

General Meeting - 2/9/16

**SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

**GENERAL MEETING**

**SECOND DAY**

**February 9, 2016**

**Verbatim Transcript**

**MEETING HELD AT THE WILLIAM H. ROGERS LEGISLATURE BUILDING  
IN THE ROSE Y. CARACAPPA LEGISLATIVE AUDITORIUM  
725 VETERANS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY  
SMITHTOWN, NEW YORK**

**Minutes Taken By  
*Alison Mahoney & Lucia Braaten - Court Stenographers***

*(\*The following testimony was taken & transcribed by  
Alison Mahoney - Court Stenographer\*)*

*(\*The meeting was called to order at 9:50 A.M. \*)*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Good morning, everyone. Good morning, Mr. Clerk.

**MR. RICHBERG:**

Good morning, Mr. Presiding Officer.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Can you do the roll call?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

Surely.

*(\*Roll Called by Mr. Richberg - Clerk of the Legislature\*)*

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Here.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Here.

**LEG. STERN:**

Here.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

Here.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Here.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Here.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Here.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Here.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Here.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Here.

**LEG. ANKER:**

Here.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Present.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

*(Not Present).*

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Here.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Present.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Here.

**MR. RICHBERG:**

Seventeen. Sorry; Legislator Calarco?

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Present.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Present.

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Seventeen (Not Present: Legislator Muratore).*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Will you please all rise for the salute to the flag led by Legislator Kara Hahn.

***Salutation***

Next we will have the invocation given by Reverend Brenda Ford of Stony Brook University Protestant Chaplain and leader of the University Protestant Campus Ministry, guest of Legislator Kara Hahn who will introduce her.

**Invocation**

**LEG. HAHN:**

Thank you. Welcome. Reverend Brenda D. Ford joined the Stony Brook University Campus community in 2009 and is the Protestant Chaplain and University Pastor. Pastor Brenda is trained for pastoral ministry and has an avid interest in the unique needs of young adults at risk and disenfranchised families. She is an ordained African Methodist Episcopal itinerant elder, a certified women's employment life coach, Christian counselor, trainer of counselors and clergy misconduct and trainer for the prevention of domestic violence and elder abuse. Pastor Ford holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Health Services management, a Master's in Community Health and received a Master of Divinity from Columbia University's Union Theological Seminary. It's where great honor that I introduce Pastor Ford to you today.

**REVEREND FORD:**

Thank you for the notation. Let us bow our head in prayer.

God of all life known by many names who cares for all creation and calls for justice and peace. Enter thy hands, oh God, we commend ourselves this day. Let the gift of thy presence be with us and go before us with your gracious inspiration and all our doings. We gather and come to you this morning asking for your guidance, wisdom and support as the Suffolk County Legislative District begins this meeting. Give them understanding of how to utilize their gifts effectively so that they may fulfill their calling and our destinies. Shine your light upon the agenda. Help them to encourage a meaningful discussion, allow them to grow closer as a group and nurture the bonds of community, oh holy one, for the work that lies ahead in each and every district. Fill them with your grace, Lord God, as they make decisions that might affect their constituents, and continue to remind them that all that they do here today, all that they accomplish is for the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of you and for the service of humanity. Excluding kindness, love, lifting up and improving the lives of others for the betterment of all your people. We ask these things in your many, many names, your daughters and sons that are gathered today. Amen.

*"Amen"* said in unison

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Please remain standing for a moment of silence. Former Presiding Officer and Legislator, Louis T. Howard, Sr., an original member of the Suffolk County Legislature -- actually served my Legislative District two Legislators prior to me -- served from January, 1970 to December, 1978, and from December, 1982 to December, 1987. He served as Presiding Officer from 1983 to 1985 and was known for being the one of 18 County Legislators who favored opening of the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant, a position that caused him the Presiding Officer post of the Legislature in 1985. He viewed Shoreham and electrical power as one of the County's principal problems and concerns of water supply and need for low cost housing for the aging and young in the future. From Amityville to Albany, he was a formidable vote getter, elected Village Trustee and Mayor of Amityville four times, a State Assemblyman twice and a County Legislator eight times.

John C. Wehrenberg, an original member of the Suffolk County Legislature, serving from 1970 through December, 1983. He retired as Deputy Police Commissioner, was an Honorary Chief and 74-year member of the Holbrook Fire Department. He was also the longest serving Commissioner of the Holbrook Fire Department.

Peter J. Costigan of South Setauket, a former New York State Assemblyman and former Chairman of the St. Charles Hospital in Port Jefferson recently passed away as well. He led the Assembly Select Committee on Higher Education when he sponsored a bill calling for the creation of the Tuition Assistance Program. The bill was signed into law in 1974. Known as TAP, the program was intended to encourage New York students to attend college in the state while closing the tuition gap between the public and private universities. Today the program grants recipients up to \$5,165 annually depending on family income and the school the student attends.

We extend our deepest sympathies and prayers to their families. As always, let us also remember all those men and women who put themselves in harm's way every day to protect our country.

***Moment of Silence Observed***

Again, we all welcome you to our first meeting, official meeting of the 2016 Legislative calendar. We hope that you enjoy the process. And as you all may be aware that today -- or excuse me, this month is Black History Month. The precursor to Black History Month was created in 1926 in the United States when Historian C -- excuse me, Carter G. Woodson announced the second week of February to be Negro History Week. This week was chosen because it coincided with the birthday of Abraham Lincoln on February 12th and of Frederick Douglas on February 14th, both of which dates black communities had celebrated together since the late 19th Century.

In 1976, President Gerald Ford, as part of the United States Bicentennial, expanded Negro History Week to Black History Month as officially recognized by the United States Government. Ford encouraged Americans to *"Seize the opportunity to honor the too often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history."* The Heritage Month celebrates African American contributions to American culture and also serves as a reminder to the a tribulations African Americans have had to endure to obtain the freedoms that America's Forefathers promised its people when *All men are created equal* was written into the Declaration of Independence.

African-Americans have been on the forefront of the civil rights fight to uphold this oft-quoted American ideal since their emancipation from slavery in 1865, and their granting of full citizenship in 19 -- excuse me, 1868 with the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution.

### **Proclamations**

I will be make a making a presentation in honor of Black History Month and I'm going to ask that Valerie -- excuse me, Town of Brookhaven **Councilwoman Valerie Cartright, Charlotte Taylor, Lorraine Richardson-McCrae, Aliah Skelton, Jennifer Martin** and **Dawn Lott** join me at the podium.

### **Applause**

It is my pleasure to stand before you today to recognize this wonderful, wonderful organization, **Zeta Phi Beta Sorority**. We have worked together in the past to do many things. Part of their mission is to -- an important part of their mission is to do community service, and I think it's important that we recognize them for those efforts. For 40 years the United States observed Black History Month, but this month we're recognizing Zeta Phi Beta Sorority which was founded January 16th, 1920 by five women who envisioned a sorority that would address fully the prejudices and poverty effecting humanity in general and the black community in particular. The sorority's Rho Omega Zeta Chapter, one of more than 800 chapters across the world, is a group of college-educated women from Long Island who promote the sorority's ideals of finer womanhood, scholarship service, sisterly love, and who connects with African Americanism, the term used in identifying the political and economic unity of all African people to an effort to serve the Long Island community through service and scholarship. So I want to congratulate you all for your efforts and thank you for being here today. Congratulations.

### **Applause**

And if I may, while we do have her, I don't see her right now, someone who has in her own right accomplished an historic feat, we have Councilwoman Tracey Edwards from the Town of Huntington who is here. There she is. Being the first African-American --

### **Applause**

-- Elected to Town Council, the Town Board in the Town of Huntington is certainly historic and congratulations, Tracey.

**MS. EDWARDS:**  
Thank you.

### **Applause**

**(Photograph Taken)**

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer, and congratulations to those wonderful women.

And the next up for a proclamation is actually myself, and I'll ask Legislator Krupski and Legislator Browning to join me, and we'll be presenting a proclamation to **Suffolk County Police Officer Joe Verdi.**

***Applause***

Good morning. And I asked Legislator Krupski to join me, as Joe Verdi actually lives in his district, and Legislator Browning is our Chair of Public Safety. And we are here today, every morning we take a moment of silence to think about those who are defending us, both overseas, but also here at home, and that includes our men in blue. And we often talk about how they put their lives in danger protecting us day-in and day-out and every night, and Officer Verdi displayed that in recent actions just a week or so ago. He received a 911 call about a drunk driver driving at high speeds the wrong way on Sunrise highway in my district, in Patchogue, and Officer Verdi quickly got into action. He moved his vehicle into the front of many other pedestrian vehicles doing what's called a slow roll, moving back and forth very slowly to slow everyone down in an effort to make sure that when that drunk driver came flying at them, people would be at a standstill and there would be less chance of an impact. Unfortunately, that drunk driver headed straight for Officer Verdi's car; he must have seen the lights and thought it was the way to go and he crashed head-on into Officer Verdi's vehicle. And luckily Officer Verdi is here with us today relatively unscathed from that ordeal and we want to thank him for putting his life out there, because it's truly an act of heroism and an act of total unselfishness.

***Applause & Standing Ovation***

**LEG. BROWNING:**

And I'd like to say I met Joe about ten years ago when I first became a Legislator. And to cut a long story short, I had broken my ankle, my car broke down, torrential rain, and my son ran into the Moriches Bay Diner and said, *"My Mom needs help. Her car is stuck and we're blocking people."* Joe gets up and he said, *"Where's your Mom,"* and he comes out in a torrential downpour, moves my car and then proceeds to tell me to pop the hood, and I said, *"It's pouring rain."* And he had no idea who I was, but that's a testament to the kind of person Joe is. Joe stood up when nobody else did and said, *"I'll come out and help."*

So I do want to mention also something about Joe and that is he lost his brother to a head-on collision. So I just want to make sure that everybody's aware of he knew what he was doing and he was willing to risk his life for everybody on that road. So, I can't say enough thank-you's. Joe has been a friend of mine since I met him and I'm very proud to call him my friend. Thank you, Joe.

***Applause***

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Yeah, I'd like to thank Joe, too. I mean, I saw this happen once Upstate where a police officer put himself at risk on the thruway doing the same thing. And in the traffic, you know, you're moving along in traffic. You're a commuter, you're going somewhere, you're busy, you're in your own head, you don't really think of what's going on. And as a person who's not a police officer, of course you don't know that there's danger coming the other way. So you set a great example, not only for all the men and women who serve in the Police Department, All-County wide, whether it's, you know, a small department or the County department, and you set a great example for the whole community of watching out for everyone else. And you saved, you know, a life or lives that day and we all really appreciate it. Thank you.

**OFFICER VERDI:**

Thank you.

*Applause*

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Having grown up with Joe, I've known him since high school and Joe's always been a dedicated individual to the community; not only is Joe a policeman, but he's also been a volunteer fireman. And I just want to take a moment to recognize his family and thank his wife for the dedication that she has, because I know -- and Joe would probably be the first one to say this -- he would never be able to do what he does without the support of his family. So thank you for lending Joe to us and the time that he works and for protecting the County. Thanks, Joe.

*Applause*

*(Photograph Taken)*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, congratulations.

Next we'll have Legislator Spencer who will present a proclamation to James Feeley honoring him as a dedicated Centerport Volunteer Fireman for more than 50 years and an EMT at the department for 28 years.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

I want to ask if Mr. Feeley -- are you here with your wife?

**MR. FEELEY:**

My wife, yes.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Please join us. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer. The Suffolk County Legislature is proud to recognize our heroes, people who care enough about their neighbors and community to give their time to help each other every day. James Feeley has been a dedicated member of the Centerport Fire Department since June of 1965, that's over 51 years. He was elected Chief of the Department from 1984 to 1985 and reelected in 2000. He served a term on the Board of Fire Commissioners and started the Centerport Fire Department dive team. He served also on the rescue squad for 28 years as an EMT. James is a past recipient of Firefighter of the Year Award and has received recognition for fire rescue/alarm response multiple times. He has also served as President of the Town of Huntington Fire Chiefs Council from 1984 to 1985, and currently serves as Deputy Fire Coordinator for Water Rescue, a position he has held since 2000.

The Suffolk County Legislature welcomes the opportunity to pay a well-deserved tribute to residents for their dedicated service to our community. As Legislator of the 18th District, it gives me great pride and pleasure to present this proclamation to James Feeley in recognition of more than 50 years of dedicated service.

*Applause*

*(Photograph Taken)*

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Thank you, Legislator Spencer. As they're getting ready to take the picture, our next presenter will be Legislator Trotta will present a proclamation to Intel Semi-Finalist **Mehtaab Singh Sawhney, a senior at Commack High School.** And I hope I got that name right.

**Applause**

**LEG. TROTTA:**

This is out of my comfort zone being close to such a smart person; no offense guys.

**(\*Laughter\*)**

That's not going to go over too well, huh? Mehtaab is a senior at the high school I went to. I'm very proud of him. He's recognized as being an Intel Semi-Finalist, America's oldest and most prestigious pre-college science competition in the nation. He's a graduate of -- he's going to be graduating from Commack High School. This is something that takes perseverance and your summers and it's long, long -- I know friends of my sons that are doing this. He studied mathematics, a model using very large scale integration which is processed by thousands of transistors that are wired officially into tiny computers; how that works I have no idea. The chips are used in cell phones, computers. He worked on this project with a scientist from MS -- MIT, his advisor, Dr. Kruger and his wife. And I congratulate him and encourage him to continue in this path and hopefully come back to Long Island, make a lot of money, pay a lot of taxes because, as you will hear later, we need the money. Again, I want to thank you and congratulate you. And as an alumni from Commack north -- well, Commack, it was North when I went -- thank you for living here and please come back. Thank you.

**Applause**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Next we have Legislator Kennedy will present a proclamation to **Intel Semi-Finalist David Li.**

**Applause**

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Hello, David. Good morning. David is not a stranger to us, this is the second time he's been here for an award. David has accomplished so much in his short life, and I'm going to have to, for the first time, read off this proclamation.

*"He was selected as an Intel Semifinalist for his DME Tracker Project." And I want all of you to know that only 300 students in the entire United States were selected as Intel Semi-finalists; that in and of itself for these two gentlemen is quite significant. But "David attends Commack High School where he serves as president of the computer science club, as well as the National Technological Honor Society. David has founded several technology-based, non-profit organizations, including the server-hosting provider Fountain Realms, the New York Chapter of the 501(c)3 organization Kids are Scientists Too, as well as the Computer Repair Charity Club of Commack High School."*

I could go on and on with all the awards that David has won, but I am thankful that he lives in Commack. I know he's going to stay and pay lots of taxes, like Mr. Trotta wants.

**(\*Laughter\*)**

And I just congratulate him.

***Applause***

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Next we have Legislator Anker will present a proclamation to **Robert Aliano from Miller Place**, a victim of a devastating and still unresolved hit and run accident. He suffered a traumatic brain injury and serious physical injuries.

**LEG. ANKER:**

Okay. So, you know, we're seeing some amazing people that are inspiring examples of overcoming challenges, and I have a very special person here today; Robert Aliano. Nick and Lori, can you guys come on up? I know you guys want Robert to shine tonight, but he has such a large amount of energy here and inspiration that I'm sure, you know, everyone will feel this. I want to read a little bit of a story here, just to describe so that you can understand what Robert has been through.

In 2008, while at college in Hamden, Connecticut, Robert Aliano was a victim of a devastating hit and run accident. He suffered a traumatic brain injury and serious physical injuries. The doctors thought he would not survive. After major surgery, being in a coma, undergoing physical speech and occupational therapies, and with the care of his parents, Nick and Lori, he survived. He fought tirelessly to regain his strength in life. Originally Robert suffered such a traumatic brain injury from the accident that he was not able to finish college. After his accident, Robert and his family were told he would never be able to walk again. He began working with Sensei Figgiani -- how do you say that? Okay, Jerry at East Coast Black Belt Academy in Middle Island. And through his hard work and determination, Robert was able to walk again and finish his 12 remaining credits at Quinnipiac University to graduate.

For the past four years, Robert has worked as a teacher's aide at Just Kids in Middle Island, a preschool designed for children with disabilities. He has also -- he also has designed an anti-bullying and anti-drug and alcohol seminar that has been approved by New York State BOCES. Since the accident, Robert has been determined to regain his life and to be a role model for people around him. He is an inspiration to the community and it remains a reminder to never give up. And in fact, his organization is called *Given a Second Chance*.

I am -- it is with great honor that I will be presenting a proclamation to Robert. And I just wanted to mention, too, that I was thoroughly impressed at seeing the presentation that was given actually in Port Jefferson, at Port Jefferson High School. And how you truly inspired young kids to fight against the negative information that they're given, whether it's to take drugs or if they're being bullied. You know that there's something inside every one of us, that there's determination and to overcome challenges. And again, I just want to thank you, you know, and also your parents for the amazing inspiration that you are giving to our community. So again, thank you so much.

***Applause***

***(\*Photograph Taken\*)***

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Thank you, Legislator Anker. And while they're getting ready for their photo, Legislator Hahn will be the next presenter and she will present a proclamation to **Dr. Leon Klempner** who founded the **Smile Rescue Fund for Kids** in May, 2011. The Smile Rescue Fund for Kids raises funds in order to help children from all over the world with severe dentofacial deformities receive medical care.

***Applause***

**LEG. HAHN:**

Hello, everyone. It is with great privilege and honor that I introduce to you Dr. Leon Klempner. And he's here today with recognition for his extraordinary work to improve the lives of children born with dentofacial deformities.

Dr. Klempner is an orthodontist who has transformed an innate desire to help children from around the world receive appropriate medical care for deformities such as cleft lips and palates, regardless of their economic situation or nation of birth. After nearly a decade of traveling around the world with volunteer groups such as Operation Smile, Smile Train and Help Volunteers Overseas, Dr. Klempner founded the Smile Rescue Fund for Kids to better assist children with facial and craniofacial deformities so severe they cannot be helped by their families, government agencies or established charities. He helped them to receive appropriate medical care and treatment. And Dr. Klempner's work has provided specialized care to children confronting difficult medical issues throughout the world's most difficult regions, and it has given these children the ability and reason to smile.

So we're here to thank you for all your work, your dedication, your tireless activities around the world to help children, and there's nothing really more special than to help them be able to smile. So thank you for all that you do, and this is just a small token of our community's appreciation and thanks.

***Applause***

***(Photograph Taken)***

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Next we will have Legislator Muratore who will present a proclamation to *Emma Tulip* for her internship project which investigated gender issues linked to suicide among active duty and retired military service personnel and the establishment of the national movement known as *"22 in 22"* at Stony Brook University.

***Applause***

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Why don't we bring up the other individual involved in this fantastic program. You know, in today's world with what's going on, particularly with our fighting men and women, both in this country and abroad, it's very -- it's pleasing to see what's going on. I'll tell you a little story. The other day I was in a Dunkin Donuts and I'm sitting there and there's a young -- a little boy, maybe 10, 11 years old, and across from him was this elderly man, he had to be at least 90 years old, and he had a World War II Veteran hat on. And the little boy walked up to him and said, *"Excuse me. Are you a veteran?"* And apparently, you know, the man had difficulty hearing him and he didn't answer him, so the mother said, *"Ask him again."* So he asked him again and the elderly man said, *"Yes"*, and the kid walked over and gave him a hug and said, *"Thank you for serving. Thank you for protecting my country."* So you know, it's so wonderful to see that people are caring, young people are caring about our veterans, both active and retired.

Fortunately she lives in my district, lives in Centereach, and she's involved in an intern program at Stony Brook University, and it actually stemmed from her investigation of gender issues, so that means both men and women, linked to suicide among both our active and retired military service personnel. So this led to her interest and heightening awareness. Doing this, she found out that on average we lose both -- about 22 active and retired military personnel each day to suicide. So Emma, alarmed by this staggering fact, established at the Stony Brook University Campus the national movement commonly known as *"22 in 22"*. The mission of *"22 in 22"* is to bring awareness

to the disease of depression that effects active and retired military service personnel. So maybe -- you know, I can't describe this program, it's way above me, but maybe Emma can take a few minutes and just explain her wonderful program, please. Thank you.

**MS. TULIP:**

Sure, thank you. Thank you so much. Well, the program was 22 days at the campus recreation center at Stony Brook University. What we did was we encouraged students there to perform 22 push-ups, you know, in representation of the 22 veterans that we lose every day, a veteran in active duty personnel. Not everybody had to do 22 push-ups, that was really just kind of an action to leave an impression on other people, you know, see our students get down and kind of sweat a little bit for our veterans. But it's really about the message of raising awareness of the disease of depression and to connect Stony Brook students to the mental health resources on campus. You know, depression doesn't just effect military personnel, but also students. That was a big part of the program.

We had a lot of fun. It's 384 push-ups if you did 22 each day, and I definitely got a little muscle by the end of it. But I was really excited to carry on the program with Joe Verderber, the next semester as a TA for the CHILL Peer Education Program. So this is a two semester long program, and hopefully it will be a third semester, this semester. But I really want to thank University UPD for coming and supporting our events each day, come and do push-ups with us, and campus recreation, Jay, for being so kind in allowing us to rent space there. I want to thank my Dad and my boyfriend for coming today to support me, it's very nice of them to come. But, yeah, I'm just really happy that this message is reaching more than just the university campus, it's reaching, you know, County-wide now, and hopefully Statewide soon if we can make it. So I just want to thank you again for having me. This is great.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Thank you so very much.

