex, we have two officers there and they're required throughout the night to receive the arrest paperwork from every precinct in Suffolk County and secure that paperwork until it's handed off to the police liaison in the morning. Are you going to have a private contract guard, who has not had a background check, who has not taken a psychological, handle and secure that paperwork to give it to the police liaison?

These are just a few of the examples where the cost savings for the County by privatizing is not going to outweigh the cost of a problem down the line. And I thank you for your time.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Joe, I have a quick question, because you're saying that there was never a security guard until 9/11. I am -- and I see Mr. White's here today. Just curious. Do you know if there was any funding from Homeland Security money that was made available for the security guards at the Dennison or any other building from DPW?

**MR. CALLARI:**

Like I said, I believe the DSS security was probably there prior, obviously. But as far as the Dennison Building and the County Center, I believe we were created directly related to 9/11, and it was a recommendation, I believe, that it be created because there was none at that point. And, you know, like I said, we could look into that further if that's something --

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

I think we could look into that further to see if there has been any Homeland Security money that's been appropriated for your positions. I think that's worth looking at.

**MR. CALLARI:**

And I'm also aware that there is some type of funding for the two guards, as far as State funding, for their positions at the Cohalan Court Complex. I'm not sure what the percentage is, but I know

there is some type of funding there also.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

We can certainly look for that, too. Thank you, Joe.

**MR. CALLARI:**

I appreciate your time.

*(\*Applause\*)*

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Next is Michele O'Connell.

**MS. O'CONNELL:**

Hi. Yes, good morning. My name is Michele O'Connell. I would like to begin by thanking each of you for your efforts in attempting to address the fiscal crisis note facing each of us in Suffolk County today and the jobs that you have fought so hard to protect. Hard decisions had to be made, and I know that each of you knows and understands and sympathizes with those who are forced to face these difficult times with their families losing their jobs. Please, forgive me, I'm a little nervous.

I'm a Child Support Specialist III, which is part of Suffolk County DSS. Over the last 11 years, I have interacted with the clients of Suffolk County relating to collection and disbursement of child support. Emotions often run high and interactions readily escalate. CSEB may have seized someone's bank account, their car, intercepted their taxes, or simply they just might not understand the system and how it works. Verbal abuse and threats of violence unfortunately are commonplace.

We in Suffolk County are fortunate to have one of the finest law enforcement agencies in the country protecting us, the Suffolk County Police Department. However, they are stretched thin and are not in our centers. Our DSS security guards have the experience and professionalism to interact with irate clients, and oftentimes are able to defuse the situation before we have to call the police. I have witnessed these guards place themselves in harm's way, stepping between a client and a worker when the potential for violence is present. The DSS security guards have demonstrated their commitment to protecting the workers at DSS and the residents of Suffolk County that we serve. As a DSS employee, I believe that laying off the current security guards at DSS will create a very dangerous situation for both the staff and the residents of Suffolk County. The DSS security guards have the training, experience and note demonstrated skills to resolve conflicts before they escalate, and, when necessary, they fill the void during the critical minutes between a 911 call and when the officers can arrive.

I am fully aware that we must achieve savings, and I concur that decisions must be made with cost efficiency as a guiding principle. I respectfully implore you to re-exam the projected cost savings, and weigh them against having to endure an uncontrolled and hostile environment, and the cost of potential injuries resulting from the preventable assaults on DSS workers and clients.

The Suffolk County DSS security guards know our workers, our clients, and we know them. They care and they perform a job that is critical to public safety under very stressful conditions. It is my sincere hope that you can find a way to restore these positions. Thank you.

I also do have letters from the staff of the Child Support Enforcement Bureau.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

You can give them to the Clerk.

*(\*Applause\*)*

Thank you. Next is Frank Casiglia.

**MR. CASIGLIA:**

Sorry, I didn't hear you. Good morning, Madam Chair, Honorables, all.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Good morning.

**MR. CASIGLIA:**

My name is Frank Casiglia. I'm the Executive Vice President of AME. And although a great many layoffs are looming, today I wish to speak about the security guards.

As a 34-year employee of the Department of Social Services, the Child Support Enforcement Bureau, I have seen these guards on numerous, numerous occasions prevent violence, prevent people from being injured, both employee and resident alike, because you have to remember, a great many individuals coming through those doors are residents, not just our employees. These --

*(\*Timer Sounded\*)*

That was a quick three.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

No, sorry. It's not going off.

**MR. CASIGLIA:**

Good, I got that extra few seconds.

*(\*Laughter\*)*

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. We're restarting it.

**MR. CASIGLIA:**

Thank you. I'd refer to them as security officers, not security guards, because they don't just guard, they intercede when necessary, and they know when to intercede. They don't jump into a situation to try to prevent it from escalating until they realize that that potential is there. They give the workers in DSS and Child Support the opportunity to do their jobs. If someone is not trained properly, they're going to get into a situation too quickly and they will escalate it. Our guards know the players, they know who comes in with attitude, they know who's a danger, they watch out for weapons. And I've had the pleasure of working at the Cohalan Court Complex as well as the DSS centers, and weapons come in over there, too, believe it or not, but they have armed guards, they have court officers. In the Upstate centers, they have armed deputies and marshals watching over the staff and residents. We don't have that here in Suffolk County. And they can't call the P.D. six, seven, eight times a day to come to the centers to handle problems. The P.D. has enough to do. And, as Michele said, they are stretched thin already. So our guards prevent those calls from having to be made.