*Applause*

**LEG. HAHN:**

And so obviously we also have Joe Verderber here. Joe was involved in this as well. So, you know, I had all this to talk about the 20 -- I don't know that I could drop and give 22 today, so I'm going to work up to that.

*(\*Laughter\*)*

Well, not in my skirt, but I'm going to work up to that because I do think -- what an incredibly depressing statistic. And how -- you know, what a way to get college students to, you know, really think about that each and every day. I know that you all did a number of days, 14 consecutive days of events raising awareness of this. And I would have a very hard time doing 22 push-ups, even when I was in college. And so doing that each day, remembering the lives lost of those who sacrificed to protect us here. And the fact that they -- so many choose -- they come back and are faced with so much, burdened with so much and choose to take their own life is something that we all need to think about, need to make sure that we're properly providing the services that our veterans need when they return home.

And Joe, I also -- you know, I also know you received training as a QPR gatekeeper; question, persuade and refer suicide awareness and intervention techniques. I know that you served as a host and invited an event collaborator with area high school seniors on the QPR training workshop, designed to address issues linked to high school and college experience, and you worked to further raise awareness of the need to learn about the signs of depression and suicide and ways to support

all who are in need. Mental illness is a very serious problem and often doesn't get the attention it deserves, and it's truly remarkable to have students working towards solutions in this troublesome issue. And I want to implore both of you to continue your philanthropic work in the community. Thank you so very much for all that you do.

***Applause***

**LEG. STERN:**

Good morning, everyone. It's my privilege to serve as the Chairman of the Veterans Committee in the Suffolk County Legislature. And we're all very proud of the fact that Suffolk County has the largest number of veterans living in our communities and all of New York State, something that we're very proud of. Unfortunately, too many of our veterans, when they come home after serving their fourth, their fifth, their sixth tours, continue to face tremendous challenges in our community. And so it's great to see members of our community, particularly our young people, serving as great examples, continuing to show all of us that when it comes to supporting the brave men and women fighting for us overseas and when they come home need our support here at home, that we all have an important role to play. So thank you.

***Applause***

**MS. TULIP:**

Just really quickly, I want to thank Kathleen Valerio also for being the person who has made all this possible for both Joe and I. She is our intern supervisor and she's just been a huge support for 22 Today and for "22 in 22". So, I forgot to say thank you.

***Applause***

***(\*Photograph Taken\*)***

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, congratulations, and thank you for all the great work you're doing.

That is all the presentations that we have this morning. We will now go into the public portion.

**Public Portion**

Please be patient, we have many, many cards. Just a reminder that each speaker has up to three minutes to speak, and our first speaker is Tracey Edwards representing the Long Island NAACP; and then on deck, Linda Jones.

**MS. EDWARDS:**

Good morning. I am here on behalf of the Long Island NAACP. The Long Island Region represents the branches of Brookhaven, Eastern Long Island, Central Long Island, Islip and Huntington. President Lucius Ware of Eastern Long Island was actually going to be the speaker this morning, but unfortunately because of weather conditions he was unable to make his way from Southampton. So I am here to speak on the confirmation that you will be voting on later on this morning on Tim Sini.

So Acting Commissioner Sini reached out to the NAACP and we had very candid discussions and he heard our perspectives on how important it is for the Police Department to be involved in public and mental health, our perspectives on gun violence, crime prevention and drug awareness. We shared with him our perspective on the diversity profile of the Police Department and how important it is to create opportunities in various units throughout the precincts and to ensure that we have really good career paths for the Police Department of all ethnicities. We also talked about

our approach and our desire to ensure that we have community policing and how it is important to have good relationships and how good relationships with the Police Department lead to safer neighborhoods. It's also important for police interaction with young people and ensuring that that bond is created throughout when they are young and through their teenage years. And how critical it is to have a solid and strong communication process between the NAACP, the communities, both in good news and in bad news. We made a commitment to him that we will praise him and the Police Department when it is appropriate, and we will also call him out if it's necessary.

I want to leave you with what Martin Luther King says; *"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in the moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."* The NAACP Long Island Region stands here today to share with you that we are committed and ready to work in partnership with the Commissioner, if you also choose to confirm him, we encourage you to do so. And we make sure -- we will make sure that we stand ready to work in partnership with him for the success of Suffolk County Police Department and the Suffolk County residents. Thank you very much.

***Applause***

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Tracey. Linda Jones; and then on deck, Dr. Vosswinkel.

**MS. JONES:**

Good morning, Legislators and attendees. I'm Linda Jones and I'm here representing ADAM, Americans with Disability Awareness Movement. And I'm truly humbled by every person that's come up to this podium before me. I don't even think I should be here, but I am so I'm going to talk anyway.

I just want to thank you again for giving us the three-fourths of a mile. You don't know how much it meant to me to be able to go to church on Sunday and go to functions and just go out. I used to have to just stay home in the house, and it really has made a difference and I just thank you so much.

And the other reason I'm here, because there's always another reason, Mr. Bellone is going to make cuts to the budget and those cuts are going to come from the transportation. And if you cut the transportation, you'll be cutting us, too, because we depend on that just to get out of the house, to go somewhere, to do things, to doctor's appointments. And it helps; it gives us self-esteem, independence, and that's so important. And I would like to know that all of you will help or talk to Mr. Bellone and ask him to please don't cut any of the budgets for the transportation department. Thank you.

***Applause***

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Ms. Jones. Doctor? And then on deck, Steve Couzzo.

**DR. VOSSWINKEL:**

Good morning. My name is James Vosswinkel, I'm from Stony Brook Medical Center. First and foremost, I would like to thank the Legislature for its time and attention this morning. Today I would like to voice my full and unconditional support for Mr. Tim Sini for the position of Commissioner of the Suffolk County Police Department.

Collaboration and collegiality are among the main pillars of medicine; they allow each patient to receive optimal care and have the best possible outcome. When they aren't followed, unnecessary suffering and harm can occur. As we all know, these principles apply just as strongly outside of medicine, being paramount in any organizational matrix. Stony Brook and the Suffolk County Police Department have a long history of plying these doctrines for the betterment of the citizens of our County. Approximately 20 years ago, Stony Brook's paramedics began staffing the police helicopters. Immediately we saw a beneficial impact in mortality. In 2001 the program expanded with additional East End resources, and once again we saw many more lives saved. More lease -- excuse me, more recently integration has occurred in the arena of injury prevention. Of note, of course, implemented through the Suffolk County Traffic Violation Bureau has focused on high-risk drivers that has made promising strides. To date, over 400 traffic violators have participated and only one recidivist is seen. While there has been considerable gains achieved through these efforts, there is still more that needs to be accomplished. Suffolk County is still an outlier in motor vehicle fatalities, as well as has an ongoing drug abuse problem. I believe Mr. Timothy Sini is the person who can aggressively address and help rectify these issues.

Over the past year, through several events and one-on-one meetings, I am grateful that not only have I gotten to know Tim, but have begun to develop a meaningful relationship. Mr. Sini is an accomplished man of integrity. He has been described by many as one of the most honest men they have met and one who makes them strive to better themselves. He holds the doctrines of collaboration and collegiality near and dear and truly believes in what he can do for the community, not what the community can do for him. I believe Mr. Sini exemplifies what a Police Commissioner should be.

Professionally, as the Director of the Stony Brook Trauma Center as well as an elected representative for Suffolk County to the State Trauma Advisory Committee, as well as personally, I'm looking forward to continuing and expanding our relationship. Under the leadership of Mr. Sini, I know that the Suffolk County Police Department will continue to not only make Suffolk County one of the safest places to work and live, but will vigorously tackle these threats to our County. Thanks once again.

***Applause***

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you. Okay, Steve Couzzo; then on deck, Steve Chassman.

**MR. COUZZO:**

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen of our great Suffolk County Legislature and attendees. My name is Steven Couzzo and I'm a cofounder of an advocacy group for the disabled in Suffolk County and across New York State and the country called ADAM, Americans with Disabilities Awareness Movement. We self-advocate to bring an awareness in our community to the politicians and Legislatures and businesses about what's going on in the disabled community. And I want to make you aware, today you acknowledged a lot of people in our community for their efforts, today I'd like to thank you all for your efforts on behalf of the disabled community. You heard the voices that have been going on for years and you acted on it last year and now para-transit is available to all disabled people in the County where it wasn't before and that's seven days a week, so people now have the ability to go to work, to their therapies, to training and just have a life. The people that are disabled that aren't able to use mass transit, and some do use fixed transit, all the routes are important. But your efforts have made a difference in thousands and thousands of lives and as a member of that community, I'd like to thank you.

As Linda said, there's new challenges ahead and I hope we have your support in facing those with the budget problems in Suffolk County and the cuts directed at the transportation. And once again, just a great job on everybody's part and thank you much.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right, thank you.

***Applause***

Steve Chassman; then on deck, Frank Ashby.

**MR. CHASSMAN:**

Good morning, everybody. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Steve Chassman, Suffolk County resident. I serve as the Executive Director of the Long Island Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence and we, too, are here to offer some support to Tim Sini. They say there is no crime or detrimental to man or women than in times of great crisis to do absolutely nothing. As the Legislator in Suffolk County has responded, it's been our experience that so has Tim Sini. Over the last few years he has invited community-based organizations to sit at the table. In interest of public health, Mr. Sini has exhibited great leadership in implementing the Narcan and the Narcan follow-up program. LICAD, our agency, has been a responsible as first responders, have brought people out of near-fatal overdose. Two hundred and fifty-eight names as a result of this program has been forwarded to LICAD, and we have done a soft follow-up in offering people access to treatment.

In addition, I know Mr. Sini has also worked to implement the Vivitrol Release Program from Suffolk County Jail. Sheriff DeMarco has also been a pioneer, but Mr. Sini has highlighted that, you know, up to 70% of the people incarcerated are there directly or indirectly because of substance abuse issues. This crisis continues to rage on. It seems as if it's getting worse, but we want to turn some corners. There's been legislation that has been and introduced and supported by this Legislature as well as Mr. Sini that will hopefully turn the tide of this.

I also have to say that on a personal note, we have made ourselves available to the Suffolk County Government and to the leadership. And Mr. Sini has taken up the opportunity to phone me on the weekends because there have been constituents of Suffolk County, individuals and families, that have called the County Executive's Office needing help, and Mr. Sini, as a humanitarian, as a public official, did not hesitate to call on a weekend, after hours, to make sure that individuals, families and the constituents could be led by LICAD and a host of other community organizations and get help. It is this leadership that we support. We're hopeful that with his appointment for the Suffolk County Police, this is how you end health care epidemics; everyone pitches in. Again, this Legislature has pitched in, thank you very much. But it also takes police, it takes community educators, health care professionals, and of course concerned citizens. So with that, I thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today and good day.

***Applause***

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Mr. Chassman, we generally don't ask questions, but I want to take the point of personal privilege as the Chair to ask you. So are you here as an individual or representing the organization endorsing this?

**MR. CHASSMAN:**

I'm here as an individual and a Suffolk County resident.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay.

**MR. CHASSMAN:**

LICAD, as a community-based organization --

**P.O. GREGORY:**

That's fine.

**MR. CHASSMAN:**

-- remains apolitical.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

That's fine. All right, thank you. I just wanted to know.

**MR. CHASSMAN:**

Good day.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Next, Frank Ashby; and then on deck, Paul Pressman.

**MR. ASHBY:**

Good morning. My name is Frank Ashby, I am here representing myself. My wife, son and I live in Harlequin Drive in Smithtown. I am among the many people, we've heard from several of them this morning, in Suffolk County, including, I believe, virtually every member of this Legislature, who has been very impressed by the reports about Acting Police Commissioner Tim Sini. Mr. Sini is obviously a very bright man and a very good man. And if he becomes our new Police Commissioner, as I imagine he will, the people of Suffolk County should put politics and any concerns about his qualifications aside and support him enthusiastically. I agree with Mr. Gregory and Mr. Trotta that these are important times. We should all come together once a decision is made for the good of the County and the Suffolk County Police Department.

That said, I am here this morning to register my concern about the process used to identify and select Mr. Sini, and the fact that people of Suffolk County have been presented with only one candidate, someone we've been told is a close associate and neighbor friend of the County Executive. That doesn't seem right to me, particularly now, and it should not have been acceptable to the Suffolk County Legislature, in my opinion.

I've written several books on the hiring of senior executives and the rebuilding of troubled organizations cultures, and several people are aware that I was honored to be a keynote speaker at the National Police Commissioners' Convention at the FBI Academy in Quantico several years ago. In my opinion, a national search by an independent search firm should have been conducted before any decisions were made about a new Police Commissioner. Doing so would have reasonably assured the citizens of Suffolk County that the very best person available for the job had been found and hired and that the kind of politics and favoritism reportedly used to select our former Police Chief isn't -- or wasn't used to select our new Police Commissioner. Thank you for your time.

***Applause***

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, sir. Again, Paul Pressman; then on deck, David Raimundo.

**MR. PRESSMAN:**

Good morning, Legislators. My name is Paul Pressman, I'm a member of SILO but I am representing myself today. I want to thank the Legislators for abolishing that three-quarter mile rule for transportation, but there's a lot more that needs to be done. And unfortunately you abolishing that three-quarter mile rule is a great step forward, but that's all going to be lost if this \$10 million cut goes through the budget thanks to Mr. Bellone who I guarantee you wouldn't know a bus if it ran in front of his building, which it does.

I've been up here many times. I've championed as much as I can. I still don't know whatever happened to the \$10 million that Legislator Schneiderman was working on before his term expired. I've been in contact with State Senators, I've been in contact with Governor Cuomo's Office. I will do whatever is necessary to get money in this County, but the County has to also take care of itself. We can't wait for the Federal government, we can't wait for the State government to give monies that we may or may not get. It is very, very important that the Legislators all realize how important it is to the disabled people and to the citizens of Suffolk County. The bus system cannot go by way of the way Nassau County is going. Thanks to Nassau County, residents of Suffolk no longer have a bus that they can take going from Babylon all the way to the Sunrise Mall, which means everybody on Montauk Highway that used to have a bus, that Suffolk County used to run and then Nassau County took over, they have now abolished, and that is a big problem, especially with all the businesses that are there.

So I implore you to please, please tell Mr. Bellone that that \$10 million is a necessary thing for the citizens of Suffolk County and especially to the disabled, because it's going to effect the para-transit, which I can tell you because I've ridden it many, many times. And please don't go by what Nassau County does because they're an absolute joke. As much as their buses run more than ours, believe me, they don't know what's going on. And at least the Legislators here have shown an initiative to help the residents of Suffolk County, especially the disabled, and I just implore you to please continue. Thank you very much.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Mr. Pressman. Okay, David Raimundo; and then James Nolan's on deck.

**MR. RAIMUNDO:**

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to be here this morning. My name is David Raimundo, I'm a lifelong resident of Suffolk County. I'm also an attorney practicing law in Suffolk County for 25 years.

I represent victims of catastrophic personal injuries and often fatal injuries. I was retained in 2015 to represent the estate of a 16-year old boy killed after being struck by two vehicles in the pedestrian crosswalk at a traffic-controlled intersection with a red light camera. I began my investigation, as did Suffolk County Police Department. The investigation brought me to the advocacy of people like Stephen Ruth and Hector Gavilla who brought to the attention red light cameras for the first time. I was sceptical at first to question the yellow change interval time of record at this fatal accident location; after all, we have professionals who do this stuff. My research and investigation demonstrates that the Department of Transportation traffic engineers, under the Red Light Camera Program, used the wrong equation to set the yellow lights.

The traffic engineers did math wrong in simple physics which determines the length of the yellow lights. For a left turn where the driver slows from 45 miles per hour to 20 miles per hour, the driver needs 5.4 seconds; not three, not four, not four-and-a-half, they need 5.4 seconds. No one can overpower the laws of physics and the traffic engineers, under these equations, forces the driver to run the red light on an arbitrary and capricious three to four seconds. This is engineering malpractice by which the Suffolk County Red Light Camera Program generates revenue. This is

engineering malpractice which effects the safety and income of the citizens of Suffolk County.

In the fatal collision I referred to a moment ago, I have court-ordered subpoenas by the Supreme Court served upon the Department of Transportation, the County of Suffolk and Xerox which are returnable on February 18th in the Supreme Court of Suffolk County. I am seeking the professional engineer's Certified Engineering Plan of Record under the Red Light Camera Program for the fatal intersection as well as all other intersections under the Red Light Camera Program. It's important to know what the yellow change interval time was before the Red Light Camera Program and after the Red Light Camera Program. Because the Freedom of Information Act has failed to yield any information for me, I was forced to resort to subpoena power through the Supreme Court.

Unfortunately, the Red Light Camera Program does not have any data since 2013. I suspect Xerox is not cooperating, so I could not resort to the Red Light Camera Program for any information about the yellow change intervals. I have spent 25 years representing victims of personal jury and advocating for their safety in Suffolk County and in Albany before --

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Excuse me. Mr. Raimundo, please wrap up, your time's expired.

**MR. AMONDO:**

Certainly. I ask you to suspend the Suffolk County Red Light Camera Program on 30-days notice to Xerox pursuant to the contract that you have with them. Please investigate the yellow change interval times of record before and after the camera's installation. Thank you.

***Applause***

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you. Okay, Mr. Nolan; then on deck, Hector Gavilla.

**MR. NOLAN:**

Good morning. My name is Jim Nolan and I'd like to thank you very much for allowing me to speak this morning. But I would also like to thank each and every one of you for your tireless service to our County and to the many communities within our County.

I'm here this morning in support of Acting Commissioner Tim Sini, and I'm here wearing two hats, one as a family man, a husband and a Dad who resides in Patchogue. On behalf of my family, I could not be more grateful to the service of the men and women in the 5th Precinct who keep our community safe each and every day. And I'm also here wearing the hat of Superintendent of Schools of the Sachem Central School District. And I have many, many family members and friends and no less than probably 100 plus students who now serve as Suffolk County Police officers. I was ecstatic to be here this morning as you recognized Joe Verdi, although I wasn't quite that ecstatic when Legislator Lindsay reminded Joe that they were in 9th grade together; I happened to be teaching back then, so that makes me a little old, but it was a pleasure to be here.

I've known Tim Sini for quite a while now. I first had the pleasure of working with Tim in his role in the County Executive's Office. He has been a friend to Sachem, he has always availed himself to us. He has been an active part of helping to keep our schools and our communities safe. He has also been an active part of our initiatives with drug prevention and education. We currently at Sachem have an initiative, a K-12 leadership initiative where we try to instill many tenants and our students to become principle-centered leaders of great character who are humble, who are kind, who are competent, who are caring, and I believe that each and every one of those tenants are synonymous with Tim Sini and what I have seen of him in the several years that I have worked with him.

So in closing, I would strongly support Tim's candidacy and I thank you very much for allowing me to speak this morning.

***Applause***

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Mr. Nolan. It is eleven o'clock and I'll entertain a motion to extend the public portion from Legislator Browning.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Second.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Second by Legislator Barraga. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MS. ELLIS:**

*Eighteen.*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. All right, next, Hector Gavilla; and then on deck, Steve Donnelly.

**MR. GAVILLA:**

Good morning. My name's Hector Gavilla and I oppose the Red Light Camera Program. Since we last met, I just want to let all of you know that we have over 4,000 residents, Suffolk County residents who oppose the program as well, and most of them would like to be here today, but they have to work. And one of the things I would like to request is a public meeting, a General Meeting at night where you could meet these people, because everybody here is doing a bad job at convincing the public that the Red Light Camera Program is for safety reasons.

Now, I have two handouts that I'm giving you this morning. The first one I'd like you to take a look at are these photos. This is what they do to the cameras that do not perform, that do not produce enough tickets, enough revenue. What they're doing is there's over 70 scrap metal boxes that are left behind all over Suffolk County, because what they do is they remove the cameras but they leave the bases. And what we did was we looked around and we took pictures of the different locations and I was surprised to see that some of them were shattered. So they're scrap metal and they're hazards on the road besides being scrap -- besides being dangerous to both pedestrians and drivers.

The other item that I want to share with you is this red light camera ticket. And I got permission from the person who it's issued to, I want everyone to take a look at this now and I'm presenting a challenge; please view the video and tell me where you see the light turn red, because it does not turn red. This is bad evidence. This should have been thrown out, yet he was found guilty when he went to the red light camera court.

***(\*The following was taken and transcribed by  
Lucia Braaten - Court Stenographer\*)***

**MR. GAVILLA:**

What's even worse is if you look at Page 2 of that handout, okay, you will see that there's a technician's certification that supposedly is signed by someone by the name of Mordicai Hay, and he's supposed to certify every single red light camera ticket that's issued, whether they go to court or not. Now, I looked at the numbers of the 2013 report, and if that's correct, he's supposed to certify about 500 per hour. How do I know that? Because I looked it up in Suffolk County. Mordicai Hay has a salary of \$7,818, which probably means he comes in once a week to just watch videos all

day and these are rubber-stamped. And this is supposed to be used as prime fascia evidence against the ticket holder. There's something wrong here.

And I would definitely like you to look at the certificate, because there's problems with it, which, obviously, I can't get into, because I only have 30 seconds left, but there's real problems with this program. Why are you having a secretary as the accuser of the tickets when it really should be a police officer that should be viewing these videos? And if a police officer looked at this red light camera video, he would not have issued the ticket, that I am sure of.

So today I am going to email you the link in case you can't find it yourself, the video and the ticket itself. And I'd like everyone to respond and tell me the exact moment that it turned red, because you won't find it. Thank you very much. Have a great day.

**(\*Applause\*)**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you. Okay. Steve Donnelly, and then on deck, Kathy Liguori.

**MR. DONNELLY:**

Mr. Presiding Officer and Members of the Legislature, good morning. My name is Steven Donnelly and I'm here also concerning the Red Light Camera Program, however, in a different regard.

I, too, received a summons for a red light camera ticket and I attempted to apply for a court date. That was in November. In December, I received a notice in response to my request for a court date that I was able to apply for a court date. That notice was dated December 3rd. I resubmitted it. A few weeks later, I received the same notice with the same date telling me that I could apply for a court date. I responded to that notice, and in January received yet another notice dated December 3rd telling me that I could apply for a court date. I know we pay a lot of money for the management of this program, and it was probably one of the most lucrative traffic programs ever invented, but you shouldn't have to go through this kind of an exercise to challenge a summons.

All of these documents get mailed out to Baltimore for assignment of a court date, and when you try to contact them by phone, you're talking to somebody in Colorado. These people have no clue what's going on here in Suffolk County. Why are these jobs not here in Suffolk County? Why are they spread out across the country?

I mean, I agree with the gentleman who spoke before me, that these tickets and these -- this program has some issues, but I'm also told by others that have received tickets, by police officers and by employees of the Traffic Violations Bureau that fighting these tickets is basically a waste of time. You know, this is guilty by image. I thought we were innocent until proven guilty, yet, here we are, we're guilty by a picture that somebody looks at says, "Guilty."

I just wish the Legislature would re-examine their contract, re-examine the way the program is managed. Thank ou very much for your time. You all have a good day.

**(\*Applause\*)**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Mr. Donnelly. Kathy, and then on deck, Jason Neal.

**MS. LIGUORI:**

Thank you. My name is Kathy Liguori and I'm the Vice Chair of the Suffolk County Welfare to Work Commission, and owner of HabiTots Preschool and Child Care Center.

For the past 15 years, I've been one of your leading advocates for child care and early learning. I remember when first being asked about putting together a Child Care Commission, it was about ten years ago working with Legislator Viloría-Fisher. So when I say thank you for bringing I.R. 1023 for a vote today, I sincerely mean it.

In the past 12 years, there's been three professional child care industry reports published for Suffolk County, and I.R. 1023, to establish a Child Care Commission, is one of, if not the first, recommendation that our governmental leaders have acted upon. I am grateful and my support is genuine.

To say -- to state some facts, on Long Island, child care is an \$804 million industry, employing 10,000 people. Child care spending has that multiplier effect. Each State and Federal dollar generates a \$1.92 back into the local economy. The 2014 Child Care Industry Report stated that for every dollar Long Island invested, it brought back \$42 in Federal and State funds to Long Island, compared to \$10 just ten years ago. That's remarkable.

Working Long Island parents who rely on child care collectively earn \$10 billion annually, yet child care remains a patchwork of silos, working independently, whether it is a governmental agency, child care agency, or modality of child care providers, and I've provided you this handout.

At the Welfare to Work Commission child care hearings, Jennifer Rojas of the Raush Foundation stated that on Long Island, one of the biggest obstacles to making a systemic change to expand and improve the child care system is the total lack of a system. There are many State, local and Federal agencies involved in providing early childhood programming, yet this fractured system creates inefficiency and dilutes accountability. It makes finger-pointing easy and inaction easy.

I think it ultimately confuses the families whose decisions are challenged while they search for the care that they need and want, if they can afford it. I think we can do better and this resolution can help.

Another interesting fact is that in the past three years, 54% of family daycare providers in Suffolk County closed. We need to find out why, where and what important -- what economic impact it has had, and this could be some of the data that the Child Care Commission could present to you.

In closing, I.R. 1023 will open the doors of these silos and bring the committed players in the industry to one table, to communicate, to gather information, to raise awareness, to make recommendations to our Legislature about a more coordinated system of -- delivery system of child care to Suffolk County. Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank, you Kathy.

**(\*Applause\*)**

Okay. Jason Neal, and then on deck, Shahid Ali Khan.

**MR. NEAL:**

Good morning, Legislators. I'm here this morning to speak on behalf of the appointment of Timothy Sini as County Commissioner of the Police Department. As many of you know, I have a lot of friends in law enforcement. My twin brother is in law enforcement. I speak to you today as a private citizen and a resident.

I met with Mr. Sini about three weeks ago to talk to him about some issues that were going on in the Bellport area, and to basically try to find out what his philosophy of policing is, what his ideas are about law enforcement and how things should be working in Suffolk County. The first thing that I said to him was that it's my opinion that we have one of the best police departments in the country, and I honestly believe that. We have one of the best trained forces. We have officers whose first response is to ask, "What's the problem and how can we fix it?" We're not a "draw our guns and shoot first" area, and that's something that means a lot to me and to the people who live in my neighborhood.

The Police Department does its best, I know, and it's always -- it always comes down to the boots on the ground, the actual police officers who are out there doing the job that matter. No general, no admiral has ever won a war, no matter what the history books say, it always come down to the boots on the ground. I know that because I fought in a couple of wars, and I look at the -- what the Police Department has done over the years in terms of building relationships with the citizens, the residents in the communities. I know that in the Fifth Precinct where I live, they work especially hard. We do a lot of good things in conjunction with the Police Athletic League, and with the Community Liaison Officers and the COPE Program. Great things are happening in terms of getting people to really appreciate what our police officers go through, and also getting the police officers to realize that there's not an us-versus-them mentality. It really does come down to the police officers doing what's best, and protecting and serving the residents of these communities and of the County. So I voiced that to Mr. Sini and he seems to be in accord with that. And if that's indeed the case, then I see no reason why he should not be appointed as the next Police Commissioner. Thank you.

*(\*Applause\*)*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you. Shahid Ali Khan, and then Foster Mayer, Maer. Excuse me.

**MR. KHAN:**

Good morning. My name is Shahid Khan. I'm the Chairperson of the Muslim Advisory Board of Suffolk County, and a proud citizen of Suffolk County. I have had the utmost pleasure to meet Mr. Sini on a few occasions. I have always found him to be professional and amiable.

Mr. Sini extended the invitation to more than 25 Muslim leaders in Suffolk County to meet at the Police Headquarters for the community awareness. It was a wonderful meeting, especially since after the Muslim community was going through a tough time after the San Bernardino tragedy and the harsh rhetoric of the Presidential candidates. Amongst this, Muslim kids were being racially targeted. Mr. Sini ensured that he would not tolerate any such incident in Suffolk County.

Another fond memory I have, Mr. -- with Mr. Sini is from the "Proud to Be American" rally, which was held at the Noor Mosque in Huntington. The Muslim community invited Mr. Sini to stand in solidarity with them against all acts of violence and hate going on in America and around the world. At that time, Mr. Sini promised to keep each and every citizen of Suffolk County safe, and no act of hate will be tolerated in Suffolk County.

During this interaction, Mr. Sini was nothing but cordial, compassionate and respectful. I hope the future holds many opportunities for Mr. Sini. I'd love to see him as the Police Commissioner. Thank you.

*(\*Applause\*)*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Foster, and then on deck, Stephen Ruth.

**MR. MAER:**

I'm switching positions with her. She works in the same group and she's introducing the group.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

And who are you?

**MS. ANDRADE:**

I'm 27.

**MR. MAER:**

I'll be 27.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

You're 27?

**MS. ANDRADE:**

Gabriela Andrade. I'm pretty sure it's 27, Gabriela Andrade.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Oh, okay, gotcha.

**MS. ANDRADE:**

Yeah.

**MR. MAER:**

Thank you.

**MS. ANDRADE:**

Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

I thought that was your name, Agent 27 or something.

**MS. ANDRADE:**

Oh, no. *(Laughter)*.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right.

**MS. ANDRADE:**

Good morning. My name is Gabriela Andrade and I'm an immigration worker organizer from Make the Road New York. I'm here on behalf of Long Island United for Police Reform, a campaign to end discriminatory policing practices on Long Island. We are a movement of community members, lawyers, researchers, and activists organizing for reforms that will promote community safety, while ensuring the police protect and serve all Long Islanders.

Today we're here because the County went ahead with the process of selecting a new Commissioner. We want to emphasize for the future the community has a say on who is the Police Commissioner for their community. We want to make sure that the Legislators have an open process that allows the community to mention their concerns and input as candidates for this position are considered. It is only through a transparent process that the Police Department will gain the trust of the community after recent corruption cases, issues of bias and police abuse on community members. Thank you very much.

**(\*Applause\*)**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you. Stephen, okay. Stephen Ruth, and then Diane Thiel.

**MR. RUTH:**

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen. My name is Stephen Ruth. I live in Legislative District Number 4, and I oppose the Red Light Camera Program.

On my way to work late Summer 2015, I decided to take on the Red Light Camera Program. I had had enough and was not afraid of the ramifications. Upon my son bailing me out -- me out for \$3,000, I was contacted by a Suffolk County Officer who had spoken in front of you in regards to the short yellow lights. When in the beginning I asked you to compile a list of the people who died, as these people were innocent people dying before their time and their families needed justice, I asked you to start an investigation to who died in front of these cameras since the program started, but you cowards did not have the courage or heart to help me.

Flint, Michigan was held responsible for wrongful death of an innocent victim who died in front of a short yellow light. You have been put on notice, you will be held responsible for anybody who dies in short yellow light intersections. At this point, it is evident to everyone that you do not have any regard for human safety and you only care about taking every last penny that you can from us. Others will say that you didn't know what you were signing and that you didn't know the yellow lights would be shortened, but I am not willing to accept that. The evidence -- the evidence of this corruption and misengineering of traffic signals is all over the internet. You owe it to yourselves, your families and your constituents to resign from office.

Upon my very first speech, I mentioned how Professor Maraduden from you U.C. Irvine California stated that his formula, the ITC formula regarding the yellow light interval was incorrect when applied in this manner. Your disregard of that evidence, as well as the evidence of short yellow lights that I have brought forward, you have disregarded this and it has already cost many serious injuries and deaths. More people died upon your vote for the Red Light Camera Program than died in Flint, Michigan from lead poisoning. You should be ashamed of yourselves. All Suffolk Legislators are suspect of being put on a Xerox immunity list, ineligible of being ticketed at red light camera intersections. This corruption is going to stop.

I want to thank God for giving me the opportunity to represent the people of Suffolk County, as well as the restless spirits of the innocent lives lost. Thank you.

**(\*Applause\*)**

**MS. THIEL:**

Good morning. I'm Diane Thiel, and I thank you all for the opportunity to speak at today's confirmation hearing for Tim Sini. First, I'd like to commend all the Legislators from the committee who are recommending Mr. Sini to be approved as Suffolk's Police Commissioner. I am here to request that you honor the advice and the recommendation of this committee, because I also would like to see Mr. Sini serve as our County's next Commissioner.

I am the President of the West Babylon Main Street Organization, which is a nonprofit community organization that works to enhance the quality of life in our town by working closely with all other local community organizations, including police, residents, businesses and elected officials. I am fortunate to have had Mr. Sini's assistance and expertise to assist us with numerous community issues, such as with our community coalition work to help combat the drug epidemic that we are all facing, and also with our auto safety campaign to remind and enforce no texting and driving and no

drinking and driving to keep our community safe, as well as others.

I have had numerous situations where community members have contacted me over community or personal safety concerns and needed help and didn't know who to trust to help them, and I was always able, no matter time or day, to contact him and help them. I believe great leadership is a combination of not just personal attributes and knowledge, but also the ability for a person to know when to reach out and get the best expertise of others to get a job done correctly. And I know through experience working with Tim that he has this tremendous personal attribute for solving problems. I believe his educational background and expertise with the law as a Federal Prosecutor, serving as our County's Deputy Commissioner of Safety, his being appointed with the New York, New Jersey, County representatives on the White House National Drug Control Policy Team, combined with his unparalleled ethical standards, his conscientious and tireless commitment to seeing a job well done will be exactly what we need for this position in Suffolk County.

I am extremely grateful for all the work Mr. Sini has done for our community, as well as for others like myself in the Town of Babylon. I know he is the best candidate to take on the numerous tough issues that we face in Suffolk and he will do a fantastic job.

I thank all of you for your time, and implore you to make the right decision for us and approve the nomination later today of Tim Sini for our next Suffolk County Police Commissioner. Thank you all.

*(\*Applause\*)*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Diane. Next, Sarah Fogelstrom, and then on deck, Reverend Martir Benavides.

**MS. FOGELSTROM:**

Okay. Forgive me if I'm not prepared as everybody else. I was under the impression this was just a red light camera issue. Okay. So I'm speaking from my heart. I made a few notes.

I oppose the red light cameras also, along with my husband and my family. My son -- I'm speaking from experience. A year-and-a-half to two years ago, my son was involved in a car accident under Exit 56, the underpass between -- on Route 111 and Exit 56. An 18-wheeler came flying off the Expressway and made a right turn onto Route 111. Okay. He then stopped short, stopped in the middle of the -- of 111 and caused a three-car pileup. Now this is in the middle of rush hour, so he didn't -- so the people there were not going fast. My son was doing under ten miles an hour, he was the third car in the accident. The car behind the 18-wheeler had to stop short. He was hit by the guy behind him, who was then hit by my son. My son had \$2,000 in damage. Thankfully, nobody was hurt. The 18-wheeler took off, left, and being that the three of them, the three involved in the accident were upset, didn't think to take his driver's license.

I contacted my insurance company and I told them there were cameras at the intersection, that I didn't believe it was my son's fault, and going by the other two, also. The police showed up, couldn't give a summons to the 18-wheeler. We don't know if he went through a red light, went through a yellow light, what. But when I called the Red Light Camera Department, I was never able to speak to a -- any person in particular. I was never able to speak to anyone to discuss what my options were.

I called my insurance company back. They tried for months to get the footage off of the camera, and I was told that we were not entitled to the footage, they were not entitled to the footage. Not one single one of those insurance companies were entitled to the footage. Why not? I pay for those cameras in my taxes. My husband has been out of work for six years and I'm -- the money that I could have saved, had they deemed my son not responsible, could have been immense, okay? You didn't catch the guy that ran the light, if he ran the light. No summons were given, and none of us

were given any satisfaction anywhere.

When I finally got a hold of somebody to speak to, the number, again, I was going by the man that was speaking over here, I was given a number in Colorado. I was told that half of the money goes to Colorado that we're charged on these red light cameras. This isn't -- it's not fair. The people of the -- of Suffolk County have a right to a say in what is going on with these red light cameras. We have heard numerous times that -- I see my time is up, but we have had numerous opportunity to talk to other people. I have spoken to people in --

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Ms. Fogelstrom, please wrap.

**MS. FOLGELSTROM:**

Okay, I'm wrapping it up. I have spoken to numerous people and I have been told the same thing, the lights are shortened, they're not -- they're not -- people are not given the incentive to go to court because they're never going to win. So I question the safety. If it was -- if it's safety --

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Thank you.

**MS. FOGELSTROM:**

Okay. If it was safety was the matter, then someone would have -- would have checked on that camera to see why that guy went through the light, or whose fault it was, but nobody -- but nobody cared to help me at all.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Ms. Fogelstrom.

**(\*Applause\*)**

All right. Next, we have Reverend Benavides, then on deck, Mark Thielking. Is that right?

**(\*The Following Testimony Was Given Through an Interpreter\*)**

**REVEREND BENAVIDES:**

Good morning. My name is Martir Benavides, Pastor in a church in Islip, and I represent the Long Island Hispanic Pastors Association, and I come to support Tim Sini.

One of the points that we talk with the -- on Tim -- on Mr. Tim Sini, it's about security, and I think security is very important to us, because when security is in the community, our families feel secure. For that, he has to work with different programs. And he answered to a lot of questions in one meeting that we had with him. And he was honest and transparent in answering that he was going to work to get better with the work with the community. When we bring programs of prevention to the youth, that prevent them to fall with gang situations. But we need to work with parents, too. We need to talk about parental responsibility, too, that these programs have -- these programs have to include the parents so they can support their child.

Mr. Sini promised to work against the criminals and we will support that, too, because we think that, you know, someone that doesn't obey the law has to go to -- has to pass a process, too. We really want to work in unity with the community with relationship -- with the relationship of the community and police officers. We don't want the community to be scared of police officers, we want them to be secure, feel secure about that.

We support the nomination of Mr. Sini to work together like as a group, not only because only one group, because of the whole community. Thank you.

**(\*Applause\*)**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you. Mark Thielking, and then on deck, Patrick Fazio.

**MR. THIELKING:**

Hi. My name is Mark Thielking. I'm the Executive Director for the Energy Improvement Corporation. I'm here just to announce my presence for the further consideration later on in the agenda for I.R. 1022, so I'm just here in case there are questions that come up.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, sir. Patrick Fazio, and then on deck, Pamela Mizzi.

**MR. FAZIO:**

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Patrick Fazio. I'm a lifelong resident of Commack, and I'm also the Fire Commissioner in the Commack Fire Department, one of the Fire Commissioners. I'm here in support of Tim Sini.

I think that Tim has a vision. He is young, but I think he has the vision to bring the County forward with regard to law enforcement. He has a good background, coming out of the Federal Prosecutor's Office, and I'm sure that the men and women in Suffolk County Police Department, which in my eyes is one of the finest departments, will rise to the top and they'll support him, they'll rally around him. And I think the leadership, and we do have good leadership in the Suffolk County Police, I think they'll be found, hand-picked, and I think we can all move forward.

And I want to echo the sentiments of several speaker before me about the heroin and opiate problem. It is a big problem. It affects every one of you, because I'm sure there's not a person up there that couldn't say they know someone that's affected by it. Twenty years ago that was a different story. In the last six years, it has gone to epidemic proportions, and I think Tim has what it takes to the treatment end of it, but also the enforcement end of it, locking the bad guys up. We saw that already in the last couple of weeks in the newspaper.

So I urge you to make this decision not political. Support him. We don't have the money in the County and you need money to do things, but you could support him, and support him and the men and women of the Suffolk County Police. Thank you.

**(\*Applause\*)**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you. Pamela, and then on deck, Allison Vernick-Chaikin.

**MS. MIZZI:**

Good morning. Thank you for your time and attention on this serious matter. I, too, am here to support Mr. Sini's appointment as the Commissioner of the Police Department. I'm a -- I am a credentialed alcohol and substance abuse counselor. I am a licensed mental health counselor. I am a retired civil servant. Currently, I am a community advocate and work towards the prevention of substance abuse in our communities, and that is where I met Tim, in the community. We met first in a senior citizen center, and, at that time, neither of us qualified. But I continued to run into him again and again in high school cafeterias and classrooms, public libraries, and all the way along, his message was to search and listen in the community for how to develop

working relationships with those individuals and how to work the system. His message was the same all along, that we work together to make the government and the law work for the people, and for this, I'm behind him 100%. He's a person who listens and he acts. He understands how service to a community is part of the public trust that is expected of our public officials. He knows how different our communities can be. He knows the strengths, the distinctions, the uniqueness across Suffolk County, and he is truly a collaborator. He -- his determination, as he says, to create a culture of transparency and fairness is refreshing and sorely needed. He is committed and he has the skill set to make a difference.

There's no doubt in my mind as to the suitability of Mr. Sini for this challenging position, especially during these trying times. Thank you for your time in his support.

**(\*Applause\*)**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Pamela. Good to see you. Okay. Allison Vernick-Chaikin, and then on deck, Reverend Ruben Cruzata -- Cruzati, excuse me.

**MS. CHAIKIN:**

Hi. My name is Allison Chaikin. I'm sure you're all familiar with me, I've been here for many months. I come every time as a community mom. I have two daughters. One just turned 16 in the months that I've been coming and she now has her permit. It's the wintertime. I'm very concerned with the ice, the rain. My biggest concern is the yellow lights. When I looked into them and I filmed a couple of them, none of them are the exact same time. I know that at one point it was a six-second light. I know that they're now under six seconds. My daughter is first learning how to drive and my biggest concern is that I don't need her at the very last minute deciding, "Do I press the gas and gun it, or do I hit the brake and hope that someone behind me doesn't slam into me?"

On my second time coming here, this is now my fourth or fifth, I actually watched a minivan on the right of me go into the intersection. He slammed on his brake because he realized he didn't make the yellow light. He backed up and he backed up into a car behind him. Normally I stick around and I'm a witness, but I had to come here and speak before you.

I was very happy to hear today that David Raimondo, Esq. spoke about the yellow lights. Every time that I've come here we have spoken about the red lights, and I am for that as well, but I am really for the yellow lights, because I'm finding that there are a lot of T-bone accidents, there are a lot of people that I've witnessed slamming into the back of each other as they're stopping short. And I'm also finding that this red light issue is because people are gunning it, trying to judge what to do.

I'm 50 years old. When my dad taught me how to drive, the one thing he said to me was, "Never hesitate. When you see the light turn yellow, judge the distance and make your decision. Don't gas it, gun it, this, that, make one decision, so that you don't have an accident, so that you don't cause an accident, and so you don't get a speeding ticket."

All I'm asking as a mom from the community is could we just have the yellow lights have a specific time straight across the board so I don't have to worry, getting a phone call that my daughter is in the hospital, or, God forbid, worse? I thank you for your time and I will see you at the next meeting.

**(\*Applause\*)**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you. Reverend Ruben Cruzati, and then --

**REVEREND CRUZATI:**

Cruzati is fine.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

-- Foster Maer.

**REVEREND CRUZATI:**

Good morning. Today, I'm here on behalf of Tim Sini. I've been hearing the complaints of the people of the cameras, and they say every time they call about the tickets, someone in the United States pick up, and they say they don't know nothing about the reality in Long Island. So if we choose today Tim Sini, and we confirm today, we're going to have a man that knows very well Long Island. He grow here, he knows, he starting here and he served here, so he knows the reality. He deals with the police and he deals with the community.