Please reconsider. The fact that I've said here -- and I apologize for the redundancy to some of the elected here, Mr. D'Amaro has heard me several times now, but it's a violation of our contract on top of it, if nothing else. Appendix F, Job Protection, states that the County agrees not to lay off any employees as a direct result of an assignment of unit work. That was a contract passed 18-0 by

this body. So we would hope that you'd honor the vote that you made.

And I'd like to commend Legislator Kennedy on his proposal for an equitable retirement incentive. Give people the opportunity to leave rather than just toss them into the street. And what I've heard from a Commissioner and a Legislator, that these layoffs have nothing to do with the fiscal problem, that distresses me even more. If we're not trying to save money, which is minimal in this particular case, 90,000 for 2012, and 180,000 for 2013. In a two-and-a-half billion dollar budget, that's peanuts. That's one less political appointee at \$175,000. That pays for all the guards; 30 people in exchange for one. And I think you have to start looking at those before you get that lawsuit, because it's going to happen. An \$8.50 private security guard is not going to step in between rival gangs in the middle of a center.

And I thank you, and I ask that you reconsider and do the right thing and put these guards back on the job so they can protect our workers and our residents alike. Thank you.

*(\*Applause\*)*

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Next is Thomas Buttaro.

**MR. BUTTARO:**

Good morning. I'm here to address Introductory Resolution 1362. The County's looking to put another 50 traffic lights, red light camera lights. I'm all for this program, as long as the timing on these lights are set properly.

It's come to my attention, almost the first year of this program, that the lights were mistimed by a second-and-a-half. The timing that New York State DOT used to time these lights is in direct contrast to the teachings of Department of Motor Vehicle. They actually had to tweak their times by a second-and-a-half. Legislature is holding, trying, the public responsible for various times at the same parameters for the same lights. I was told that anything within three seconds to six seconds for a yellow interval is acceptable at all speeds. Not only is it acceptable, but I was told it is enforceable. DMV, once again, I'll state directly contradicts these numbers. They educate, they license the public.

I'm getting the idea that it's the State lights and it's not Suffolk County's problems, since it's the State's lights and the State's timing. If the State -- if the County wants to have a successful safe program, I implore the County to make sure the base -- the traffic lights being used are timed properly.

Addressing the timing conflicts at these lights will give the -- your program credibility. Otherwise, the public out there thinks it's a money grab. You can't put a price on safety. People's lives are at stake, medical expenses are at stake. I just ask you to look into this. Right now there are no guidelines, protocols or oversight for looking into the timing of these lights. If you want to run a program, please run it properly. Please have a system in place. Make sure the timing at these lights are properly timed before you hold the public responsible for the unknown. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Thank you. And last is Kathy Malloy.

**MS. MALLOY:**

Good morning. I haven't talked a lot yet. Thank you for the opportunity to speak at the Public Safety Committee meeting. My name is Kathleen Malloy. I'm a 30-year retiree of Suffolk County and a member of AME. I attended the Long Island Workers Annual Memorial Service last Saturday

at the New York State Building. It was held on April 28th. Why you ask is it held on the 28th of April? Well, this year the 41st Anniversary of the creation and the passing of OSHA, promoting safety at the workplace.

No worker, public or private sector, should ever fear death just by going to work, and, yet, each year as I attend the Worker Memorial, there were more added names. Are we moving backward in safety at the workplace? Now we face layoffs of County workers, all of whom provide services to the public. I bring up particularly the County security guards, 30, 21 from DSS, nine from DPW. The DSS guards' wages include a 62% reimbursement by the State. The DPW guards, who are stationed at the Cohalan Court Complex, are also subsidized by the State. I was not able to get the amount, but I'm researching it.

In my own 30-year history with the County, 19 of those years was worked in DSS, covering five centers, so I get it, I get the importance of our DSS guards. Their careers usually span 30-plus years, so 30 guards could actually, in all essence, equal 500 years of knowledge and experience. They live locally, they know the demographics of each center. Every center is different. They recognize many of the clients. They know the gang activity, and believe me, it's here. They know what colors to look for at certain centers.

Surely, there are 18 brilliant minds here, and I do believe that, to find better fiscal resolutions to this budget crisis, better than putting people out of work, because I will agree with you, I'm sure you'll agree with me, understaffing your county offices most surely will put every Suffolk County residents in potential danger. And coming from a taxpayer, myself, at a Grade 13, our DSS security guards are a very, very good deal and worth the money. Thank you.

*(\*Applause\*)*

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Thank you, Kathy. Okay. We have no more speakers. Is there anyone else in the room who would like to speak? No? Okay. Well, we do have a presentation. Richard Stockinger, Executive Director of the Suffolk County Fire Academy. And have a seat, and if you could introduce who you're with.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Surely.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

And I believe you want to speak about the Fire Academy and impacts on the Academy, I guess budget-wise.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Good morning, and thank you, Madam Chairperson. Good morning, Members of the Committee. My name is Richard Stockinger. I'm Executive Director of the Suffolk County Fire Academy, and with me today is the Deputy Director, Robert Holly.

I'd like to take a little time just to -- I know there are some newer members to the committee here -- to explain the relationship of the VEEB and the Fire Academy and where we fit into the scheme in the County.