I hear about he's too young. And I went to the word of God, because I want to see exactly what God thinks about his youth. And First Timothy 4:12 said, "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example of the believers in word, in conduct in love, in spirit, in faith and in purity. So and for you Legislators, in Romans 13:1 says, "Every person should obey the government in power. No government will exist if it hadn't been established by God," that government which exists today have been put in place by God. So today you will have a decision in your hands and you will be guided by God, because no one, not even yourself here, there's no higher power put in position.

I think being young is not bad, it's good. I hope I can have his age now. But being young and wise is even better, and he was wise enough to surround himself with people with experience and wisdom. I know some of the Chiefs. We have been working with them for a long time in the Police Department. They're really good men of integrity. I have a -- I don't want to say names, but we know them. They're really, really good person. He was humble enough where he separate himself by what he says to -- from the rest, be humble. He says, "I cannot do it alone, I need your help." That was his words. I need help from the community so I can accomplish what he wants to accomplish. And unselfish enough to give his cell phone everyone, which for me is a crazy thing, all right?

But the good thing with him is that if you confirm today Tim Sini, you are not confirming Tim Sini, you're confirming a team of people all with the same desire, community leaders, Police Chiefs, and himself, devoted himself to the job. So he knows that he will be and he is accountable to God, because I hope he can listen, every person here that support him. All right? So he will be accountable to God to -- finally to God, like everybody else. So you got the man for the position. Let's see what's he's capable to do. God bless you.

**(\*Applause\*)**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Reverend. Okay. Foster, and then Marvin Smith is on deck.

**MR. MAER:**

Good morning. My name is Foster Maer. I'm an attorney with Latino Justice PRLDEF, which is a member organization of the group that was earlier described, Long Island for Police Reform. And it's a group of social service advocates in the County trying to improve the police situation. In fact, the name is Police Reform. Is there a need for reform now? Of course there is.

Just in today's -- obviously, Newsday has been covering the problems in the force, and in today's New York Times is a feature length article on everything that's been going on in the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office connected with the same scandal that's currently inflamed in the Police Department. Obviously, there are many, many, many, mostly great officers there, but there is a problem at the top.

Our position was that there should be an open search nomination process. That is critically important.

**(\*Applause by a member of the public\*)**

That was critically important to get someone who's experienced and someone who's independent. And the way this process has worked out is we haven't gotten that nomination, and that's a tragedy, because that is what is needed at this point.

I worked on the "Stop and Frisk" mediation case in the City, and have not dealt directly with Bill Bratton, but his leadership is clearly there. We meet every two weeks. Actually, I'm supposed to be meeting there today with them. And the amount of change that has come out of those series of meetings is dramatic and it's wonderful by all concerned, and I believe it's because Bill Bratton has the experience, and the common sense and the respect to pull these changes off, which are always difficult in a Police Department. He was a cop for 25 years, starting in Boston, came to New York, and then took over as Commissioner. I disagree with many of his policies, but he's a strong leader and he's the type of leader that should take over here and bring the reform that's needed.

The two areas of reform that our group is particularly concerned about is race -- impact of bias policing, as well as corruption. As for the concerns about the way -- bias policing, the recent Department of Justice report analyzed the traffic stops, traffic arrests, traffic penalties, and found that not only was there extremely disproportionate rate of ticketing and stopping to black and Latino drivers, but it was worse than in Ferguson, Missouri, worse than Ferguson, Missouri disparity index.

The second, I wouldn't call it an incident, but the second problem that reflects the larger problems at play here is Sergeant Scott Greene, 25-year veteran, for at least a decade stopping Latino drivers, robbing them, and, yet, undetected for ten years? Either someone's very asleep at the wheel, or this whole monitoring process is just inadequate for this job.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Mr. Maer, your time has expired, please wrap up.

**MR. MAER:**

Yes. County residents are entitled to know the candidate's position on these issues. I sat through the Public Safety Committee. At least his prepared remarks, I didn't hear him address either of these issues. He should address these issues. They're the most important issues that could affect this County on this nomination. Thank you very much.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, sir.

**(\*Applause\*)**

Okay. Marvin Smith, and then on deck, Rose Van Guilder.

**MR. SMITH:**

Good morning. Thank you for this opportunity and for your patience. I stand as our leader; Tracey Edwards, did this morning. I'm from the Islip Town Branch NAACP, and we stand ready to work with Tim Sini as the next Commissioner of the Suffolk County Police Department.

The man has the requisite skills, educational background and experience to lead this Department forward in the 21st century. I was impressed when we met with him for over three hours and asked him every kind of question we thought was important for our communities to know. He was unflappable. He was concerned. He gave us answers that led us to believe that he's concerned about all of our communities. I left that meeting feeling pretty confident that the person that the County Executive has chosen is a man of great character.

I made a call-in about a week ago, because a neighbor in Central Islip had texted me about a drug problem across the street and an illegal chop shop. I guess all the chop shops are illegal. Within 30 hours, I had police on the phone giving me an update as to what had happened and what will continue to happen. In 45 years, and working in both Nassau and Suffolk County with Commissioners, it was the first time when I met Tim that I heard the words "public health model" and "law enforcement model" in the same sentence. And so I'm convinced that for the first time in my lifetime, that we have someone here in Suffolk County that is concerned about the overpopulation and the colonization that we are using the penal system to do. And so I stand ready, the NAACP stands ready to work with Tim to bring about a change here in Suffolk County.

Let me be clear. There is something to be said about a nationwide search. Some communities can wait six or eight months, ours cannot. Thank you.

**(\*Applause\*)**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Rose Van Guilder, and then on deck, Dr. McIntyre.

**MS. VAN GUILDER:**

Good morning. My name is Rose Van Guilder and I am speaking as the President of the Long Island and Rockaway Ratepayers Alliance, an alliance for independent Long Island. And I sent each one of you an email in support of your approval for Tim Sini as the next Police Commissioner of Suffolk County. He is an honorable and trustworthy individual, and he deserves each and every one of your supports.

Tom Sini and I have spoken several times. I told him about a situation that I am currently having with an apartment complex that I live in at Holiday Square, which is owned by Home Properties in West Babylon. He indicated that he would assist me immediately with this, because the Town of Babylon, who I have gone to and obtained a CO for this complex, which is a 55-and-older community, is renting to 20-year-olds, 30-year-olds and 40-year-olds. They also have over 55% handicaps in these communities with no handicapped ramps. They have no facilities for these handicaps. The doors, the -- I get very upset when I talk about this, forgive me. The screen door and the front door are opposite each other. We have a cluster of four doors. If you open one door and the other door, you cannot open both doors. They should have never gotten a CO for this complex, it is illegal.

I'm a real estate broker, I know real estate law, I know Chapter 12. This complex is illegal. And I went to the Town of Babylon. I asked for an inspection from Code Enforcement. They refused to come. They told me to go elsewhere and that management is responsible for making the repairs.

The electric is in violation. If you turn your hair dryer on and the dishwasher on, the electrical panel shuts off all your lights. Can you imagine this? If you turn on your stove or your dishwasher, the lights go off. Do you know what the complex did? They sent me a letter saying that I have too many items plugged in. I called a police officer and had him verify everything I had plugged in. I obtained an attorney. They sent me letters saying that I called the Fire Department, I caused the Fire Department to come on New Year's Eve. Well, you know what happened -- the social committee had a party.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Ms. Van Guilder, please wrap up.

**MS. VAN GUILDER:**

You need to realize this is a violation, and this is dangerous for all the people in the community, and you need to hold the Town of Babylon accountable. Rich Schaffer is creating this problem. He created it and you need to hold the Town of Babylon accountable. People's lives are in danger. Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, ma'am.

**MS. VAN GUILDER:**

And please vote for Tim Sini, he deserves your support.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right.

**MS. VAN GUILDER:**

Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Did he promise you electric?

*(\*Laughter\*)*

**MS. VAN GUILDER:**

And, by the way, Kevin McCarthy came when he was --

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Ma'am. Ma'am, your time --

**MS. VAN GUILDER:**

-- for re-election. He witnessed this.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Ma'am, your time has expired.

**MS. VAN GUILDER:**

He even saw it.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

And it's unfair to others that haven't yet spoken.

**MS. VAN GUILDER:**

I hope you realize these are your constituents.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

I certainly do.

**MS. VAN GUILDER:**

You need to fight for them.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, ma'am. Dr. McIntyre.

**DR. MC INTYRE:**

Mr. Presiding Officer, members of the Legislature, good morning. I'm Dr. McIntyre, the Superintendent of the Brentwood Schools. As you know, it's the largest school district here on the Island and we have many challenges. And most recently, we had an issue in our community, and the Deputy Commissioner, Tim Sini, was there to reassure the community that safety was a part of his agenda. And so I'm here this morning to support the nomination of Tim Sini as Commissioner.

Recently he selected a group of Superintendents and he wanted to hear from us what were some of our major concerns, and there I expressed to him the concerns that we have in our community as it relates to gangs. He was very sensitive and concerned in that area, and he promised us that he would do his very best to help eradicate gangs from our community.

We talked about the importance of the resource officers in our schools, and what they do for us and how important it is that those resource officers remain in our buildings. And then he listened to us and he gave us the commitment that the resource officers would remain in our building.

We spoke about the importance of building bridges in our communities, particularly in our Latino community, we have a large Hispanic community, and how important it is that the community sees the police from a different point of view. And so we recommended to him the importance of having a community forum conducted by Hispanic officers in which they can reassure the community that all police officers are not ICE or immigration officers, so that we can bridge that gap, and he listened to us. And we feel that based on the commitment and the dedication that we've seen in his type of leadership, that we are going to see something different within our community.

One of the other issues of concern that we expressed to him was the importance for police officers to become more role models to our youths, and, therefore, developing programs where our police officers can interact with our youths in order to become a role model and to see them from a different aspect.

And from what he has demonstrated to us and the type of leadership that he intends to bring to the community, I see that we are opening up a new age in which he will make a difference. And so I'm here to support Tim Sini as our new leader. Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Doctor. Terri Kroll. Where's Terri? There you are, Terri, and then Lori-Ann Novello on deck.

**MS. KROLL:**

Hi. I spoke the other day, but after I spoke the other day, a couple of other people came up and spoke after me. And as Kate Browning pointed out, that a lot of people felt there was a need for a nationwide search. And I respectfully disagree with that, and the reason I disagree with it is

because I work for a global company and I do a lot of the employee searches, and I would never search for a salesperson in Brazil in the United States, because the salesperson in Brazil has to know the community and the community -- and the people that live in the community in order to sell to them. So I know that that's not what this position is, Tim's not selling anything to us, but he does have to perform a job that involves the community. And his knowledge of the community to me is more valuable than any nationwide search could be. I wouldn't want to see a Police Commissioner in Suffolk County from an area that is totally different.

Tim is born and bred in this area, Tim understands this area, and I do feel that for that reason, a nationwide search is not necessary. And as you've heard from many other people and me the other day, Tim is entrenched in Suffolk County, Tim knows the issues, and Tim has the experience. As we heard from Tim the other day, he has nationwide experience, he has experience in Washington, he has experience with the criminal system. And I really do feel that a nationwide search is not a necessary thing for this position. We have to fill this position quickly, we have the right person, and I think that's Tim Sini. Thank you very much.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Terri. Okay. Lori-Ann Novello, and then on deck, John Urbancik.

**MS. NOVELLO:**

Good afternoon. My name is Lori-Ann Novello. I'm here to speak as a character reference for Tim Sini. I'll just read what I want to say.

I want to express my enthusiastic support for Tim Sini's appointment as Suffolk County Police Commissioner. I know him well, because he has worked closely with myself and other members of my community organization, which is a coalition whose main goal is to reduce underage drinking and drugs use in Lindenhurst. Now Tim knows that these issues are important to us and he gave us the support we needed to raise awareness in our community to launch a major effort to create positive changes in our town. Now it was because of Tim's help that my organization was able to collect the data and support we needed to secure grant funds to continue our work in the fight against opioid and heroin abuse in the Lindenhurst community.

Now the students and the members of Linden Cares will not forget the time he took to spend with us. He came to weekend car washes to let the youth know that he supported their efforts. He helped us work at a drug addiction awareness forum, offering Narcan training to some citizens that had just taken their children out of a rehab facility, so it was very necessary that they understand the use of Narcan. He also helped us raise awareness about the Social Host Law right around prom season, helping us with signage. His partnership, support and participation and encouragement has meant a lot to us, and, in my opinion, contributed to our growth and credibility. And I'm confident that his background as a Federal Prosecutor, where he prosecuted some the country's most dangerous murderers, gang members, drug dealers, this has more than prepared him for this role. It's his connections to law enforcement partners and his expertise in crime-fighting and his relationships with grassroots organizations, as witnessed right here today, this will help him lead the Suffolk County Police Department into an era of continued positive change.

I witnessed Tim tirelessly working to find ways to solve our local issues, and I'm sure that he'll have the same rapport with our police officers to create the best force possible, because he'll listen to them. I'm looking forward to seeing the great things he will do as Police Commissioner, and because of his background, he is the person that we need to lead our Police Department, and I encourage you to approve his confirmation today. Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you.

**(\*Applause\*)**

Okay. John Urbancik. I'm sorry if I messed your name up. And then on deck, Stephen Ruth, Jr., I guess.

**MR. URBANCIK:**

Hello. I'm John Urbancik. I'm here about the red light camera. I've been following the story online on Facebook, most social media and local news. The main thing to me is the inconsistency of the yellow, the time, as the other speakers spoke. Every single light should be the same seven seconds. You can't have one that's three, one that's five, one that's -- it's not fair to drivers. I also have two young girls. One daughter will be driving starting in March. You guys are aware of this? You guys are not allowed to answer questions, I'm supposing.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

(Shook head no).

**MR. URBANCIK:**

But if you guys are aware of this and this is true, you guys need to do something about. Like you guys are -- I noticed these lights have to be the same timing, it's a safety issue. And it's numerous lights. You pull up, you'd just be sitting there at a red light and you see flashing going on and there's no other cars around. So that's also a concern to me, especially like L.I.E. Exit 56 or 57. The light there will flash consistently with no other -- you look around, you're like, "What's going on," and there's nothing going on. And you guys are on notice. You're elected officials, you should be looking into this.

I hope you guys -- I know there's so many of you that I don't know how you communicate through mass email, but this is something that needs attention right away. Either you're going to do something or you're not, and so far you haven't, so it makes me think nothing's going to be changed. And I will be here every month, every time you guys meet to discuss this until there's something -- you guys make a public statement, something about it, because we don't know what you're doing. Are you doing anything, or is this like, "Oh, another speaker, oh, I'm glad that guy's gone"?

The yellow lights have to have the same time all over the place, because you don't know whether you should speed up, slow down. I consistently look in my rearview mirror when I'm approaching one of these intersections. We all know where they are. Everyone here knows the same roads you travel, you know where those lights are. So you go up there, you look in the mirror, can I make it through, I don't go through, and it becomes more of a -- it's going to cause more damage than help anybody. And also, it's like a money grab, like, so why do we have these things here? I mean, other states have took them out already.

You can't have lights where cameras, yellow is three seconds someplace, seven seconds somewhere else. People see this and it's just not -- it's going to create more damage than good. Thank you very much.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, sir.

**(\*Applause\*)**

Stephen Ruth, Jr.

**MR. RUTH:**

Hello. I'd like to speak about Tim Sini. I'd like to know if he climbed the chain of command to get to his position, or was he appointed by the Bellone Administration? And where does he stand as well on the red light cameras or body cameras? He is another one of Bellone's cronies, in my opinion. Remember, the short yellow lights are killing people for revenue, and how will Tim Sini change that?

If you're afraid that bussing is going to be cut back, it will. All the County's money will be taken from wherever it can and be diverted to the Police Department. This is the track record of the Bellone Administration and nothing is going to change. Furthermore, he is not concerned with safety if he supports the red light camera program, as more people have died in front of these cameras than in Flint, Michigan from lead poisoning. Thank you.

*(\*Applause from Audience Member\*)*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Diana Bonacasa. Diana here? This is the last card I have. Is there anyone else that hasn't spoken that would like to speak? Yes, Janet, please come forward. Fill out a card while we wait for the Bonacasa Family.

**MS. LOMBARDO:**

Good afternoon. It's now afternoon. My name is Janet Lombardo, and I am a resident of Suffolk County for 20 years. I am Vice President of the Copiague Chamber of Commerce, and I am also on the Board of Directors for Copiague Community Cares Coalition. And as an active member in the community, I was given the privilege of meeting Tim Sini, and I am here today and took a day off from work to support him. I think he would make a terrific Commissioner.

And I hate to speak after Terri Kroll, because she always says what I want to say. Terri was the person here who talked about the need or not the need for a nationwide search, and I also agree with her on that.

Tim is here in the County doing a lot of great work for years, and he's done a lot for our community. We've worked with him on projects and he listens, he supports us, and whether he knows it or not, he has had a huge influence on motivating us to do the work that we're doing in bringing awareness to our community of the epidemic that we have. So he is a doer, but he's also a leader. He has the qualities that I feel we need in Suffolk County Police Department. He's passionate about serving the community and he listens to us, and he's a collaborator. I think that all of those attributes that he has the ability to influence people in a positive way is remarkable. And I am very excited about the possibilities of what we can do here in Suffolk County with Tim Sini here leading the way.

Again, I want to thank everybody for giving me the opportunity to speak today. Thanks so much.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Janet. Okay. Diana Bonacasa.

**MS. BONACASA:**

Good morning. We are the proud parents of Staff Sergeant Louis Bonacasa. On December 21st, 2015, Staff Sergeant Louis Bonacasa was directly responsible for the safety and security of the five fellow Security Forces Airmen, five OSI Agents and two Linguists. They were approached by a suicide Taliban terrorist operating an explosive motorcycle. The suicide bomber stopped. Staff Sergeant Bonacasa, with selfless disregard for his own personal safety, placed himself between his fellow team members and the terrorist's motorcycle. As a result of his heroic action, he provided cover for two of his fellow comrades. My son and five of his fellow Airmen were wounded. His

courageous sacrifice shielded and safeguarded two of his other team members, which ensured the safety and survival of a fellow defender. By his heroic actions and unselfish dedication, Staff Sergeant Bonacasa has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Airforce.

I am truly honored and privileged to stand here, my husband and I, before you today to speak about my son, my hero. Despite all his achievements, he remained humble. Louis was so proud to be an Airman of the United States, and he loved what he did. He excelled at his job and many young Airmen looked up to him. Me and my family were always concerned about his deployments, but we supported him no matter what. Not once did he complain, regardless of the risk and dangers of his mission. He didn't want us to worry.

Staff Sergeant Louis Bonacasa was assigned to the 105th Security Forces Squadron at the Stewart Air National Guard Base, New York. Per Airforce Times article, dated January 7th, 2016, General Keith Givens, the Commander of OSI, announced that Staff Sergeant Louis Bonacasa and Sergeant Joseph Lemm will be made Honorary Agents. His exact words were, "In our Command's 67-year history, we have selected less than 60 Honorary OSI Special Agents. None of those have been active-duty Security Forces or Air National Guard members. That has changed."

Bonacasa and Lemm would join OSI's Hall of Heroes at Quantico, Virginia, which honors fallen Special Investigations personnel. "These two heroes served alongside our Special Agents at Bagram and represent the Tactical Security Element professionals who have teamed up with OSI on our "outside-the-wire" missions for the past five-plus years. They are true Defenders and true teammates," Givens said. Staff Sergeant Bonacasa was also awarded the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star Medal with Valor for his heroism to the United States.

My son, a beautiful soul, left this world too soon to be in a better place. He was there when you needed a friend and went out of his way for those in need. Family always came first, and he was an adoring husband, adoring father, beloved son, watchful brother and loyal friend. My son touched many hearts and so many admired him for who he was, a person and courageous hero.

Words cannot express our deepest gratitude to all of you on behalf of myself, my son and my family. Thank you for all the unbelievable love and support you have shown us during this dark time in our lives. We are forever humbled and grateful to each and every one of you. Louis may be gone from sight, but his memory will live on forever. His passing will not be in vain. We will carry his flag with honor and dignity to continue his legacy.

Two weeks before he passed, we received a building for our church. We're Christians, and we had received a mortgage for a church that's going to be in Rocky Point, Rocky Point-Miller Place. And we are so proud to have the street, Rocky Point Road, to be named after my son, because we as parents, and the church elders and pastors, we will continue to honor our son through this church, because the ministries that we're going to be doing is going to be under his name. And we're going to be helping a lot of people, because that's what Louie would want us to do. That's how he was, helping others when they were down. He would lift them up no matter what, no matter who they were. Even if they were strangers, he would still help them. That's who Louie is, and we will continue to do that to follow his legacy.

And I want to thank you for letting me speak today. Thank you.

***(\*Applause and Standing Ovation\*)***

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Ms. Bonacasa, on behalf of myself and my colleagues, we, the Legislature, we send our deepest sympathies and prayers to you and your family as you go through this very difficult and trying time.

May you -- may you all have strength.

That is all the cards that we have. I'm going to entertain a motion to close the Public Portion.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Motion.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion by Legislator Krupski.

**LEG. ANKER:**

(Raised hand).

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Second by Legislator Anker. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions to close?

**MS. ELLIS:**

Eighteen.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Eighteen. Okay. I have a request at the behest of the Bonacasa Family to take I.R. 1155 out of order. It's in -- excuse me. It's in the CN packet.