VEEB stands for the Vocational Education and Extension Board. They were formed in 1943 by the then Board of Supervisors of Suffolk County for the sole purpose of providing training for the volunteer firefighters of Suffolk County, and they've completed that for the past 69 years supplying that. Our agency supersedes many of the agencies in the County.

The Suffolk County Fire Academy proper is the facility located on 20 acres in Yaphank just south of Police Headquarters where we have Probation and the Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services. The VEEB, as it's commonly referred to, is a contract agency through the Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services, still charged with providing fire training for the volunteer firefighters of Suffolk County. There are currently approximately 11,000 firefighters in Suffolk County. Right now everybody knows about firefighters in Suffolk County because of the recent wildfires, and that's a good thing for us. But we've been there, we've been doing it for a long time. The history of volunteer firefighters in Suffolk County goes all the way back to 1802 in Sag Harbor, which is one of the oldest fire departments in the United States.

All we do is provide training. One hundred percent of the budget that we receive goes for training for the volunteer fire departments. We have a minimal staff. We currently have 12 full-time employees. Most of those are clerical. They provide all of the student records, the scheduling for all of the fire departments. We have four maintenance personnel that take care of the burn buildings on the Fire Academy proper, and we have 86 per diem instructors that provide the firefighters with all of their training. Our instructors are nationally recognized. Many of them speak at the national conventions. They are sought after because of their experience and their training ability. And we are one of the busiest fire academies in the United States because of the amount of firefighters that we currently have in Suffolk County.

We provide a wide variety of training. We do two types of training. We have what we call hands-on training, which is done at the Fire Academy. We have several burn buildings where we conduct controlled live fire training. We provide hazardous materials training for the County HAZMAT teams, also for the County Police Department. We also provide technical rescue training for all of the technical rescue teams, and most recently we've been charged with training the newly formed Suffolk County Urban Search and Rescue Task Force. All of these specialties, we have the program specialist, probably the most well trained people in the United States, that teach all of these classes.

Currently in 2011, we tracked -- we track our training by what we call a student contact. In other words, every time a student attends a class, whether it be lecture-based training in a fire house or hands-on training at the Fire Academy, we count that as one student contact. And in 2011, we had a total of 46,769 student contacts. If I turn that into hours, I think maybe that's a little bit easier to grasp. That means that the volunteer firefighters of Suffolk County took 170,000 hours of training through the Suffolk County Fire Academy. We can run -- we did over twenty-five hundred individual classes, and we conducted over 750 live burns at our facility.

Back in 2008 was the first year that we started experiencing decreases in our annual budget. Up to that time we had always been given a minimal increase one or two percent, but I'd like to refer back. 2008 was also the time when I took over as Director of the Academy. Since 2008, our budget has been reduced by eight percent. And we also receive, because we are an educational institution and the VEEB Board, we do receive State aid through the New York State Education Department. Since 2008, that has been reduced by 38%. This year, 2012, when we submitted our annual budget, we were asked to submit that with a 5% reduction, which we did. At that time, the only way that we could meet that requirement was we had to eliminate three positions. So we did have three funded vacant positions that we had planned on filling in 2012, but we had to give those positions back. We also had to reduce our overall training by 3%. And we initiated something that we really didn't want to do, but we had to, is we initiated a fee to the fire departments for non-training services that we provide. For instance, the fire departments are required by NFPA specifications to have their engines, their pumpers have to be tested every year for capacity. We traditionally provided that service for free over the last 60 years. We now have to charge a fee for that service, because that is taking from -- taking away from our training budget. So we were

able -- we were still able to meet the training requirements, even with that small reduction.

And then we were requested back in March to reduce the budget by another 5%. Unfortunately, you know, we had already felt that we were down to the lowest level that we could possibly go, but this new 5% really put us over the edge. There was nothing we could do but to reduce the amount of training. So, consequently, what that turned out to be is we had to reduce our live burns. And let me just take a minute to explain how we structure our scheduling for that.

There's 109 fire departments in Suffolk County. At the beginning of the year we give each fire department the opportunity to attend six live fire training events at the Fire Academy. Some departments take advantage of all six, some may only take three or four, and that's mainly logistically, because, for instance, Montauk, you know, it's a long distance for them to travel, so they may only come three or four times. But what we had to do is we had to go back, and those people that did have six trainings, we had to take away one. The ones that had five, we had to take away one from them.

So we reduced the live fire training, which is the essential training. It's the basic training that every firefighter needs; we had to reduce that by 95 classes. We also had to reduce our new recruit training. I know the County has an outstanding recruitment program going on. Every time you turn the radio on today, you hear, you know, let's -- become a volunteer, become a volunteer. Well, one of the concerns we have right now is will we be able to train those new volunteers. We did have to eliminate two new recruit classes at the end of the year that we planned on doing. And in addition to that, we also reduced our -- we have Program Development Department that takes care of updating and creating new training programs as the standards change. We had to reduce their budget by \$20,000. Part of that \$20,000 was money that was slated for the online training.

If you remember my presentation back during the budget time is that we were pursuing online training to help reduce our expenses, and now that money had to be eliminated, so that's kind of at a stalemate. In addition, we did shut down one of our burn props. We have what we call a tank car, which is a training prop that the fire departments come to. It's propane fueled and it's very expensive for us to use that because of the price of fuel today. So we had to eliminate that drill completely to realize some kind of a savings.

As I said before, 100% of the money we use goes for training. We receive no money at all for maintenance or infrastructure. That's done through Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services. They have a very small budget to maintain the buildings on the property. Unfortunately, that's been reduced, and we have very little money now to do any infrastructure repairs at all. We do have one building, one of our older buildings that is on the verge of being condemned that we won't be able to use any more. And we have over the last several years requested new capital programs to try and add some new facilities, which have not come to fruition yet. All I can say is that we will continue to offer the best possible training, the highest level of training with whatever we have. But we have done more with less for all of these years, and now we're at the point where we're doing less with less. We ask your support.

I know Legislator Browning, Kennedy, Gregory and Romaine have been huge supporters of the Fire Academy. They see us frequently and attend the functions that we have. And we hope that the rest of the committee will continue to support our efforts. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Thank you. And I think there may be a couple of questions. Just real quick, because you've said you've had a 30% decrease from the State. What is your total budget, the County portion of your budget and the State portion of your budget?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

The current County budget for 2012 with the most recent reductions is \$1,983,233. The aid that we receive from New York State is 184,760. So our total budget for this year is 2,167,993.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. And I think there's a few questions. John, I can see you.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Yeah. Through the Chair, first of all, thank you for inviting the representatives here today. And, Dick, I want to commend you and Mr. Holly for all the work that you do. I see one of our board members here in the audience, Mr. Barz.

The opportunity to do or to see firsthand the training that's conducted at the grounds there is a unique experience. And when I had the opportunity to be out there last year, I believe it was, I got to see our Hauppauge Fire Department firsthand at work, and they were involved in a couple of different areas. But you spoke about one thing in particular, there was another department training on it, and I saw it because of -- it really left a lasting impression, and that was the tank car. Now, although it's set up in a railroad car configuration, propane is probably one of the most volatile types of things that we'll see out there on our roads, or actually in commercial settings or residences. How does a firefighter get the training or knowledge to combat a propane fire without the opportunity to go ahead and have that practice, how do we do it?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Legislator Kennedy, the tank car you're talking about is -- has numerous uses. We still do have, even though we've eliminated that particular training evolution, we still do have an LP gas facility, a propane gas facility that we do other types of training.

Going back in history a little bit, back in my early days, that originally was -- that rail car was in the pit and we used to use diesel fuel. What that is simulating is simulating a spill, either from a rail car tanker, an over-the-road car, or it's even used -- we have been approved, believe it or not, by the FAA where MacArthur Airport Crash/Fire/Rescue comes out and trains, because that's an approved spill site for them if it was an aircraft accident.

We're not cutting short the LP training, they're still getting that through the facility. It just so happens this prop is fueled by propane. It's not necessarily a propane fire, it's just fueled by propane, so --

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Okay.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

And that's the reason why we did cut that, but we still do offer propane training, yes.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Okay. The other thing that I wanted to make sure that I understand, and sometimes I think it's a little bit of a myth that gets put out there, some of our towns do have town-based training facilities. As you know, in Smithtown, right up on Veterans Highway, we do have I believe it's a two-story burn facility, might simulate, I guess, like a small commercial setting, or something to that effect. Is that equivalent to what firefighters have as far as the opportunity on your campus?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

I could say -- we could say it's equivalent, and there are several townships that have created their own training facilities in addition to fire departments that have a building that they use for those

burns. That training is usually done -- it's their own -- their own instructors that they're using. We don't get involved with any training at those facilities because we have no control over the facility itself. You know what, one of the things with our facility, there was legislation passed two years ago, is that any burn buildings in any fire academy has to be inspected on a regular basis based on the amount of times at that it's used. So our building -- the buildings at our fire academy get used every night, so they have to be inspected once a year by a professional engineer. The buildings in some of those facilities, because they get used less, don't have to be inspected as often. So we have no control over the conditions in the building. We're not familiar with the buildings, how they work, so we don't get involved with that. But the individual fire departments can still do training in there, but it's not being done by Fire Academy instructors.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

So we don't have perhaps maybe the same standardization, I guess, that you're able to go ahead and implement across all 109 departments. And there are some simulations that you have in Yaphank that I know don't exist in Smithtown. Firefighters get exposure in different -- well, the tank car, we have no tank car in Smithtown.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Yeah. And most of the training centers that are out there are only one building that do one particular thing, you know, and they may just have one burn area in there. So they can't simulate the different types that we did can -- different types of fires that we can do under the controlled environment that we have.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

There's one other area, and again, we're in tough economic times, you know, and I appreciate you trying to belt-tighten, but we can't compromise safety. The pumper fee, what does it cost now for a department? What's it going to cost Nesconset to have their pumpers certified by you?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

The fee right now is \$275 per test.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Okay. How often do they have to come out? Are they once a year or --

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Yes, it's an annual test for every engine they have. If they have five engines, each engine has to be tested once a year.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

So that's a cost that the individual department bears, and they either return it back to their resident property taxpayers or raise it in some fashion out of the department.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