**LEG. ANKER:**

(Raised hand).

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion by Legislator Anker, second by Legislator Lindsay to take I.R. 1155 out of order. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MS. ELLIS:**

Eighteen.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. ***I.R. 1155 is a resolution Honoring an American Hero, Staff Sergeant Louis M. Bonacasa, by renaming a portion of County Road 21, Rocky Point - Yaphank Road, as well as the intersection of County Road 21 with New York State 25, Jericho Turnpike (County Executive).***

**LEG. ANKER:**

I'll make that motion.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion by Legislator Anker. Second?

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Second.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

(Raised hand).

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Legislator -- all right. What are we doing here?

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Everyone.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Whose district is it? Okay. Second by Legislator Muratore. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MS. ELLIS:**

Eighteen.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Congratulations.

**(\*Applause\*)**

Okay. We're going to the manila folder to the agenda. Let's see. I make a motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Second.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Second by Legislator Cilmi. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MS. ELLIS:**

Eighteen.

**BUDGET & FINANCE**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Budget and Finance: ***I.R. 1002 - Authorizing the County Comptroller to borrow cash funds from other County funds for 2016 (Pres. Off.)***. Motion by Legislator Calarco. Do we have a second? Legislator D'Amaro?

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Yes, second.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Second by Legislator D'Amaro. On the motion, anyone? All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MS. ELLIS:**

Eighteen.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

***I.R. 1043 - Approving County funding for a Contract Agency (Southold Historical Society) (Krupski)***. Is there a motion by Legislator Krupski?

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Motion, so moved.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Second.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Second by Legislator Fleming. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MS. ELLIS:**

Eighteen.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

***J.R. 1044 - Amending the Adopted 2016 Operating Budget to transfer funds from Budget Line 477-8038-1100 to Budget Line 477-8038-4980-Hsk1 for Cornell Cooperative Extension's Agricultural Stewardship Program (Co. Exec.).***

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

So moved.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion by Legislator Krupski, second by Legislator Fleming.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

On the motion.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

On the motion, Legislator Krupski.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

I'd just like to thank everyone. And this -- we discussed this last year when this happened. This line was in 477. It was not supposed to be cut as much as it was. And moving on from that, I appreciate everyone's, you know, understanding of what happened during the budget process and their willingness to restore this to its proper place in light of the great water quality work that Cornell does with this money. Thank you.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

On the motion, here.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

On the motion, Legislator D'Amaro.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Yeah, through the Chair. Legislator Krupski, I just want to clarify what -- we're using the word, there was an error made in reducing this 10% as opposed to 2%. Can you tell me a little bit about that? Was that, in fact, an error that our Working Group, in putting together the budget, didn't intend to cut this by 10%?

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

My understanding is that the intention of the Working Group was to cut the 477 funding by 2% and not 10%, and that this was not on the same page as the other 477 lines during our review at the Working Group.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

But my question is did the Working Group specifically consider this budget line, and what was the conversation?

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

I didn't see that, because the 477 line should have been in one -- in one place, and that this Ag Stewardship line was actually not physically grouped in with the other -- as presented, was not grouped in with the other 477 lines.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right. But my experience has been we usually look at Cornell separate, and we go through each of those programs, because it receives substantial funding from the County. And I don't -- I don't have a specific recollection as to whether or not this particular program was considered and what the group decided, but I have to believe if it wound up with a 10% cut, that that was a conscious decision and recommendation made by the Working Group when it looked at Cornell's programs.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

No, that wasn't -- that wasn't my recollection at all, that this was not discussed specifically for a cut of this magnitude; that this was something that was not grouped in with the other 477 programs, especially in light of the water quality work that the County is doing. This would be a line that, in my opinion, shouldn't have been cut at all, but the -- you know, the Working Group decided on a 2% cut on the -- all the 477 programs.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

That's why I supported it in committee. But subsequent to that, when I considered it and thought about it, I know that we look at Cornell separate from 477. And I'm not sure that it wasn't the actual intention to cut this particular Cornell program 10%. We've cut Cornell programs at different levels. They're not always the same, irrespective of what the funding source has been. I guess, through the Chair, is any other -- any of my colleagues have any recollection at all from the Working Group as to what was intended with this budget line?

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

I think I can answer it, Legislator D'Amaro. My recollection, as we were talking about Cornell and their various programs, was that the operating -- the Work Group decided that for those Cornell programs that were funded out of the General Fund, they were going to take the same 10% cuts that we apply to all contract agencies, but those particular programs that were funded through the quarter percent fund were to be left at the 2% cut that the County Executive imposed. So I think that in this particular situation, because it was presented to us as being out of the General Fund, we cut it 10%, but that wasn't, in fact, the case.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

But are you saying we didn't specifically consider this program?

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

I think we debated each program at length, but, at the end of the day, decided that all General Fund programs were going to take the 10% cut.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Well, then let me ask the Budget Review Office, Dr. Lipp, if -- do you consider this also to have been just an error because there was a policy decision made to only cut 2% from 477?

**MR. LIPP:**

It wasn't an error. They -- as you had said before, we have a tendency to look at Cornell as a group, and we did this time also. And we knowingly, whether or not the argument should have been made or not, cut them to the 2015 adopted, less 10%, level. And we have an email asking us about that, dated January 5th, from Legislator Kennedy that states that, too. So we didn't make an error. If you want to move it back, that's your discretion, of course, though.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right, I understand. But as far as the Budget Review Office is concerned, you received direction from the Working Group to cut this program 10% because it was specifically considered during our deliberation.

**MR. LIPP:**

Correct.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

And you mentioned an email from Legislator Kennedy. Just through the Chair, Legislator Kennedy, do you have anything to add to that; is that your recollection, if you --

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

That is my recollection.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So, you know, again, in committee, I heard testimony from someone from the Administration telling me this was in error, that the intention was to cut this by only 2%, not 10%. But, yet, that person who was giving me that recollection wasn't even in the room. So I'm just kind of wondering where is this coming from, if that's not -- if we did specifically consider this and decided to cut it 10%, and that's what the Budget Office is telling us.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

If I could answer that --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Sure.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

-- Mr. Presiding Officer. I don't recollect anyone having a discussion about cutting ag stewardship 10%, so the -- and I do -- I do remember the conversations about cutting anything related to 477 by 2%, which was the recommended cut for the budget. So it is problematic that this was cut 10%, because it is -- if you want to get into the value and the merit of the work, I mean, it's without question, because they do work with growers and producers to -- it's ag stewardship to reduce soil and water erosion and reduce pesticide and nutrient use.

So it has great value. It's a program that has had great success and it should be continued. And to cut it by 10%, I don't -- I don't have, you know, any belief at all that it was intentional. And I addressed this right after -- actually, the day we were approving the budget last November, and I did have a lot of understanding from my colleagues around this horseshoe that this should not have been cut 10%.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Well, I appreciate that, Legislator Krupski, but the Budget Review Office does have a specific recollection and tells me that it was meant to be cut 10%. So for that reason, I'm not going to support this.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Legislator Stern.

**LEG. STERN:**

Yeah, thank you. Without necessarily having a conversation or a debate about the value or merit of the program, which I'm sure we all agree is an important program, tell me about the impact of this

specific cut. I see the line item is for equipment use. Speak to the specific equipment and how this cut would impact the ability to not only provide the service, but the impact that it might have on the purchase or the use of this particular piece of equipment that is the subject of this funding.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

I'm not really familiar with the specific equipment. I know this would affect the salaries, because this is something that they relied on in their budget, certainly. And it's \$18,000-plus that was -- you know, again, that they rely on to run these programs and to pay the salaries of the people who run the programs. So this was -- again, it was never my recollection that this was going to be cut during that Working Group time. So this would -- that's what actually could effect, you know, ultimately affect personnel. Don't forget, Cornell Cooperative Extension's budget has been cut since 2008 in a consistent and really dramatic manner to the point of you're going to start to lose a lot of the function that they provide if this continues.

**LEG. STERN:**

So here, the line says that in the 2016 adopted budget, this would result in the elimination of the equipment line in which funds were used to purchase necessary field equipment. But we're saying that it won't have an impact on the purchase of field equipment to operate the program, but it is -- it has to do with personnel? Maybe BRO knows the answer.

**MR. LIPP:**

I'm not sure how they'll spread the money around, that's up to them.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

And, again, this is something that I tried to address last year with the -- at the time, when we -- when we adopted the budget, and I was given assurance by most people at this horseshoe that understood that this was something that should not have been cut 10%, and I was assured by the Administration. I addressed it with the Administration also, and I said let's -- how do we reconcile this as quickly as possible for their budget? It's an important line. I mean, ag stewardship is an important line, and if I had known there was going to be questions about this, certainly, we could have had Cornell Cooperative Extension represented here to explain why it's important towards agriculture and towards preserving water quality.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Legislator Fleming.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer. I just wanted to note, I wasn't present for the discussions that you all are talking about, but I can speak to the alarm that the cuts engendered out east, and particularly in the agricultural community, specifically now, when, you know, the State has awarded \$5 million for the Long Island Nitrogen Action Plan Initiative. Cornell Cooperative Extension and the Peconic Estuary Program are so critically important to that initiative. Any cuts to the Extension, after the cuts that they've really sort of steadily received for the past several years, would be harmful and have been harmful to them. So I just wanted to allow the Legislators to be aware of the dramatic impact that this will have on our efforts to reduce nitrogen on the eastern end of Long Island.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Legislator Kennedy.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

A question for Legislator Krupski. This 18,000 and change will go entirely to the salary of someone that is already there, or the salaries of more than one person that is already there?

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

I don't know exactly how that money is -- goes to the -- is apportioned to that ag stewardship line. I know it goes to the whole program, which a lot of the program, of course, goes towards salaries, because it's people who go out in the field and work with farmers on different ways of controlling, you know, nutrient use, so it's mostly salaries.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

I understand that. Will Cornell -- should this pass, will Cornell be coming back to us in a month requesting money for equipment?

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

I've never -- I've never heard that from Cornell, that they would be -- if this passes and they have this money restored, that they would be looking for more money for equipment, not to my knowledge.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

So we're taking it from their equipment line, correct?

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

What's that?

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

We're taking it from their equipment line?

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

I didn't -- I didn't come up with the offset for it. This is -- to me, it was important that this be restored, I mean, because -- and it was important that I -- and this should have been restored the day that we -- actually, the day that we passed it in the budget, but this is -- and maybe Director Lansdale can answer the question where the money is coming from.

**MR. NOLAN:**

Coming from the permanent salary line.

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**

Yes.

**MR. NOLAN:**

In the same department. That's the offset.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

The questions is answered.

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**

That's right. One of our staff members in Economic Development and Planning, who is funded through the 477 Program, was out for a few months on maternity leave and there is a savings that was accrued to the County. So that savings will be used to offset this request.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Okay. Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. So do we have a motion?

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**  
(Raised hand).

**P.O. GREGORY:**  
And a second?

**MS. ELLIS:**  
Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**  
DuWayne, excuse me. Could I just follow up on that?

**P.O. GREGORY:**  
Yes, Legislator D'Amaro.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**  
Sarah, so do you have -- the funding became available because an employee was out for part --

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**  
That's right.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**  
For several months, or whatever it is. So that -- obviously, that employee is funded or salary is paid out of the 477 Fund.

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**  
That's right, yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**  
Will that employee be here next year full-time?

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**  
Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**  
So, you know -- so do --

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**  
It's a short-term fix for this, for this issue.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**  
So was the -- are you -- do you have any specific knowledge of how this came about? I mean, who made the request to increase the line within the Administration?

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**  
I believe the request was made by Cornell to both Legislator Krupski, as well as to the Administration, specifically our Farmlands Coordinator Administrator --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**  
Right.

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**  
-- Augie Ruckdeshel.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right. And what was the reasoning? Was it on the merits that we just don't have enough funding, or what was the reason for the increase?

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**

So there were a couple of reasons. One is reducing -- continuing this program will help advance the multi-part strategy of the County Executive's "Reclaim Our Water" initiative. If you think about the innovative alternative septic systems that we're demonstrating at homes, and looking at connecting some parcels to sewers, this is kind of the next part of that, which is working directly with farmers, this program to help farmers reduce their nitrogen and pesticide uses, and reducing overall that nutrient loading into our surface waters.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So that's the justification for the increased funding that came from Cornell?

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**

That is my justification for this. What came from Cornell is that this 10% cut will result in the elimination of the equipment line, for instance, in which funds were used to purchase field equipment to conduct on-farm demonstrations. That equipment includes things such as shovels, pest traps and the calibration --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So Cornell did what every other agency or recipient of funding does and says, "This is how the cut will affect our operation"?

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**

Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right. But were -- was the County ever told by Cornell that this was done in error?

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**

I don't believe so.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

I don't either. You know, look, we're reopening the budget here. If you want to support it, that's fine, but there are many other groups and organizations that suffered cuts that we made conscious decisions to implement. All of them are very difficult. If we're going to do this for Cornell, then are we going to allow every other agency to come here and justify why their funding should be restored? So I just think it's inappropriate that this was presented as an erroneous cut. It was not an erroneous cut, it was a conscious cut made during budget deliberations. It was passed by the Legislature and I think it would be unfair to pass this bill.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

It's 12:30. Go ahead, last word.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Well, I really disagree with Legislator D'Amato in that we ever discussed cutting ag stewardship specifically out of all the 477 lines by 10% by -- and not cutting the other lines, except for 2%. So I never remember hearing that conversation at all. Certainly, we would have had a much larger -- if we had that conversation at the Budget Working Group in November, we might still be there. So I -- in fact, I have an email here saying that we need to -- we need to address this on Wednesday morning, November 4th. I don't have my schedule, you know, with me if we ever met on

November 4th to discuss that. But this is of serious concern as soon as the budget was passed. I remember that day.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. All right. So we have a motion and a second.

**MS. ELLIS:**

Yes, we have a motion and a second.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Roll call.

*(Roll Call by Ms. Ellis, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature)*

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Yes.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Yes.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yes.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Yes.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Yes.

**LEG. ANKER:**

Yes.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

No.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Yes.

**LEG. CILMI:**

No.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

No.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

No.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

No.

**LEG. MC CAFFREY:**

No.

**LEG. STERN:**

No.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

No.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Yes.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Yes.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Yes.

**MS. ELLIS:**

Ten.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Congratulations.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. We're going to try to squeeze in one more. We have a gentleman who's been waiting. We're going to take out -- make a motion to take ***I.R. 1022*** out of order.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

(Raised hand).

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion by Legislator Krupski, I'll second. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MS. ELLIS:**

Eighteen.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

I'm sorry, it's in the bottom of Public Works. ***I.R. 1022 - Authorizing the County Executive to enter into -- to enter into and execute a "Municipal Agreement" relating to the Sustainable Energy Loan Program (Krupski)***. Motion by Legislator Krupski.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

I know I did have some -- this is a -- this is the second piece to the original bill Legislator Schneiderman introduced last year that we approved last November.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Can I get a motion?

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Oh, I thought -- I'm sorry, I thought I made the motion.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

No, that was --

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

I make the motion to take it out of order. Sorry.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

So moved.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion to approve; second, Legislator Fleming.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

On the motion.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

On the motion, Legislator Kennedy.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

I have a list of questions Al and I briefly discussed. I have some questions for the gentleman. Could you come up? Good afternoon.

**MR. THIELKING:**

Good afternoon.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

This one does not apply to you, but I recall back last year or the year before, there was an issue, and I think it was with the College, where the Tax Receiver said that there was no room on the bill for another line. Now, when someone takes a loan from you that will go on our County bill, which the County pays for, that is an issue that I'm having. My question is I know that NYSERDA said there's 90 million available for funding. How much of that is coming to Suffolk? Because I want to know if we have to bond out for insurance of sorts.

**MR. THIELKING:**

So just by way of introduction, I'm Mark Thielking. I'm the Executive Director of the Energy Improvement Corporation, which is the not-for-profit Local Development Corporation that helps counties and cities across the state activate Article 5(L) of the General Municipal Law, which provides financing for upgrades to commercial property for efficiency and renewable energy. So I'm here to help answer the questions.

Because we're a Local Development Corporation, we have bonding authority on our own. We're akin to any public authority of the State. So the bonding and the issuance of debt to pay for these upgrades is ours alone, it's not the County's. So all sources that are funded to fund the projects for our members, which are counties and cities that join Energy Improvement Corporation, comes from private capital sources.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Okay. Should the business that takes out a loan from you default on payment, then it would go through the County process where we take the business, do we become, in essence, the guarantor?

**MR. THIELKING:**

Well, the way Article 5(L), which is --

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Yes.

**MR. THIELKING:**

-- the General Municipal Law statute, is written, essentially, it's --  
You're providing another public benefit. So the Local Law that was passed in October and then, I guess, consummated in November allows the County to now activate this program. All we're doing at this point is how the program works, this is what the municipal agreement is today.

So the way taxes are collected in New York State is that the entity with lien authority, in this case Suffolk County, will be adding that extra charge to the bill, and they're all grouped into one bill. If the property owner is in default on that one bill, then the County is obligated to make our creditors whole through our bank trustee, just like you're making water districts and sewer districts and school districts whole as well. It's really the County's program. We're helping administer it so you don't have to build the infrastructure and secure the debt yourself. But that is one of the obligations, one of the few obligations that the County has, yes.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

So we will have to bond out for that.

**MR. THIELKING:**

Well, there are two considerations to keep in mind, three, actually. First is we've written the underwriting standards to eliminate the possibility of a weaker property to take advantage of this. I have copies of it. It's also in you're a packet from November. If you would like, I can hand it out again. But the main thrust of that is that we do not want to see a property that is delinquent on their taxes, delinquent on their mortgage payments, that is overindebted, to be -- qualify for this program, because we do not want to see a tax delinquency.

The second is that we also provide as a member a reserve for permanent losses. So the reserve is funded through Federal and State grants. It's also funded through a fee that we charge on every borrower. If the County does experience a permanent loss on that collection process, we will reimburse the County. And, again, this is unique to, you know, pretty much any authority that you're making whole.

And the third is we have a reserve to cover -- it's a fund that's funded by the New York State Green Bank to provide timeliness cash flow in case there's a delinquency. This is an optional program that we have built in case there is a cash flow concern by the member, where you pay an upfront fee to avail yourselves of that fund. If there's a delinquency, you can cover your obligation to pay the tax charge during that delinquency and default, and that then provides that cash flow until such time that you are repaid. And then when you're repaid, then you repay the fund. It's a fund for the members that decide that the cash flow obligation is too much to carry. It's an optional part of the program and it's funded by a \$5 million line of credit with the New York State Green Bank.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Robert, does that comply with the Suffolk County Tax Act in what we're allowed to do?

**MR. LIPP:**

As far as I know. I mean, what he's saying is if there is a delinquency, they will make good on it. We'll just have to make sure that we properly document everything.

**MR. THIELKING:**

That's right.

**MR. LIPP:**

And it's a long-term impact, and any like delinquencies will take years before they totally vet themselves through the property tax system.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Okay. I think it's a great program, but I am going to put in a request to table until someone, the sponsor speaks with our Town Tax Assessors and our County to find out if it is still true, that there are no lines, and this will not be an excessive cost to the County and to the Towns.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. So we have a motion to table by Legislator Kennedy. Do we have a second?

**LEG. TROTTA:**

(Raised hand).

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Second by Legislator Trotta. Okay. We're going to call the motion -- call the vote on -- tabling motion goes first. Roll call.

*(Roll Call by Ms. Ellis, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature)*

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Yes.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Yes.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

No.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

I'm going to pass.

**LEG. STERN:**

Yes.

**LEG. MC CAFFREY:**

Yes.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

No.

**LEG. CILMI:**

No.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

No.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

No.

**LEG. ANKER:**

No.

**LEG. HAHN:**

No.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Yes.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

No.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

No.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

No.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

No.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

No.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

No.

**MS. ELLIS:**

Five.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. All right. Motion to approve goes.

**LEG. STERN:**

I'm a no on the tabling.

**MS. ELLIS:**

So that's four.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Motion to approve. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MS. ELLIS:**

Eighteen.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. All right. We are adjourned for lunch.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Mr. Presiding Officer.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Oh, I'm sorry.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

I apologize. I know we're getting ready for lunch, but we have three of our FRES representatives here. I'd prefer to try and let them get out of here and go back to work than have to come back at 2:30. So would you indulge taking 1016 out of order and let us vote on it? I don't think it's going to take a lot of time.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. All right. We'll -- I'll second your motion to take **1016** out of order. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MS. ELLIS:**

Eighteen.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. Motion to approve 1016.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion to approve ***I.R. 1016 - Adopting the 2015 Suffolk County Multi-Jurisdictional Debris Management Plan prepared in conjunction with a FY2013 UASI Grant and approved by FEMA on December 14, 2015 (Co. Exec.)***. I'll second that motion. Anyone on the motion? Any questions? All in favor?

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Hold on.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Oh, I'm sorry.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Hold on. I just -- hold on. Just, George, can you give us just a brief explanation of this, please?

**MR. NOLAN:**

I think we have those guys from FRES who might do a better job.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

That's even better, yes. Thank you, sir.

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JORDAN:**

Good afternoon. John Jordan, Deputy Commissioner of FRES. Tom O'Hara, Tom is the --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So this a County Multi-Jurisdictional Debris Management Plan. Can you just tell us a little bit about specifically what debris and what are we managing?

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JORDAN:**

Well, it's debris secondary to a storm or a natural disaster, similar to what we saw with Sandy. Federal Government requires us to have Memorandums of Understanding with the towns and villages on how to handle the debris, how to get rid of it, and that's what this plan is. It's a partnership with all ten towns, villages.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Great. So working together with the various towns, the ten towns. And the funding is provided by whom?