That's correct.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Okeydoke. Thank you. All right. I'll yield, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Thank you, John. Legislator Gregory.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. I just had a quick question. The budget cuts that you've outlined, Chief,

how does that affect your training, or should I say exercises, your coordinating exercise? I know I went to a mass event that you had, I want to say 2007, 2008?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Yes. Yeah, that was that Homeland Security drill that we had done. It wouldn't have an impact on that, because those were grant-funded. So can still -- you know, we can still conduct evolutions like that. We do not have any plans for anything like that, because there are -- there is no grant money available right now. But the budget cuts would not have any impact on that at all.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

So it's mostly, I guess -- we reduced two classes, two recruit classes.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

That's correct, two recruit classes.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

How many personnel each class, roughly?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

On an average, we do about 50 students per class. It varies between 50 and 75 students per class.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay. And with the -- you know, the difficulty in getting recruits, it makes it that much more difficult for the department. I mean, how does that affect them? If you recruit someone, you can't get them certified, then --

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

It's going to have an impact, obviously.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Yeah.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

You know, we can only fit so many people in the class, and if there's more people than we have seats for in the class, obviously, those people are not going to get trained.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay. And you say there's little to no money for infrastructure.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

There's -- we have zero dollars, and I know the FRES budget, typically, it was only like \$10,000 and we usually go through that in the first month. And, you know, right now we have our -- back in the '90's, we had gone through a conversion of some of our older buildings. We converted them to gas fired, you know, so we could get more life out of the building. Well, that gas-fired prop now is over 12 years old and the manufacturer is telling us, you know, things are starting to fall apart. They have to start a maintenance program to start updating the equipment on that. We've put in for capital funding on that, but nothing has been approved yet.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay. So you did put in for a capital improvement, but nothing -- you haven't heard anything about it.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

That's correct, yeah. It was put in through -- you know, through Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services. In their budget, they had requested the funding for that.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay. All right. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Legislator Calarco.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Thank you for coming. I just had a couple of quick questions for you. How many employees do you have out there at VEEB?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

We currently have 12 full-time staff and 86 per diem instructors.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

And the 12 full-time staff, what are their responsibilities?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Well, that includes Bob and myself, Deputy Director Holly. We have six clerical staff, we have two -- two of those are scheduling. We have an office manager, one lady that's the student records individual responsible for all our student records, and then we have two -- we have a treasurer and an accounts clerk. And then four are the maintenance staff that take care of the buildings on the fire ground.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

So you don't have any full-time instructors on staff?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

No. We've -- at one time, it was all full-time instructors. That was eliminated back in the late '80's, early '90's where they went to per diem instructors.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Are those employees, are they AME employees, are they union employees?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

No, they're not. Again, where the Vocational Board is a contract agency to the County, they're employees of the VEEB Board.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

So VEEB negotiates the contract with them and determines their pay scales, etcetera?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

That's correct.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Have they been -- had the benefit of raises in the recent years?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

We follow -- according to our contract with the County, we have to follow the AME contracts. Whatever AME employees get, our employees get.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

And that's for all the employees?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

That's for the nonexempt employees. Mr. Holly and I are exempt employees.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

And have you folks taken raises in the recent years?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

No, we haven't.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Okay. The other question I have, and I know we talked about -- you mentioned that you have been getting -- you don't get funding from the County for your infrastructure needs? But I thought most of -- most of the major capital projects that happen out there go through our actual Capital Program.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

They do go through the Capital Program, but the request is made through Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

But we pay for it?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

That's correct.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Okay. So we -- basically we contract with VEEB, but we pay the cost for most of the services you provide?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

That's correct, yes.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

And do we review your budget at all at any time?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Yes, you do.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

I have a quick question, but I'm going to pass you on to Legislator Hahn. At one point you said that your budget was, I believe, strictly for operation. It's an operation budget. Does that include your salaries? And what portion of the budget is salaries?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Actually, our -- it's probably about 50% of the budget is salaries and mandated expenses.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Fifty percent is salaries and mandated expenses. Okay. I thought initially you had said that your budget was strictly for the operation of the facility, so that's why I was trying to figure out where the salaries came from. Legislator Hahn.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Hello.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Good morning.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Thank you for all you do for our volunteers. I am the daughter of a 45-plus year volunteer at Stony Brook Fire Department, and I think he has seven or so years in East Rockaway before that, so I thank you. I know the commitment and dedication that our volunteers give is beyond. It's really amazing.

Can you talk a little bit -- and I hope I'm not making you repeat anything, but on the recruit training, can you talk about number of recruits that are trained each year? And you said you expect some decreases in that area, and what that will mean, because I know particularly in some of the local fire departments in my area, they're kind of aging, the volunteer -- you know, my father, who I just spoke about is still active, and there's a real problem getting recruits. And, like you said, Suffolk County is working on that, but it would just be a shame to get people willing and really not being able to train them. So if you could just go over again what you were saying about how many recruits you train, how many classes for recruits, and then what you expect the impact will be there.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Surely. Every year we do -- somewhere between 500 and 600 new firefighters a year come through our program. We do -- we allow our students -- our new recruit program, we call it -- it's called Firefighter I, is the basically recruit program. That's currently 110 hours, the lengths of that program, that they spend. We give the students, you know, because we are dealing with volunteers, we give the students two years to complete that entire program. So our numbers may vary from year to year because we don't have the people that are taking that in succession to try and complete it as fast as possible. But every year it's somewhere between four and 500 students complete the program. With the new recruiting that's going on, and talking to several fire departments, you know, asking them, "How many new members have we received, you know, this year with the new recruit program," we're hearing numbers that I've never heard. You know, I've heard one fire department said they have 25 new members coming in.

**LEG. HAHN:**

That's a good thing. That's a good thing.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Oh, it's a good thing. Oh, we're ecstatic about this, you know. And, like I said, you know, every time you turn the radio on, you hear this, this advertisement and it's working, because we see the numbers in our classes. Right now, all of our -- we're currently running -- I believe it's five classes at the same time, you know, Firefighter I classes. We try and conduct at least three at a time. You know, because of the size of Suffolk County, we try and do one in the west, one in the central and one on the East End. We currently have five programs running right now and each program has somewhere between 50 and 75 students in it. So we're already seeing the increasing in that. The impact it's going to have, like I said is we had to eliminate two of those programs towards the end of year, so there is the possibility that there may be a hundred students that we may not be able to train in this years budget.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Okay. So you had to -- out of the five classes, you'll have to eliminate two; is that what you're saying?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

No. We had slated to do 18 total classes this year. We'll be -- we have cut that back to 16.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Thank you.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

My pleasure.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

One last question, just out of curiosity, because I know for the EMT training, there's a State requirement, so many people per instructor. Do you have any State requirements as far as training?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Yes, we do, and it depends on the type of training that we're doing. You know, some -- obviously, lecture-based classes, there is no minimum, it's one instructor for -- and it could be, you know, 25 or 100 students in the class. For our hands-on training, depending upon the type of training that we're doing, it could be an instructor ratio of one to five, one to four, or one to eight, depending upon the type of training, and we follow the State requirements on that.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. Well, I certainly thank you. Any more questions? No? But I do thank you for coming in, because I will tell you, initially, I did not realize that you were contracted by the County, I always thought you were County employees. So, you know -- and I think with -- in light of what recently happened in the Manorville area, we certainly need to make sure that our firemen are well trained, as they're all volunteers, but they're extremely well trained. And --

**LEG. HAHN:**

Do they train for brush fires?

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Well, I would assume, yeah. Brush fires, do you -- you do training for the brush fires, right?

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Yes, we do, yes. We cover everything from, you know, the basic house fire to commercial fires to brush fires and to propane fires, and just anything that burns out there.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

So, again, thank you for your service. And, like I said, we have very well trained volunteers and we appreciate what you've done to help them.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

Thank you. And we appreciate all your support. And I'd like to extend an invitation to any of the new members of the committee. If they'd ever like to come out to the Fire Academy, we'd be more than happy to give them a tour and show them the firefighters at work. Thank you very much for your time.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

No, thank you. And, like I said, you know, I think you know well, we have no money and we are asking that you help weather the storm with us.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

I didn't come here today to ask for money.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Oh, I know that.

**CHIEF STOCKINGER:**

I'm just telling you, we're going to do the best we can with what we have.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

I know you will, and I appreciate it. Okay. Sounds like there's a few people who want to come out to see a burn. Okay. So we -- do we have any representatives from -- oh, I'm sorry, from FRES. Did you have a comment or concern?

**MR. EGAN:**

By all means. Good morning my name is James Egan. I'm the Chairman of Fire, Rescue and Services -- Emergency Services Commission. We're the volunteer piece of all the organizations within the County that meet and kind of overlook to try to help and put our two cents in one way or the other to get the programs running right and help the Legislators understand sometimes as the liaisons.

One thing Dick is not good at is patting himself on the back. He came here and made a presentation today, which was good. I know from presentations I've made, it's always difficult to get everything. The volunteers and the quality of volunteers that come out of our fire academy is beyond recognition. They are recognized throughout this country. There are people, unfortunately, we've trained, we've got Firefighter I, Firefighter II who've moved on and had -- actually have -- hold positions, governmental positions, throughout the country in the fire service, other chiefs, major cities things of that nature, a lot of the training that starts in the Fire Academy.

And the question came up about the ancillary, like the other fire departments that have their own, or the townships. Six training sessions a year will not make a firefighter. All the other ancillary training that's done through the other fire departments is just to now backfeed what Dick has originally given to us. By doing that, we can take the technical rescue piece and then take the next evolution. You can't have a class in January in technical rescue and remember everything come September and October, should there be an event in your district.

My district, personally, we run forty-five hundred calls a year for a volunteer organization. The members that I have, I currently am lucky I have 32 probationary members that have to go through this class this year, big numbers. That entail, I think, is to the fire service and the job we do. Obviously, local media, sometimes we get a bad rap. My department, and I'm not preaching for my department, through -- we get not only Dick's classes, also through EMS services classes. We are lucky enough to bring our people to the point we have a national recognition that we just received from Congressional Fire Service Institute, which is in Washington. Anybody who doesn't know anything about that institute, bipartisan among all the Senators and Congressional people, because fire service and public safety is not a partisan issue, it's everybody's issue. When we pick up the phone, it's Fire Rescue, we don't have are you Republican, Democrat, Conservative. "What's your emergency? Whatever we can do to come and get you, we'll come and do. And we would hope, or I would ask that when people think about any refunding or bringing fundings to operational levels for

public safety, that that gets put in everybody's mind. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Thank you, Jay.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Thank you for your service.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

And I know Commissioner Williams was not able to be here. He contacted me. He's at a New York State Fire Commissioners conference today, so that's why he's not here today. I see we have someone from the Sheriff's Department and the Police Department. Do any of you have any comments or -- about anything?