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JORDAN:**

Well, this, having this plan allows us to get Federal reimbursement for the debris as we get rid of it.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

What's the cost of the program?

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JORDAN:**

The program was -- the plan was created through grants. We paid for the plan through grants.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Okay. So the County does the initial outlay, but it's 100% reimbursed?

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JORDAN:**

Well, the debris management, we have to get rid of it no matter what. This plan just coordinates how we -- how we do that. When there's a storm or -- we're responsible to get rid of the debris anyway. But if it's a Federal declared storm, we would get reimbursement, maybe 75%, or up to 90%.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So you need to have this plan in place. If a disaster should strike, then you can get the reimbursement coordinating with the towns?

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JORDAN:**

Correct.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

And that would be 100% reimbursed?

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JORDAN:**

Well, it depends on the storm.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JORDAN:**

But for Sandy, we would.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

If you qualify.

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JORDAN:**

Zero cost share.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right, right. Okay, very good. Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Legislator Stern.

**LEG. STERN:**

Yeah. It says that when you are under this type of a plan, that we would be able to receive expedited Federal assistance. So you're saying that the expedited Federal assistance is not hands-on assistance of any type, but it is -- it is reimbursement?

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JORDAN:**

No, it could be hands-on assistance. We saw after Sandy the Army Corps of Engineers administered the plan to get the debris off Fire Island. By having this plan in place, it expedites that process. We don't have to -- we don't have to create Memorandums of Understanding and all that stuff.

**LEG. STERN:**

Okay.

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JORDAN:**

At the time of disaster.

**LEG. STERN:**

So it's not just monetary reimbursement, but it is also hands-on --

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JORDAN:**

Could be, yes.

**LEG. STERN:**

-- if necessary, if that's what the situation warranted?

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JORDAN:**

Could be, yes.

**LEG. STERN:**

Okay. Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Legislator Kennedy.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Gentlemen, I read the plan from my two townships, you did an excellent job.

**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JORDAN:**

Tom O'Hara could take credit for all of that. He was the Project Manager on the plan.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Oh, yay.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right. We have a motion and a second. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MS. ELLIS:**

Eighteen.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. We stand recessed. We're going to have our all 18 photo now, so please don't go anywhere.

**(\*The meeting was recessed at 12:46 p.m.\*).**

\*\*\*\*\*

*(\*The following testimony was taken & transcribed by  
Alison Mahoney - Court Stenographer\*)*

*(\*The meeting was reconvened at 2:35 P.M. \*)*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Good afternoon, Mr. Clerk.

**MR. RICHBERG:**

Good afternoon, Mr. Presiding Officer. Happy Birthday.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you. Please do the roll call.

*(\*Roll Called by Mr. Richberg - Clerk of the Legislature\*)*

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Here.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Here.

**LEG. STERN:**

Here.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

Here.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Here.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Here.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Here.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Present.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Here.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Here.

**LEG. ANKER:**

Here.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Present.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Present.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Here.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Here.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Here.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Present.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Here.

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

**Public Hearings**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, we are in the Public Hearing portion of our agenda. We have.

IR 1000-15 that is first on the agenda, but we're going to skip over that for now. One of the expected speakers went to the location, so at the approval of the sponsor of the bill, she will allow us to skip over that public hearing and go on to IR 1006 -- ***(Public Hearing on) 1006, excuse me, A Local Law to update and strengthen the Hotel and Motel Tax statute (Lindsay).***

And I do not have any cards for this public hearing. Is there anyone that would like to speak on this matter? Please come forward. Okay, seeing none, Legislator Lindsay?

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Motion to recess.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion to recess by Legislator Lindsay. I will second -- oh, second by Legislator Fleming; I'm sorry.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, ***(Public Hearing on) IR 1007-15 - A Local Law to provide designated parking for veterans at County facilities (Muratore).***

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Motion to close.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

A little premature, hold on.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Oh, okay.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

I don't have any cards for this public hearing. Is there anyone here that would like to speak on this public hearing? Please come forward. Okay, seeing none, Legislator Muratore would like to make a motion to close. Legislator Browning would like to second it. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

***(Public Hearing on) IR 1020-15 - A Local Law to ban the sale of formaldehyde for use in holding tanks (Spencer).*** I have a few cards for this public hearing, the first being Robert Litzik? Litzke? Litzka?

**MR. LITZKE:**

Litzke.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Litzke, okay. One of three, not bad.

**MR. LITZKE:**

Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen. My name is Bob Litzke. I work for the Town of Huntington's Department of Maritime Services, and prior to that I worked for Brookhaven National Laboratory as a Superfund Health & Safety Supervisor, and before that I spent some time in the Nuclear Navy; just a little bit of my background. But just as you came up, quite a few years ago when I first started on with the Town of Huntington because the Town of Huntington had just started a three and a half million dollar upgrade for the Huntington Sewage Treatment Plant and went to a different sort of system where it's called sequencing batch reaction. And as the system came on-line, we noticed that the system was sort of fluctuating in sufficiency. I was tasked with trying to find out what was causing that, and one of the things that came to my attention was that when people have recreational boats, they use a deodorant to kill the odor in their holding tanks on the boats. And looking further at what was being sold locally, it turns out there are two types, there's a type that is naturally based with citrus products and there's another type that uses formaldehyde which is a toxic and it's a carcinogen. We asked our contractor to take a look at it and he said, *Well, that's probably not really the cause, but it's certainly not a good idea to be adding a toxic material to a system that uses a natural digestive process.*

So that's really the background for how the Town of Huntington really learned about this. And it really doesn't make a lot of sense to sell a product that you know is going to end up in the environment and you know is a carcinogen when there are other options. So you really have to wonder why you would want to sell something like that when you know it's going to end up either in our surface waters or in our groundwater eventually.

There is a no-discharge zone in the Town of Huntington waters and all of Long Island Sound, but of course, even if people use a pump out station, they're still going to end up going into the sewage treatment plant which is not going to take that material out and it's going to end up back in the waters that we all swim and eventually drink sometimes. That's pretty much all I have. Thank you.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Thank you very much. If you could hold on one second, sir. We do have questions during this portion and Legislator Stern has a question for you.

**MR. LITZKE:**

Great. Yes, sir?

**LEG. STERN:**

Welcome. Where might it be sold? Is it widely available? Is the substance widely available in some of the local area stores that you're seeing it in Huntington, or is it mostly coming in from other areas when people are coming into the harbor?

**MR. LITZKE:**

No, it's currently available in any marine supply store. I mean, I won't mention any store names, but right across from our office there are marine supply stores and you walk in there and you'll see a choice; they will sell a green product and they will also sell the formaldehyde-based product. Of course, the formaldehyde-based product is relatively cheaper than the other one, but again there's a reason for that, so.

**LEG. STERN:**

What would you say the approximate cost differential is?

**MR. LITZKE:**

It's been a while, but last time I looked there was probably a 40% differential.

**LEG. STERN:**

Thank you.

**MR. LITZKE:**

You're welcome. Any other questions?

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Yes, Legislator Krupski.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Thank you. So in Huntington, do you have pump out stations on the harbor? Do you have a pump out boat?

**MR. LITZKE:**

We actually have -- I think right now we have six pump out stations and we have two pump out boats. And all our services are offered free, right, the pump out stations don't charge a fee, and we actually take marine sanitary waste from marinas and we allow them to use our pump out stations which then we use town monies to transfer that waste to the sewage treatment plant. So even if somebody follows the rules and pumps out their boat into a pumping station, eventually our truck comes, takes that waste and carries it to the transfer station at the sewage treatment plant and it ends up going into our sewage treatment plant.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Sure. No, I understand that. Thank you. So the Town runs all that.

**MR. LITZKE:**

Yes, it does.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Do you have -- so you've got pretty good compliance if it's a free service?

**MR. LITZKE:**

Excuse me?

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

It's a free service to boaters?

**MR. LITZKE:**

There is no charge for any of this.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Okay, so you're getting good compliance with the boaters, then.

**MR. LITZKE:**

Correct.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Do you do it -- what's the season on that?

**MR. LITZKE:**

I believe a season runs pretty much from Memorial Day, but it runs usually until the end of -- I'd like to say middle or end of October because people take their time pulling their boats out of the water.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

So a County sale -- now, you're pretty far west. A County sale, is that going to be a problem with people maybe bringing material in from further west, outside of County?

**MR. LITZKE:**

In terms of people who are non-residents using our pumping stations? We don't differentiate. Anybody who wants to use our pumping stations --

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

No, but I mean bring the formaldehyde product in --

**MR. LITZKE:**

Oh, yes.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

-- that's going to effect the sewage treatment plant.

**MR. LITZKE:**

I mean, I don't believe, as far as I know, from what {Marcy Risers} told me, that the town can actually ban it locally. And even if we did, again, it could be sold anywhere on Long Island, so.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Thank you.

**MR. LITZKE:**

You're welcome. Any other questions? Thank you.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

That's it. Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Ed Carr.

**MR. CARR:**

My name is Ed Carr, I'm Director of Maritime Services for the Town of Huntington. I work with Robert Litzke. I will just -- if I could address some of the questions that Legislator Krupski had had regarding -- and Legislator Stern regarding costs and outside individuals coming into town harbors.

It's anecdotal, but we believe that the majority of vessels coming into the Huntington/Northport Bay Complex located in the northwest end of the harbor -- of the County, are very much Huntington residents. We have about 5,000 vessels based out of the Town of Huntington, and that's from Cold Spring Harbor on the west and then into Huntington Harbor, Centerport Harbor, Northport Harbor, Duck Island Harbor, Price's Bend on the south side of Eatons Neck.

And then to answer Legislator Stern's question, the price differential had been about 40% about three or four years ago. When we did an assessment this past Fall when Huntington Town Councilwoman Tracey Edwards had proposed a Sense Resolution, that I assume this is the reason for the hearing through Legislator Spencer's office that you're considering today, the price differential is down to about 5% difference between the green products that do not contain formaldehyde and the products that do contain formaldehyde.

Where this issue really came to a head -- no pun intended --

**(\*Laughter\*)**

-- back over the summer was Northport Village had upgraded its sewage treatment plant. The Town of Huntington has two sewage treatment plants in the Town's borders, you know, four Incorporated Villages and the Town of Huntington. The Town has its own sewage treatment plant at Mill Dam Road in Huntington, and then one of our four Incorporated Villages. The Village of Northport has its own sewage treatment plant. That sewage treatment plant in Northport only has a capacity of about 300,000 gallons per day capacity coming into the plant, where the Town's sewage treatment plant has upward of 1.5 million gallons a day.

We have a marina, the Woodbine Marina that the Town had just recently refurbished on Northport Harbor, so it's in the Village of Northport even though it's a town facility. And our pump out station is the closest one to the north end of the harbor, so it's very popular for boaters to discharge their marine sanitary waste into. We typically have a very long line at that marina. The marina only has a thousand gallon capacity holding tank, so once a marina pump out has reached its thousand gallons, it just shuts off on high alarm because you've reached the capacity. And if the Town doesn't get around to removing the waste for a day or two -- if it happens on a weekend, we don't have work force on the weekend -- then boaters that are showing up looking to pump out their vessels basically have no recourse. They'd have to go about a mile south, half a mile south to do that and a lot of them don't, they get frustrated and they just leave the dock. We approached Northport Village and asked them if we could tie the current Woodbine Marina pump out station directly into the Village septic lines, and the Village was hesitant to do that because of the formaldehyde issue.

Somebody had also asked what other states are doing, because you do have boats coming from Connecticut. Some counties in Connecticut, I believe Fairfield's one of them, is considering a ban on formaldehyde. A lot of states out west -- California, Oregon, the State of Washington -- have already banned formaldehyde, and I have some literature here, it's widely available on-line. But the sense seems to be that continuing to use formaldehyde, which basically kills off the good bacteria in a sewage treatment plant, is something that you don't really want to have coming into a sewage treatment plant, especially a small plant the size of Northport Villages.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Mr. Carr, thank you very much. Your time is up, but Legislator Spencer has a question for you.

**MR. CARR:**

Yes.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Hi, Ed. How are you?

**MR. CARR:**

Okay, Legislator.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Ed, is the -- I understand that with a lot of the sewage treatment plants, that there are some plants that are scavenger sites that are designed to, you know, take these types of chemicals like pharmaceuticals and things of that sort. Is the Town of Huntington a scavenger site in its STP?

**MR. CARR:**

I don't know about the towns. I believe Northport Village's is not and that was the one we were looking to tie into. Huntington's I'm not certain on. Do you know, Bob; scavenger site?

**MR. LITZKE:**

I really don't know. I know the technology involved, but I'm not sure.

**MR. CARR:**

Yeah, we know the technology, but we're not sure if Huntington Sewage Treatment Plant has that modification.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

This was something that was brought to me from the Town of Huntington which was one of the reasons we laid it on the table. And I guess the feedback that I've gotten is what would potentially be the other chemicals that would have a similar impact; is it just formaldehyde or are you aware of other chemicals?

**MR. CARR:**

If you go with the State of California, they list -- and Oregon, they list five chemicals. I'm going to butcher some of these, but Bronopol which is a chemical, Dovicil, Glutaraldehyde, also known as embalming fluid, Paraformaldehyde is the fourth chemical, and then the fifth one is Paradichlorobenzene which is the common ingredient in mothballs.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

So I think the feedback that I got as we were looking into that, do you feel that this legislation goes far enough, or should those other chemicals -- does formaldehyde -- would that accomplish what you're trying to do or should these other chemicals be included?

**MR. CARR:**

The products that are on the store shelf right now, if you were to go into any marina, you'd find about ten deodorizing products, and the majority of them have actually removed most of these chemicals, so maybe seven out of the ten already have none of these chemicals in them. It's the three that do have these chemicals in them, and of those three, the majority will have formaldehyde in them. It's rare that you'll get the chemicals that still contain the active ingredient in mothballs or embalming fluid.

But, you know, years ago these type of chemicals were all in these products because the idea was just to -- in order to tamp down the odor, you would just want to kill anything in the tank and you'd basically almost embalm your holding tank is what you would do, and that really doesn't work in a system where you're trying to have natural biodegradation

**LEG. SPENCER:**

One of the things I'm considering is amending my legislation to include those other chemicals, since I've gotten the feedback, which right now we're in a public hearing, if I recessed it and amended it. Would that be something -- even though it's, like you said, not a big source, but definitely is potential loopholes. Would there be benefit to doing that?

**MR. CARR:**

I believe so, and I don't think it would -- I don't think you'd get much push back even from the industry. When I had informal discussions with many of the marine stores in Huntington, again, they're selling ten products on the shelf and they said if they have to decline three products, it really doesn't hurt their business model. And when they write to these manufacturers, they said a lot of manufacturers are looking to remove these products anyway because there seems to be a national move toward this.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Thank you very much for being here and I appreciate your support on this.

**MR. CARR:**

Thank you.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Jackie Martin.

**MS. MARTIN:**

Good afternoon. Thank you for allowing me to address you today. My name is Jackie Martin and I am the Commodore of the Greater Huntington Council of Yacht and Boating Clubs. We are a boating advocacy and trade association that is 30 years old and we represent 22 member clubs in the Huntington Township.

I think most of the points about the formaldehyde ban have been covered today, and I want to thank you all for listening, you know, to the testimony. There's really nothing -- no expertise that I have other than to say that our organization is in favor of this legislation. I personally liken it a little bit to the microbead legislation. I feel that if Suffolk County does pass this, then Nassau County will probably follow suit with it. We certainly promote within our organization not only safe boating but clean water, and this would certainly be very helpful to us, as well as allowing the Northport Sewage Treatment Plant to possibly open a direct line to their holding tank at their pump out station at the Woodbine Marina so that the effluent from the boats can go straight into the sewage treatment plant.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Dr. Spencer?

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Hi, Jackie. Thank you for being here. So one of the things that I think this Legislature wants to do when looking at any bans is to understand the impact on retailers, impact on municipalities and impact on constituents. So we hear from the municipality and potentially the retailers. So you are a personal recreational boater, you represent 22 yacht clubs, and it's your position that if we pass this legislation, the boating community that this ban would affect embraces it because of the benefit that

it provides to protecting our water.

**MS. MARTIN:**

Yeah, absolutely. I mean, boaters try to do the right thing and, you know, we've seen the change in the regulations coming with the no discharge zone getting wider and wider. We've also been an advocate for the mobile pump out boat, which we now have both in Northport and in Huntington. And we've also extended or we've pushed very hard to extend the period of time that that boat is used; it now extends until October because there are so many people who are boating actively every weekend and want to do the right thing. They don't discharge overboard, they use the pump out stations and they do use the mobile pump out service; they're very much in favor of it. And I think anything that Suffolk County could do to make the choice simpler for folks, they just know they need a holding tank treatment. You know, and they go into the store and they'll pick up probably whatever is on sale; some of them look at the label, some of them don't. Now we've made our organization's members aware of this, I'm sure that a lot of them are no longer buying formaldehyde products and putting them in their holding tank. There are a lot of -- much better alternatives to that. And I think it will have little, if any, impact on anyone and will be very beneficial to the environment.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Thank you.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Thank you very much. Legislator Krupski has a question for you.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Thank you. So to the sponsor first, and then to -- well, anyone else who would answer. So to the sponsor, did you -- Legislator Spencer, did you reach out to like the AMI or any other area besides Huntington about this legislation? Because I think this is -- and I know this has historically -- it's been a problem for pump out boats and anyone with a pump out facility to get rid of this waste. I understand it's been a problem for a long time and that's why, because of the chemicals in the waste. But I can't imagine anyone being against it, I just wonder how wide a net -- you know, we need to cast a wide net here.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

I guess -- through the Chair, is it appropriate for me to respond?  
Am I able to do that, or is it just a public hearing? I just wanted to just --

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Well, we're not debating the bill, so it wouldn't be. We should just have questions for the witness.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Okay. All right, I thought so.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

So then the question would be much -- Ma'am, how much of this waste do you think a sewage treatment plant could tolerate? If you have boats coming in from out of state, and I would think you're going to be, you know, subject to that from someone coming in from Connecticut at that location. How much dillusion is going to be enough to be effective, not to hurt the function at the site?

**MS. MARTIN:**

I would probably say minimal. Most folks, if given an opportunity to pump out in their own local area, would choose that rather than going into a strange place and trying to find the pump out

station. You know, it's strictly -- and most people don't travel with their boats unless it's a weekend, and they'll come for overnight and they're probably certainly well suited to stay for one or two nights without using the facility to pump out. You know, normally the holding tank is big enough to allow them to go out for several days.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Legislator Krupski, I want your water to be clean in Greenport also, as I do in Huntington.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

*(Gave a thumb's up)*. Thank you.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Thank you very much, Ms. Martin. We have no other cards for the hearing. Is there anyone else in the audience who would like to address the Legislature on this issue? Sure, come on, Mr. Kaufman. Please just state your name for the record and then fill out a card after.

**MR. KAUFMAN:**

Thank you very much. My name is Michael Kaufman, I'm a member of the Council on Environmental Quality. Just as a point of information, I was not here to testify about the bill or anything. There's only one scavenger waste plant in the County, that's Bergen Point, that's the only one equipped to handle anything. There are no town scavenger waste facilities that exist at this point in time. Bergen Point does have the equipment to handle a fair amount; I can't give you an exact number or anything like that. But they are sort of the last resort for chemicals around here that EPA allows to be basically treated and flushed out into the ocean. So just wanted to bring that little point up. Thank you.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Great. Thank you very much.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Thank you.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Okay. We have no other cards. Is there anybody else who would like to speak? Seeing none, Dr. Spencer?

**LEG. SPENCER:**

I'm going to make a motion to recess, as I have to make some decisions in terms of adding additional chemicals to the bill.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Okay. I have a motion to recess. I'll second the motion. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Motion is recessed.

We're going to go back to ***(Public Hearing on) IR 1000-15 - A Local Law to increase awareness of dry cleaning chemical use (Hahn)***. I have a few cards. The first speaker is Daniel Tran.

**MR. TRAN:**

Hi. Good afternoon. My name is Danny Tran and I'm a dry cleaner in Suffolk County, in Islip. I'm not using PERC. I use alternative method. I use wet cleaning, 50% wet cleaning and 50% dry cleaning using DF-2000. I support -- I think it's a great idea to have a sign up where it indicates what solvent you use at the plant, I think that's a great idea. But I do oppose to the hierarchy or opposed to having like a ranking system on what type of -- you know, the solvent, how hazardous the solvent is. And I also believe that one sign at the store is actually sufficient rather than having multiple signs at the store. Okay? Thank you.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Thank you very much. Does anyone have any questions for Mr. Tran? Thank you very much for coming out this morning. This afternoon, excuse me. Our next speaker is Nora Nealis.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Did he leave contact information on his card, Mr. Tran?

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Sure.

**LEG. HAHN:**

He did? Okay, thank you.

**MS. NEALIS:**

Good afternoon. My name is Nora Nealis, I'm with the NCA which is a dry cleaning trade organization. We don't have a lot of dry cleaners here today to talk about this because they're, as you know, small businessmen, most of whom are actively involved in the 6 AM to 6 PM running of their business.

Since this proposal was first introduced and I appeared here several months back, we've spoken to a number of our members about it. We feel strongly about consumer education and our members are pretty much in line with what Danny said in terms of signage, alerting the consumer as to what kind of solvents are being used in the plant. However, like Danny, the cleaners have and we as an organization have serious concerns about the notion of ranking.