**MR. SHARKEY:**

(Shook head in the negative).

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

No? I guess we shall move on with the agenda, then.

**TABLED RESOLUTIONS**

Okay. We have tabled *Resolution 1065 - Adopting a Local Law, a Charter Law to provide for fair and equitable distribution of public safety sales and compensating use tax revenues (Schneiderman)*. I'll make a motion to table.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Second.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Second, Legislator D'Amaro. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Abstain -- I mean, opposed.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Opposed? Two oppositions, Legislator Gregory and Spencer.

*(Vote: Tabled 5-2-0-0 Opposed Legs. Gregory and Spencer)*

*1233 - Adopting a Local Law, a Charter Law to clarify the process for distributing public safety sales tax revenues to municipalities outside the Police District (Schneiderman).*

**LEG. CALARCO:**

I'll make a motion to table subject to call.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Motion to table subject to call, Legislator Calarco. I guess I'll second that. All in favor?

**MR. NOLAN:**

What resolution is that?

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

1233. Are we having some discussion about this or are we --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Yeah, just Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Oh, I'll second it, just so we can --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

I'm not going to support subject to call, only because in deference to Legislator Schneiderman. And should he want to raise the issue again, I'd like to give him the opportunity.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Then table.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

I'll withdraw my motion and make a motion to table.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. So the motion is withdrawn. But motion to table, Legislator Calarco. I'll second it. Go ahead.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

On the motion. I think the concern is that some of the Legislative districts have incorporated villages. And in my particular district, you know, I've got four incorporated villages, and I think that this -- that's my opposition. I think instead of tabling it, you know, maybe we can discuss it further at some point. But I know that, especially during some of the economic challenges that we face, we don't want to take any resources away from our public safety officials. I know we have some of our small incorporated villages and mayors and things like that, these funds are extremely important to them. So I do think we have to come to some conclusion instead of just tabling it over and over again --

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

You know, I understand, but I think the issue, being that we don't have money.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Right.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

And it is something that we try to address during the budget process, during our Operating Budget. And, you know, at this time, there are many services provided to the villages and the East End police departments. And, certainly, we would love to get them more money, but over the past few years it's been a bit of a challenge. But I believe, Legislator Calarco, you have a comment?

**LEG. CALARCO:**

My comment's a very simple one. We just had a number of individuals here who are being laid off in July. I cannot at this time consider any resolution that's going to constrain the amount of money we have coming into the County budget when I have to face the reality that people are losing their jobs.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. Comment?

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Certainly. I totally agree. And I definitely understand the challenges and that we are confronting. And I think the resolutions that Mr. Schneiderman is introducing goes to looking at -- with the resources that are there, should there be some equity. And I definitely understand and I support -- you know, I understand where we stand with these things, but that's -- but the issue is that we still -- with regards to some of the incorporated villages that have law enforcement. I think that, as we're making these difficult decisions, I just want to keep in mind that we have to be equitable in our judgment, but I do understand the position, and I can --

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Sure.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

-- support my colleague's position.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

And I think that one thing that they can do as a taxing district is raise their taxes, if they wanted to. However, I think at this time we do have a tabling motion, and I'll second that. All in favor? Opposed? I'm assuming opposition Legislator Gregory and Spencer.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay? Abstentions? Okay. It's tabled. *(Vote: Tabled 5-2-0-0 Opposed: Legs. Gregory and Spencer).*

***1286 - Authorizing the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office to incorporate motor vehicles obtained at no cost to the County through the Federal Asset Forfeiture Program to the existing fleet (Co. Exec.).*** I'll make a motion to table because we have -- table subject to call, because we do have two other bills that we will be passing on the same issue.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

I'll second.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Second, Legislator D'Amaro. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's tabled subject to call. *(Vote: Tabled Subject to Call 7-0-0-0)*

***1287 - Authorizing the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office to incorporate motor vehicles obtained at no cost to the County pursuant to DWI seizures into the existing fleet (Co. Exec.).*** I'll make same motion, same second, same vote. *(Vote: Tabled Subject to Call 7-0-0-0)*

***H.R. 04 - Requesting the State of New York to amend the Tax Law, in relation to within the County of Suffolk for public safety purposes of sales and compensating use tax (Senate Bill S.2638 and Assembly Bill A.3735) (Schneiderman).*** I'll make a motion to table.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Second.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Second, Legislator D'Amaro. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Opposed.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Opposed, Legislator Gregory and Spencer. Abstentions? Okay. It's tabled. *(Vote: Tabled 5-2-0-0 Opposed: Legs. Gregory and Spencer)*

**INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS**

*1362, Introductory Resolutions, Adopting a Local Law to expand the County's Traffic Control Monitoring System (Presiding Officer).* Is that a -- yeah, I thought so. So I'll make a motion to table for public hearing; second, Legislator Calarco. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? *(Vote: Tabled for Public Hearing 7-0-0-0)*

**LEG. HAHN:**

Madam Chair?

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Yes.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Is it possible just to invite someone here from Public Works, whoever sets up those lights, just so that we can hear again --

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Sure.

**LEG. HAHN:**

-- about the timing of the yellow lights and etcetera?

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Sure we can. I know we did have a presentation at one time and they talked about New York State law pertaining to it, but we can certainly make a request again to have someone come at Public Safety.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

And, you know, the gentleman who was here, I would certainly like if they could respond to him also.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay? *I.R. 1369 - Appropriating funds in connection with the purchase of heavy-duty equipment for Sheriff's Office (CP 3047) (Co. Exec.).* I have a -- can I ask a question of this one? I'm just curious. What kind of vehicle is this? This is like a tow truck? I'm just wondering, do you currently have one, and what's the purpose of this?

**MR. SHARKEY:**

This item was vetted through the Capital Program last year for the '12 through '15 Capital Program and it is for a flatbed tow truck. We do currently have one flat bed operating in the Sheriff's Office, which is not sufficient for our operation.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

In what way is it not sufficient? No, I'm just curious because, obviously, we're going to have to bond for this. And, you know, my question is, there was a comment here, I have a copy of a memo, and it's talking about using it for vehicles that were stranded. And do we currently use the law enforcement -- like the P.D. and the Sheriffs have tow trucks, I know, I believe. Do we use them for all stranded vehicles, or don't we have contracts with tow truck companies?

**MR. SHARKEY:**

No. This is -- there are contracts with outside tow truck companies for disabled motorists, etcetera, or accident vehicles. This is no handle tows of our fleet vehicles, which are over 300 vehicles, in addition to other tows, such as Sheriff's Office cases and/or impounds in relation to DWI's, or multiple traffic laws that require impounds of public vehicles.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. But now what kind of tow truck do you currently have? I mean, is that one -- are you replacing that one?

**MR. SHARKEY:**

We're retaining that one. This is a -- the tow truck we have now is a 12-year-old flatbed tow truck. We also have a conventional wheel lift tow truck, which you would picture as, you know, not a flatbed tow truck. However, there's limitations on usage of that with front-wheel drive vehicles and all-wheel drive vehicles. You can cause damage to vehicles that would leave the County liable for damages.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. You know, I kind of -- you know, because of our budget issues, and I'm sitting here listening to security guards talking about getting laid off, and we're talking about our budget and having to bond money for more vehicles. And if you wouldn't object, I would like to get some more information and maybe table it for one cycle and, you know, look at it for -- say again?

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

You want to table this?

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

I'm just -- you know, I'd like to kind of get some more information. And, you know, like I said, is it something that we do really need to bond at this time? And that's my concern.

**MR. SHARKEY:**

If you have specific concerns, I'd be more than happy to address them, if you want to forward them to me. A vehicle such as this does take some time to purchase, so I can't see the harm in a one-cycle tabling.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Okay.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

And I'll make -- I'll second the motion.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

So do I have a -- John, did you want to say something?

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

No, that's okay.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. So motion to table; second, Legislator Calarco. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's tabled.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Maybe when you come back, let us know how often it's used and how often you, like, would need a second -- how many instances are you finding yourself where you're going to need this second vehicle?

**MR. SHARKEY:**

It does come up on numerous occasions. But, as I said, if you would be so kind as to forward me your specific questions, I'd be happy to answer them.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

We can do that. Okay. Thank you.

***1370 - Authorizing the Sheriff's Office to increase the fleet by one prisoner transport bus by retaining a bus scheduled for decommission (Co. Exec.).*** Again, this is a prisoner transportation vehicle. Would be nice that we didn't have to use it too much, but I'm assuming we have to. So, with a bit of luck, we'll have a new jail and maybe we won't have to --

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Another cost of the jail.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Yeah. But, anyway --

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Motion.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

-- not an option. So motion to approve, Legislator Calarco. Second? I'll second that. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It is approved. ***(Vote: Approved 7-0-0-0)***

***1372 - Appropriating funds in connection with the upgrade and reinforcement of Hauppauge Tower (CP 3238).***

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

I'll make a motion to approve.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Motion to approve, Legislator Kennedy; I'll second that. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's approved. ***(Vote: Approved 7-0-0-0)***

**1383 - Accepting and appropriating a grant in the amount of \$596,908 from the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services for the State Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program (SLETPP) (FFY2011) with 100% Support (Co. Exec.).** Motion to approve and place on the Consent Calendar.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Second.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Second, Legislator Calarco. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's approved. **(Vote: Approved 7-0-0-0)**

**1397 - Authorizing the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office to incorporate motor vehicles obtained through the Federal Asset Forfeiture Program into the existing fleet (Browning).** I'll make a motion to approve.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Second.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Second, Legislator Calarco. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's approved. **(Vote: Approved 7-0-0-0)**

**1398 - Authorizing the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office to incorporate motor vehicles obtained pursuant to DWI seizures into the existing fleet (Browning).** Same motion, same second, same vote. **(Vote: Approved 7-0-0-0)**

**1454 - Appropriating funds in connection with the Palm AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System) (CP 3503) (Co. Exec.).**

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Motion.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Motion to approve, Legislator Spencer; second, Legislator Gregory. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's approved. **(Vote: Approved 7-0-0-0)**

With that, we have no more business.

**MS. LOMORIELLO:**

What happened to 1477?

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

1477 is withdrawn.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

1477, I'm sorry, was withdrawn. And is that it? Okay. So we are adjourned.

**(\*THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 11:29 A.M. \*)**