First of all, I want to call to your attention that in terms of PERC, which is the one dry cleaning solvent that's identified as a hazardous air pollutant, New York State requires all PERC dry cleaners to alert consumers that that is the solvent that is in use. All PERC dry cleaners hang an 11 x 17 sign telling consumers *We're using PERC*. So any signage we're talking about over and above that is basically identifying the alternatives to PERC, none of which are HAPS. So all of the alternatives have been brought to the industry as a non-hazardous air pollutant, a greener, more environmentally friendly technology.

When we get into trying to rank these, like-minds, or rather educated minds could come to different conclusions based on what their particular interest is in a solvent. So one cleaner might read the MSDS and study the data on alternative A, and because there's a question as to whether or not it might be a carcinogen, he rejects that solvent. And another cleaner could look at that same solvent and say, *Ah, but it's not a BOC, so that's the solvent I want to use*. A consumer could have a similar feeling in terms of what's important to them and where they want to go. In New York City, cleaners are required, alternative solvent cleaners, to post a sign in their store telling them what alternative they're using and directing them to a website where they'll find the MSDS and all the details -- health, safety, environment -- having to do with that particular solvent.

NCA and the cleaners who are our members have no difficulty with that kind of signage. We do, however, have a problem with ranking, where somebody else is saying that this solvent is better than this solvent from an environmental health and safety point of view.

*(Beeper Sounded)*

Because arguments can be made and are being made every day by people for whom this is a passion about which is better than the other, and that's something that we believe consumers are bright enough, educated enough to make a choice given the data and the facts about what's being used. You don't need somebody else to tell them.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Thank you, Ms. Nealis. Does anybody have any questions? Thank you very much for your testimony.

That is the last card I have on this topic. Is there anybody else in the audience who would like to address us on the issue? Seeing none, Legislator Hahn?

**LEG. HAHN:**

At the request of a colleague, I am going to make a motion to recess.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Motion to recess. I'll second the motion. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MS. ELLIS:**

*Eighteen.*

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

The resolution is recessed.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

The hearing is recessed.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

The hearing is recessed, excuse me.

***(Public Hearing on) IR 1025-16 - Adopting Local Law No. -2016, A Local Law to enhance the County's Tourism Promotion Program (Lindsay).*** I do not have any cards on this issue. Is there anybody in the audience who would like to address the Legislature? Seeing none, Legislator Lindsay?

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Motion to close.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Motion to close.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Second.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Second by Legislator Cilmi. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

The hearing is closed.

**(Public Hearing on) IR 1026-16 - Adopting Local Law No. -2016, A Local Law to amend Resolution No. 1123-2015 and improve Alarm System Registration Requirements (Browning).** I have no cards. Is there anybody in the audience who would like to address the Legislature on this particular item? Seeing none, Legislator Browning?

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Motion to recess.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Motion to recess.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Second.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Second by Legislator Cilmi. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? The hearing is recessed.

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

**(Public Hearing on) IR 1027-16 - Adopting Local Law No. -2016, A Local Law to clarify affordable housing requirements at developments connecting to a County sewer district (Calarco).** I have no cards on this resolution. Is there anybody in the audience who would like to address the Legislature on this item? Seeing none, I will make a motion to recess.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Second.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Second by Legislator Cilmi. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? The hearing is recessed.

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

**(Public Hearing on) IR 1042-16 - Adopting Local Law No. -2016, A Charter Law to establish minimum qualifications and screening process for appointment of Police Commissioner (McCaffrey).** I have no cards for this hearing. Is there anybody in the audience who would like to address the Legislature on this topic? Seeing none, Legislator McCaffrey.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

Motion to close.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Makes a motion to close.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Second.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Second by Legislator Kennedy. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

The hearing is closed.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. All right, I'd like to set the date for the following Public Hearings, March 1st, 2016 at 2:30 PM, Maxine Postal Auditorium, Riverhead, New York: IR 1095, IR 1100, IR 1148, IR 1149, IR 1150, IR 1151. Motion to approve.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Second.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Second by Legislator Cilmi. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, let's go back to our agenda. I believe we're up to **Education & Human Services:**

**IR 1023-16 - Establishing the Suffolk County Child Care Commission (Martinez).** Motion by Legislator Martinez.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Second.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Second by Legislator Lindsay. On the motion anyone? Legislator Cilmi.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess through the Chair to the sponsor. Ms. Liguori distributed sort of a graph, if you will, of the very convoluted "system" that exists currently in this area, and I'm just wondering how exactly this is going to either bring -- create a system or bring together that system or is it going to sort of try and figure out what all of the different components that are out there and put them in some sort of -- you know, make some sort of organization out of them? If you could explain.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

I couldn't explain to you the actual chart that was given because it is very confusing, but the purpose of the legislation is to come together and start the dialogue as to the child care system in the County. The purpose of this is also to come up with creative ways on how to help the system, on how to help parents who are not even aware that subsidies exist for child care. It's also kind of thinking outside the box on new initiatives and ways to raise awareness of the lack of child care, affordable child care here in Suffolk County.

**LEG. CILMI:**

And I see that you have representatives on this commission from a variety of different agencies.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Yes, 13 of them.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Thirteen different agencies. And is the commission constituted for a certain period of time, or is it one of these perpetual things?

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Definitely not. It does have a time limit; they have a year and within that year they have to produce certain data that will then be presented to the Legislature as a whole. At that time, a reevaluation will be made to see if they will continue or not.

**LEG. CILMI:**

And the work that this committee is doing, or this commission is doing is not duplicative in any way with any of the work that any of these other entities are doing?

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

What this commission will do is assist in what these are already doing but could do better. Just, for example, breaking up silos, all right, of independent child care. Also, there are some child care facilities that are not legal, this would make sure that certain child care systems are being monitored and making sure that they are able to exist under the law.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay. You know, I'm willing to give it a year. The thing that causes me hesitation is that given the ten or so different, you know, entities that already exist, I hate to just add another one to this piece of paper. I'd be surprised if, you know, none of these agencies is already doing what you're suggesting here, but, you know, it's an important area for sure. So I'll support it and let's see what they come up with after a year.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

I appreciate that. And like I said before, let's just talk, you know, let's begin the dialogue.

And the other issue that -- this really stems from the Welfare-to-Work Committee in that *Who's Minding Our Kids Report*, all right, and just making sure that, again, that affordable child care is accessible for our families. And it's just really just gathering data just to see where we're at. And one of the issues that the County faces is the fact that the funding is not there, but it's not really because of us, you know. So it's bringing these agencies together and seeing how we can work together to see if funding can be made available and that affordable child care can exist here in the County.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Thank you.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, Legislator Fleming.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wanted to applaud you, Legislator Martinez, for doing this. I know, you know, in my district there are so many disparate organizations that are trying to work on child care and they're geographically distant from one another, we don't have good public transportation that can connect them. And quite frankly, I was just meeting with the Children's Museum of the East End Director who wants to offer his facility for child care services and frankly he has no idea who he should turn to try to make that offer. So I think this is a really excellent effort to coordinate some very uncoordinated systems and really serve our children well. I don't know if there would be room for somebody like that in a private organization to weigh in on the efforts of the commission?

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

There definitely is. Part of it is also holding meetings. And as Chair of the Education Human Services, I will be part of this commission and I want different stakeholders involved. I mean, yes, there are 13 here that are members, but that does not mean that we're going to exclude anyone who wants to weigh in in order to make this commission even better.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Thank you. I think it's a great effort and look forward to participating.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Legislator Spencer.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Monica, thank you very much. It's a great piece of legislation. I wanted to follow-up with another aspect, if we look at the Bureau of, I guess, Children with Special Needs. I think that a good portion of it we found, as far as the budget was supported, and my numbers are rough, but it's roughly \$170 million total and we get roughly 40 to 50% of that through the State, and I think the numbers were about 3500 children were being served. And so comparing that to other counties, we weren't doing poorly but there are still concerns with, for instance, I think up to \$27 million of that budget was in transportation costs alone. And, you know, at one point the question of looking at efficiencies in terms of having one child maybe being transferred from Riverhead to Huntington on a full-sized school bus; I mean, you know, that's a bit of an over example. And then the other issue was within schools where you have recommendations from services, from testing agencies that also are actually providing the services. And at the end of the day, the County's kind of footing the bill.

So I'm not looking to cut services, I'm looking to, you know, enhance them. And if we're going to spend \$170 million, it seems to be an area where, you know, we can make sure they get the best care and we can, you know -- so will this commission address that? I had put together a committee and it is was very difficult to kind of get answers. Is this -- will the finances be kind of addressed as far as that, or is this totally separate?

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Yes and no, meaning we're trying to find ways on how to get those funds back. In terms of special needs children, that is something that this commission will speak about, but we're not focusing on it only because there are other efforts being made for early childhood intervention. And we all know that the sooner you get to a child's education, you know, the sooner you'll know if the child has a disability or not, which then will cost less money, not only to the County but to the district as a whole, especially if we start identifying those problems that a child may have. Okay? So we're not -- it's not that we're not going to focus on it.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Okay.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

But it's not -- you know, we established this commission as a first step to get there.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Well, I think it's something that's extremely important. And in your background and in your role and what you know about education, I think that this will be a great service and I support you in this effort, and hopefully I can work with you and your commission. Thank you.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right. Anyone else? Okay. We have a motion and a second. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, congratulations. List me as a cosponsor.

**Environment, Planning & Agriculture**

Okay, ***IR 1008-16 - To appoint member of the Suffolk County Planning Commission (Errol S. Kitt)(County Executive).***

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Amy, cosponsor.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Motion.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion by Legislator Muratore.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

Second.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Second -- who was that? Second by Legislator McCaffrey. Motion to approve or what? Oh, okay. All right, I didn't ask the question. Anyone on the motion?

**LEG. HAHN:**

I'd like to make a motion to table.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Legislator Hahn makes a motion to table.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Second.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Second by Legislator Kennedy. Legislator Krupski, I think you were --

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

I just wanted to ask a question of the nominee, on the motion to approve. So maybe that's premature?

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Is the -- anyone have any questions? Is Mr. Kitt here?

**MR. KITT:**

Good afternoon.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Good afternoon, Mr. Kitt. Thank you for being here. Anyone -- there was a motion to table, so obviously someone has questions. Legislator Krupski, you had a question for the --

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Yes, I did.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right, and then Legislator Kennedy.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer. Mr. Kitt, how are you?

**MR. KITT:**

Good. How are you?

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

I did have an opportunity last week at committee to ask you some questions, but -- so this is an important position and I think there's going to be other questions about some of your background and everything. But the question I have is, you know, you're from Lloyd Harbor, and really the West End and the East End is so different. When you're reviewing an application, say you're approved today and you're on the commission, you're reviewing an application; are you going to look at the way it's going to effect the East End in different terms than the way it would effect the West End? Are you going to be able to make that distinction?

**MR. KITT:**

Yes. As we spoke previously, there are a lot of issues affecting the East End that are, you know, different in some ways than in the western part of Suffolk County. For example, you know, protection, improving our water quality is a key issue on the East End, just like it is across the County; preservation, protection of farmland and open space, critical for the eastern part of the County. So, again, every project is on a case-by-case basis, you look at each project on its own merit. But I'm sensitive to the issues of the East End, you know, their differences between the western part of Suffolk.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

So you're willing to take input from not only resident civic groups and local municipalities when you make those decisions?

**MR. KITT:**

Yes, all the information that's provided to the Planning Department which is passed along to the Commission, that's the information that we will do a thorough review, objective thorough review of that information before a judgment is made.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Thank you. We talked about -- also at committee we talked about really the needs, since we are -- agriculture is such a big industry and business in the County, having someone on the Planning Commission with an agricultural background; I don't think Mr. Kitt satisfies that need, but that doesn't make you unique in that commission. So thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Legislator Kennedy.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Good afternoon, Mr. Kitt. How are you today?

**MR. KITT:**

Good afternoon.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

I am not on the committee where you were vetted, but I listened to three-quarters of the vetting before someone walked in my door and I had to disburse.

**MR. KITT:**

Okay.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

I did a little bit of research and I will tell you, your resume is great. You've done a tremendous amount of work, the fish ladders are wonderful, not to mention other projects you've done. I just do not feel comfortable, with all the work you've done for the County, voting on you until there was an Ethics opinion. Would it be, for you, a problem to wait a month? I think they have a hearing, you know, they could do a hearing within the month; would that be a problem for you?

**MR. KITT:**

I don't see the -- if there's some sort of conflict, I don't see any conflict on my end. You know, we do work --

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

I just want confirmation of no conflict, because I can't say, I can't rationalize if there's no conflict here. I want a legal opinion as to --

**MR. KITT:**

The contract that we do have has been through a public bid process.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Correct.

**MR. KITT:**

And any project that if there was a developer, I would recuse myself in that situation, if a developer's project came before the commission. So I don't see any conflict.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

I know that there was another instance where someone went before the board and they said there was no conflict, but what I see with you is a little bit different. So I just don't feel comfortable at this point in time. You want to say something, Sarah?

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**

Sure. I just wanted to provide members of the Legislature with the timeline for a previous Ethics opinion request that was made by a member of the Planning Commission who previously served on that body. The advisory opinion was requested, for instance, on June 22nd of 2012; fact-finding was concluded in March of 2013, and then the board deliberated on the opinion at the end of March in 2013. So it was several months before the Ethics Board made a determination.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

That was the old Ethics Board, an old Ethics Board, not this one?

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**

This was 2012.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

2012, all right.

**LEG. TROTТА:**

Totally different.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Yeah, it's not going to be like that now.

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**

Into 2013.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

And that's the summer issue where they do not routinely meet during the summer I think.

**DIRECTOR LANSDALE:**

I can't speak to the frequency of their meetings.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, Legislator Spencer.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Hi, Errol. Thanks for taking the time to be here. Do you consider yourself a developer or an environmentalist?

**MR. KITT:**

Well, neither really. It's -- you know, any project that comes before the commission really needs a thorough, you know, unbiased objective review, a thorough review of the project to really ensure that they meet codes, you know, and the County-wide policies and goals.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

And if you were confronted with a situation where there was significant influences one way or the other, do you feel that you are in a position to, based on your background and experiences, to kind of render an opinion that would be based on the merits, and do you have that reflected in your background? I guess building fish ladders is definitely something that would be considered environmental in nature. But, you know, has your experience been able to bear that out? Do you have instances where you have supported development, or instances where you have not supported development based on environmental concerns?

**MR. KITT:**

The work that -- some of my experience has really been environmental and ecological related projects, anything from, you know, environmental assessments for due diligence on properties through the remediation of contaminated sites across the County, through ecological and water quality surveys. You know, in those situations, it's always been that, you know, we've followed in accordance with rules and regulations on all those projects and moving forward.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

I think one of the concerns that may have been heard as far as our rendering an Ethics opinion, the company that you were associated with, do you have an ownership stake in that company?

**MR. KITT:**

My --

**LEG. SPENCER:**

And if so, what percentage of an ownership stake do you have?

**MR. KITT:**

Ownership is less than 1%; it's like point zero zero eight, to be precise.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Did you say point zero zero eight?

**MR. KITT:**

Yeah, it's point zero eight, so less than 1%.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Okay, all right. So that would be -- so if any of us were to have a few shares of any company in Suffolk County, it would -- could put any of us in the same situation.

**MR. KITT:**

I firmly -- I'm one of approximately 200 shareholders and one of over 50 Vice-Presidents.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Currently do you have any personal contracts with Suffolk County?

**MR. KITT:**

Yes, we have two contracts, each were competitively bid. One I think from 2008 and one I think as recent as 2014; that's the fish ladder project is the 2014, and other work for the County DPW since 2008.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

That's through the company. How about you personally?

**MR. KITT:**

No, not me personally.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

You personally do not.

**MR. KITT:**

Correct.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Okay. Thank you for taking the time. And I'm proud that you are one of my constituents. Just really looking at your background, and anyone that hasn't had a chance to look at your credentials, they're quite impressive and you would really bring, I think, a significant voice to the Planning Commission. It seems that you are an independent thinker and you've worked hard to achieve a level of success and I appreciate the Administration for bringing you forward. And I will be supporting you wholeheartedly. Thank you.

**MR. KITT:**

Thank you very much.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, Legislator Fleming.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Good afternoon, Mr. Kitt. Thank you so much for being here to answer our questions. And I do appreciate your willingness to serve on the important Planning Commission. I do not mean to ask questions to be personal, I really just want to follow the law and feel confident in the vote that I cast, so I hope you understand that.

You did mention that with regard to any company that you have dealings with that might create a conflict, you would recuse yourself from a vote, and I appreciate that.

**MR. KITT:**

That's correct.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Thank you, I appreciate that. The larger question for me, based on advice of our Counsel, has to do with the contracts that you do have currently with the County. And so I just wanted to confirm, those are current contracts that have not been fully terminated yet; is that right?

**MR. KITT:**

Yes, that's correct.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Okay, thanks. So may I just ask Mr. Nolan, just based on the fact of the County connection, is there anything -- I thought that -- what I had understood from you was that based on the fact that a Planning Commission member would have a contract with the County might lead us to need an Ethics decision; am I right about that?

**MR. NOLAN:**

Yeah, there's a provision in our Code, Code of Ethics, and it states that, "*No public servant*" -- and a public servant would encompass an unpaid appointee to a board like the Planning Commission -- "*shall have an ownership interest in a firm of which such public servant knows is engaged in*

*business dealings with the department or agency served by such public servant,"* and that is the -- that's the language in the code. And then there's a definition of ownership interest which talks about having an investment of 5% of what constitutes the firm or \$25,000, whichever is less, and then it goes on from there. So that's -- you know, at the committee meeting when Mr. Kitt mentioned that he works for a business that does business with the County, I suggested to him that he look at the Code and figure out if he needs to go to the Board of Ethics to get an opinion as to how to handle this. So I don't know what he has determined, but that was obviously my advice to him at the committee.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

And would you still be willing to get an opinion from the Ethics Board?

**MR. KITT:**

Whatever is seen fit.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

I appreciate that. I understand you probably don't want to be on the spot for this stuff, you just wanted to make, you know, a contribution to your community and I really appreciate that. But I feel as though we need to dot our i's and cross our t's on this stuff, so I don't mean to put you on the spot. But if you'd be willing to get an opinion, I think that would be very valuable. Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. I was just talking to Counsel and I asked him if you are required to get an opinion, whether prior to the appointment or after the appointment, and I don't know where we are.

**MR. NOLAN:**

I think Mr. Kitt's got to decide that. There's nothing stopping the Legislature from confirming his appointment today. All I'm saying is we have a provision of the Code that restricts business that an appointee to this commission can do with the County. I think -- I don't think it's a bad idea to get an opinion because it gives an appointee some protection. If the Board of Ethics says *Go right ahead, you can have this business with the County and serve on the commission*, I think that's a good thing to have, but it's up to Mr. Kitt.

**MR. KITT:**

Yeah, it's fine. I mean, like I've mentioned, in terms of ownership I have less than 1%, I think that meets some of the criteria there. And any contract I do have has been competitively bid, so I have nothing -- whatever -- you know --

**P.O. GREGORY:**

But my understanding of the code is it's not necessarily the percentage, it's the dollar amount. So yes, you qualify under the 5%, but if it's -- you know, going by the article that was written, that you had over \$200,000 or whatever amount it was, over the \$25,000 which is in the Code that would, according to the Code, require some type of review by the Ethics Commission. That's the way I understand it.

**MR. NOLAN:**

Well, it could meet the definition of ownership interest.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Right, ownership interest.

**MR. NOLAN:**

And if you have an ownership interest -- and the other question is is the contract that Mr. Kitt has, is it with the entity he is serving? He's going to be appointed to the Planning Commission and, you know, I don't know who the contract is with, which department, that's a factor. These are things that he has to, you know, look at and consider, and if it's in a gray area, I would suggest getting an opinion just for yourself, because it protects you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Right. Okay, Legislator Browning, then Legislator Lindsay has a question.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yeah, George, you were saying it's up to Mr. Kitt to make that decision whether he wants to go to the Ethics Commission. But to date, I know it's only a matter of a few days since the last meeting, but you have not reached out to the Ethics Commission; is that correct?

**MR. KITT:**

I --

**LEG. BROWNING:**

I think Mr. Kitt can speak for himself; no?

**MS. SANTERAMO:**

Well, the Administration, at the request of this body, did reach out to the Ethics Commission to address this. We already have a request in.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

But they have not responded.

**MS. SANTERAMO:**

Not to my -- they have not given an opinion, no.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. My personal opinion, I would prefer that we would have an opinion before we take a vote. It's called CYA. I think that that -- that is something -- do you know that means? I would not be comfortable to go ahead with a vote today. I think we need an Ethics opinion before we do anything, and I don't think it's going to hurt to wait one cycle.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Legislator Lindsay.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer. My question would be to Counsel. Would the conflict -- if one does exist, I don't necessarily agree that one does -- but would it cover contracts going forward, or does it preclude anyone who ever did business with the County at any point?

**MR. NOLAN:**

Are we talking about Mr. Kitt?

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Just in general.

**MR. NOLAN:**

It depends, you know. I mean, a County employee, for example, you know, there's a complete bar on a County employee having business with the County. For appointees who are unpaid and serve on our boards and commissions, the restriction is not as wide. So you can't have a contract with the department or agency that you are serving if you have an ownership interest in that firm.

So if Mr. Kitt goes to the Board of Ethics, they might say, you know, it says in the Code, it could say divest of the ownership interest or terminate the business dealings with the County, or disclose to the board such ownership interest and comply with its order. The Board of Ethics could look at it and say, *Yes, he has an ownership interest, but it's such a nature that we think you can continue to perform the contract.* I don't know what the Board of Ethics is going to say, but I would leave it in their hands.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

I understand that point. But if -- let's say the contract was concluded, would that change the issue?

**MR. NOLAN:**

Of course.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

So how much longer is left on the contract that you have now with the County?

**MR. KITT:**

Well, there's one probably this year, it will conclude, and another, the other one may be a few years; it's a continuing contract.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Okay. I still look at it and say -- I guess from the performance perspective they could say we're -- because obviously the contract was awarded before he was even mentioned for this position, and there wouldn't be a conflict there.

**MR. NOLAN:**

They might say, look, he's performed 80% of it, he can complete the performance of the contract, that's a fair and equitable conclusion, and maybe they'll say you cannot do such business with that particular department in the future or not. I don't know what the Board is likely to say. But again, I think it's always good for employees and our officials to play it safe and get an opinion and it protects them.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

I don't necessarily disagree there. I just don't think we should hold up making appointments waiting for the Ethics Commission to give us an opinion on it or not, that it's our position to make those appointments.

**MR. NOLAN:**

Yeah, and I'm not advocating that, Bill.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Okay.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, Legislator Cilmi.

**LEG. CILMI:**

To Legislator Lindsay's point, the Ethic's law puts the onus on the applicant at this point, not on the Legislature to determine whether or not there's potentially an ethics issue; correct, George?

**MR. NOLAN:**

I think that's largely correct. I mean, if the Legislature or Legislator felt very strongly that there was an actual conflict of interest --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right.

**MR. NOLAN:**

-- then I could see where you would say *I'm not going to support that* knowing having that information. In this particular case, and I said this in committee, I don't know the particulars of Mr. Kitt's business or the contract or anything like, so it's hard to say what the situation is.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So if we then take this to the next step, let's say that Mr. Kitt is confirmed today, the Administration has indicated that they've already submitted a request to the Ethics Commission for an opinion on this. If at some point the Ethics Commission renders a decision that is in any way restrictive of Mr. Kitt's current activities, what happens?

**MR. NOLAN:**

I'm not sure.

**LEG. CILMI:**

In other words, if the Ethics Commission says, *Yeah, you know what? Given the fact that there's this contract with the County currently, you know, Mr. Kitt either must divest himself from, you know, an ownership interest in this company or resign from the committee until such -- from the commission until such time as his business no longer has business with the County.* It seems to me, you know, if they were going to render an opinion that is in any way restrictive the way I just described it, then Mr. Kitt would have to make one of those decisions, right?

**MR. NOLAN:**

I agree, yes.

**LEG. CILMI:**

And so, I mean, that process is already in the works. So if the Legislature today supports this resolution and Mr. Kitt is appointed, then at some point in time the Ethics Commission is going to do one of two things; they're going to say, *You're good to go, no problem. Just be careful about future projects, blah blah blah, they might say that, or they'll say, This is an issue and here's how you, Mr. Kitt, have to remedy this issue.* And as long as you are committed to doing that, to abiding by the opinion of the Ethics Commission, then I think from the Legislature's point I think we're fine.

**MR. NOLAN:**

And I said that at committee, I thought the committee could discharge the nomination from committee and I think the Legislature can act on it and he can go get his Ethics opinion.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right. Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Legislator Barraga.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

I think Mr. Cilmi and I are on the same track. I'm a bit concerned about the length of time for a ruling by the Ethics Commission; it could take a month, it could take several months. I'm sort of in favor of going ahead, let's vote on your particular appointment. The Ethics Committee, we request them to make an opinion, and as Mr. Cilmi points out, you're either free and clear or there will be certain restrictions, and it's up to you either to abide by the restrictions if they come or resign, you're out. Would you agree to that?

**MR. KITT:**

Yes.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Okay.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Legislator Krupski.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

I'll ask the Presiding Officer. Mr. Presiding Officer, Legislator Fleming has a question first.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Legislator Fleming.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Sorry, I just wanted to ask a follow-up question to that discussion. So what -- if that is to happen, then what is the status of the actions that are undertaken by the Commission during the time the person who's sitting on the board has not yet got the opinion that says he has to take certain steps to remediate the conflict?

**MR. NOLAN:**

If we appoint him to the Commission, he's a member of the Commission and he can vote and the actions of the commission are the acts of the commission and I don't think there's a problem there.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Well, I guess that's where my concern is. If there is a conflict that we don't know because we haven't asked the Ethics Board about it and then actions are undertaken by the Planning Commission, I'm concerned about, as somebody who voted for that member, you know, the public perception as well as, you know, the integrity of my vote. I don't understand why we don't just wait until we get the opinion, I think we can ask for an expedited opinion, and then render our decision. That's just what I would feel more comfortable with.

**MR. NOLAN:**

That's fine. I certainly understand the Legislator taking that position, but myself, I think the Legislature can proceed with the understanding that Mr. Kitt is going to get an Ethics opinion. I think that's the most important thing, that the nominee make that commitment to go get an opinion from Ethics and then abide by whatever they say.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Legislator Krupski.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

So I have a question for the Administration. So a request was made to the Board of Ethics about what Mr. Kitt can act on, or what was the nature of the request and when was the request made?

**MS. SANTERAMO:**

We made the request within the past couple of days. After EPA Committee, we went and forwarded the request asking if, due to his two contracts, if there was a conflict.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

What was the nature of the request?

**MS. SANTERAMO:**

I'm sorry; what do you mean nature?

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Well, it was written in words.

**MS. SANTERAMO:**

Correct.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Well, what did the words say?

**MS. SANTERAMO:**

I do not have it in front of me. I could try to get it.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

I mean, was it just about those two contracts?

**MS. SANTERAMO:**

Yes.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Or was it a more general overview of what he could and could not opine on or act on as a commission member because of his -- I don't know, his business or in the future?

**MS. SANTERAMO:**

It was on the nature of the two contracts, if they were a conflict, if they presented a conflict.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

But what about the nature of any other future business that he might -- his company might have with the County?

**MS. SANTERAMO:**

I would have to double check it. I don't know if it was worded that way, I have to double check.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Legislator Kennedy.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Legislator Fleming asked my question, so I'm fine.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Legislator Spencer. Doc?

**LEG. SPENCER:**

George, thank you very much for advising us on this matter. I guess my question would be to the Administration. Dennis, would you mind coming up? So Dennis, you are in agreement with kind of this interpretation?

**MR. BROWN:**

Yes.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

So, you know, the Administration put forth Mr. Kitt. What, in your opinion, makes him valid to serve without this Ethics as far as what you understand about the situation and the statute?

**MR. BROWN:**

You know, just in terms of the proceedings generally. You know, I agree, you know, virtually with almost everything that George had said. There's nothing to stop the body from acting. As far as the candidate is concerned, it's the candidate that has to ask for an opinion, and there's nothing to compel a candidate to ask for an opinion, that's entirely up to him. Anybody could ask for an opinion about a particular conflict; in this case, the Administration did ask for an opinion. You know, the board, you know, would render an opinion and, like George said, it could issue an opinion saying divest yourself of the business interest, the relationship with the County, you know, the County position, or, you know, abide by the order the board. Because the board, it can, you know, set forth parameters in its opinion as to how to act and how not to act.

And again, I also agree with George, the business relationship is between the applicant or between the public servants serving the agency and the agency itself, so not just the County generally.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

So in this situation, as far as the Administration putting forward this nomination, you would be aware. And based on your opinion from what you understand of the statute, you don't know how the Ethics Board would rule, obviously, but just from the way that you interpret from what you see, it must have given you enough comfort to be able to say he's capable of serving and there's no obvious conflicts that would shed an undue negative light on the Planning Board, that he would be a positive addition? Because obviously putting him forward, this is something that you're doing electively, so you must have -- is that the decision? Were you aware of these issues? And as you looked at everything, you had enough of a comfort level to say, *He's good*.

**MR. BROWN:**

Actually, I would have to disagree with you on that one point, because we don't really look at issues of substance with respect to conflicts because that is the role of the Ethics Board. But we do look at it from a procedural point of view and we apply the same analysis that Legislative Counsel has applied here today. And that so long as on its face there doesn't appear to be a conflict between the applicant and who has, you know, some business dealings with the County and the agency with which the County -- with which the applicant is serving; so long as that is absent, then I'm comfortable with the Legislature acting today.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Legislator D'Amaro.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Thank you. Dennis, as long as you're up there.

**MR. BROWN:**

Yeah.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So you're looking at 77-2A?

**MR. BROWN:**

I thought it might be 77-3, I don't have all the sections off the top of my head, but Chapter 77, correct.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

*77-2A says, "No public servant shall have an ownership interest in a firm which such public servant knows is engaged in business dealings with the department or agencies served by the public servant."*

**MR. BROWN:**

Correct.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So -- and I think I just heard you say that -- and I agree with Legislator Spencer, that although there's an Ethics Commission that would thoroughly vet that --

**MR. BROWN:**

Correct.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

-- we certainly should be considering that when we're looking at a candidate to cast a vote.

**MR. BROWN:**

Correct.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So your opinion is at this point that that is not, at least on its face, violated.

**MR. BROWN:**

I don't see it on its face violated, that's correct.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So Mr. Kitt, if I could speak to you just for a moment? Thank you.

So I have to apologize, I haven't spoken with you before, so I just want to go through this very quickly. What's the name of the firm that has these contracts with the County?

**MR. KITT:**

GEI Consulting Engineers.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

GEI? And they have two contracts presently?

**MR. KITT:**

Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Okay. And when were those contracts first entered into?

**MR. KITT:**

One of the contracts I think was approximately 2008, and it was through another firm, EEA, that my company acquired; we're still working on that contract, and the other was around 2014.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Okay. So there are two -- there's one company that has two contracts with Suffolk County, correct?

**MR. KITT:**

Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

All right. And what's your connection to that company?

**MR. KITT:**

I am basically Vice-President in that company and the Branch Manager for the Long Island office in Huntington Station.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So you're Vice-President and Branch Manager for the Huntington Station branch?

**MR. KITT:**

That's correct.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

All right. And you also have an ownership interest, though, in the company, I believe?

**MR. KITT:**

It's less than 1%, a shareholder. So less than 1%.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

It's a shareholder.

**MR. KITT:**

Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

You own less than 1% of the company.

**MR. KITT:**

Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So there is some kind of test that we have; 5% of the company, which you don't meet, or 25,000. Do you know the value of that 1% or less than 1%?

**MR. KITT:**

It's over 200,000.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Over 200, so you would meet that threshold.

**MR. KITT:**

Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Yeah, okay. So it's fair to say that as a public service, you would have an ownership interest in a firm, okay, that is engaged with -- that has business dealings. But then the next part of the test is it has to be -- it has to have business dealings with the department or agency served. So you're serving or would be serving here the Planning Commission, correct?

**MR. KITT:**

Correct.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right. So does this company, of which you own less than 1% and you're Vice-President of, have any business dealings whatsoever with the Planning Commission?

**MR. KITT**

The Department of Public Works we have a contract with.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

That's not my question. Does the company that we're talking about -- what's the name of it, GCI? What did you say?

**MR. KITT:**

GEI.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

GEI. Does GEI have any business dealings with the Suffolk County Planning Commission?

**MR. KITT:**

I think -- no, it's not with Planning. Not with Planning, I just wanted to double check.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

I'm not talking about Planning, I'm talking about the Planning Commission, the board that we're talking about appointing you to.

**MR. KITT:**

I'm sorry.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

That's okay. Take your time, that's all right.

**MR. KITT:**

No, not at all.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

You startled me a little bit.

**MR. KITT:**

Yeah, I know (*laughter*).

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So that's the whole point of a test. So, you know, if you sat here -- if you stood here and said to me, *Yeah, you know, I own part of this company and this company has a contract, or it has business dealings directly with the Planning Commission*, then obviously you'd be conflicted out in the first instance.

**MR. KITT:**

Right.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Okay? But has the company that you're with -- now, you've said they have no business dealings, and that's the terminology used in our Ethics Code, no business dealings with the Planning Commission. Has it ever had business dealings with the Planning Commission?

**MR. KITT:**

No.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

No. Let me ask you this question. You're sitting on the Planning Commission, okay, and GEI?

**MR. KITT:**

GEI.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

GEI, for some reason, has an interest in an application that comes before that commission. What would you do?

**MR. KITT:**

I'd recuse myself.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Okay, that's it. Thank you. That's all I needed to know.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Anyone else? Okay, so we have a motion to approve and to table, right?

**MS. ELLIS:**

Yes, we have a motion and a second for tabling and approve.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, the tabling motion goes first. Roll call.

**(\*Roll Called by Ms. Ellis - Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature\*)**

**LEG. HAHN:**

Yes.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Yes.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

No.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

No.

**LEG. STERN:**

No to table.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

No.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Yes.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

No.

**LEG. CILMI:**

No.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

No.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

No.

**LEG. ANKER:**

No.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

No.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yes.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Yes.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

No to table.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

No.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

No.

**MS. ELLIS:**

Five.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, motion to approve. Roll call.

*(\*Roll Called by Ms. Ellis - Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature\*)*

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Yes.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

Yes.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Yes.

**LEG. STERN:**

Yes.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Pass.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Pass.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Yes.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Yes.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Yes.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Yes.

**LEG. ANKER:**

Yes.

**LEG. HAHN:**

No.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

No.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

No.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Yes.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Yes.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Yes.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

No.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

No.

**MS. ELLIS:**

*Thirteen (Opposed: Legislators Hahn, Browning, Fleming, Trotta & Kennedy).*

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Congratulations.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right, Congratulations. Welcome to Suffolk County.

*(\*Laughter\*)*

**MR. KITT:**

All right, boy. Thank you very much. I look forward to working on the commission.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

There's a gun at the door, you can shoot yourself in the head for that decision.

*(\*Laughter\*)*

All right, where were we? Okay, we're up to ***IR 1013-16 - To appoint member of the Suffolk County Planning Commission (Nicholas Gould Morehead) (County Executive).***

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Motion.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion by Legislator Muratore. I'll second. All in favor? Is Mr. Morehead here? Anybody have any questions about Mr. Morehead?

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

*(Inaudible)*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

**Health**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, ***IR 1001-16 - Declaring April as "Sarcoidosis Awareness Month" in Suffolk County (Hahn).*** Motion by Legislator Hahn.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Yes.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Second.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Second by Legislator Spencer. On the motion?

**LEG. SPENCER:**

On the motion.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

On the motion, Legislator Spencer.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

I was able to address this in committee. But Legislator Hahn, I want to thank you. I really appreciate this. And, you know, I just shared a very personal story. My mother died of Sarcoidosis and it's definitely one of the reasons I became a physician. Early on she was given -- because the disease basically is an autoimmune condition that creates what we call caseating granulomas, which are kind of lumps and organs and it obstructs flow to those organs, it attacks the eyes, the liver, the lungs, and it effects African-American women I think 3-1. And it was something that as a 10-year old child I was told that my mother was not going to live, and fortunately I had her till I was 35-years old, but it's a non-relenting disease. You know, it was something that -- I lost my mother ten years ago, but it was something that brought back just a lot of emotion. I did research in Sarcoidosis when I was in high school and eventually got into medical school, and she was the driving force because I was looking for a cure to help my mother. So you doing this is very, very, very special and I appreciate it. It's something that we know a lot more than we used to know about this particular condition. But thank you, and I'd be honored if I could be a cosponsor.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Oh, I would like that very much. Had I known, I would have reached out to you for that. Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Anyone else? Okay, we have a motion and a second. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

### **Parks & Recreation**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, ***IR 1004-16 - Authorizing the acceptance of a donation from the Central Pine Barrens Commission (Browning)***. Motion by Legislator Browning. I'll second. Can I ask what the donation is?

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

A southern Pine Beetle.

**(\*Laughter\*)**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

It's a trailer? Okay. All right. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

***IR 1021-16 - Reappointing Thomas D. Glascock as a member of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Commission (Trustee No. 9) (Presiding Officer Gregory).***

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Motion.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Second.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion by Legislator Spencer. Second by Legislator D'Amaro. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

**Public Safety**

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, ***IR 1014-16 - Confirming appointment of Timothy D. Sini, County Commissioner of Suffolk County Department of Police (County Executive).***

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Let the fun begin.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right, get the popcorn.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Mr. Presiding Officer, should we bypass this? I know there's a couple of -- I know Ed Heilig's here from the DA's Office waiting for something to be approved. And is Mr. Sini here? Because I'm thinking that maybe we should try and get some other things over with, finished up before we go there.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

What is it that -- which bill is it?

**LEG. BROWNING:**

It's a CN for the ADA.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. All right, we'll do that real quick. Is that the -- oh, the ADA bill.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Motion to take it out of order.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Well, we'll have Mr. Sini come up and sit at the table.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

It's just that Mr. Heilig is making himself available in case you have any questions.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right, I'm going to -- excuse me, we're going to go to ***IR 1103-16 - Approving the appointment of*** -- no, you can sit, you can sit. It's going to be a minute, a second -- ***James Petrich as an Assistant District Attorney (County Executive)***. I'll make a motion to take it out of order. Second by Legislator Browning. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Eighteen.*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Legislator Browning makes the motion to approve IR 1103. I'll second. Anyone have any questions? This is one of the nepotism bills that we have; there's one of two in the packet. The question is, Mr. Heilig, why is it a CN?

**MR. HEILIG:**

Mr. Petrich was hired in August. It was by mistake, I had failed to realize that the bill or the County law extended to the nephew relationship. As soon as I realized that, I asked to have it put before the Legislature as soon as possible.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Got you.

**MR. HEILIG:**

So I apologize.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. All right. So motion, a second. All in favor?

**LEG. TROTTA:**

On the motion?

**P.O. GREGORY:**

On the motion, Legislator Trotta.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

There's a lot of mistakes in the DA's Office lately. Can you explain exactly how this happened?

**MR. HEILIG:**

Yes. Mr. Petrich was hired during our normal process of interviewing. At the time that he was hired, he filled out the nepotism affidavit that's required, it was forwarded to me. At the time that I received it, I did not realize that the Statute extended to the nephew relationship, he is the nephew of a sitting District Court Judge. As soon as I realized that it extended to the nephew relationship when I was reviewing other paperwork late in the year, I immediately moved to put it before the Legislature to get the approval.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

So he's the nephew of a District Court Judge?

**MR. HEILIG:**

Correct.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Normally this would never come in front of us, right?

**MR. HEILIG:**

Yes, it would.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

No, only if it's a nepotism law. Other hires don't --

**MR. HEILIG:**

It would have to come before you to get approval because he's the nephew of a sitting District Court Judge.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

And no other -- in the course of hiring someone normally it doesn't come before us. It's only if it's a nepotism law.

**MR. HEILIG:**

Correct.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Okay.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. All right, anyone else? All right, we have a motion, a second. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

*Seventeen (Opposed: Legislator Trotta).*

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right.

**MR. HEILIG:**

Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right. Thank you, Ed.

All right, back to IR 1014. We have a motion and a second, right?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

Yes.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right, Legislator Calarco makes the motion. I'll second the motion to approve. All right. Anyone have any questions? Legislator Browning.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay, I'll start. Actually, I can say, we had our Public Safety Committee meeting. Mr. Sini did, I have to say, a very -- it was very impressive. He certainly gave me reason to reconsider my position with him. I have to say, though, there was a couple of things that occurred during our Public Safety Committee meeting; not with Mr. Sini. We received some letters; one from Supervisor Romaine and one from Sheriff DeMarco, which I thought was good to get their opinion and how they feel. But I did have an issue with the County Executive's Office handing letters from non-profit organizations who have contracts with us, and I really think that's a serious conflict and I didn't appreciate it. And it makes me wonder, were these organizations coerced into writing letters? And if, in fact, that's true, I think that should be looked into. Very inappropriate.

Now, as far as Mr. Sini is concerned, I can tell you having worked with him on CJCC, he's very professional, he's a hard worker, a man of integrity, strong morals and a very ethical person. We did meet. I know that we talked about getting together before today and some issues that I had concerns about and some questions that I had. Again, he never flinches to answer. He is prepared, he's ready and he's always got the right answer, and I certainly appreciate that that.

However, there is that process that I strongly believe in and I know that this County Executive is not going to do that. We have had four years. The last four years have been pretty much a disaster, and it's thanks to our County Executive and to no one else. He is solely responsible for what has happened in our Police Department for the past four years. And I'm hoping -- and I'm not going to put a bad light on you, Tim, because I really do believe that you will turn things around, that you will work with our Police Department to make sure that the bad name that they have had for the past few years, you're going to turn that around and I'm very confident with that. So I have to say, I was very impressed.

You will be under a microscope, you know that, but I know that you're prepared to do that. And I'm willing to accept that you have been the decision and the choice of the County Executive to lead the Suffolk County Police Department. So I am willing to forgo my choice to have a nationwide search, because I have a lot of confidence in you. I certainly do not in our County Executive, I don't think I ever will. Because it's not just in this decision, he has not just failed going through process here when it comes to the Suffolk County Police Department, but in other avenues.

So, Tim, you have some challenges. I am going to be very happy to work with you, as I have been when you were over at the CJCC. So let's work together. Let's change the image of the Suffolk County Police Department, because it's so important. Because it only took one or two individuals to make us look bad and to make the Police Department look bad, and I know that the Police Officers on the street, who work really hard every day, do not appreciate that image. And so with your leadership and the team that you've chosen in the Suffolk County Police Department, I know that will change. So with that, I am going to give you my support.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

I appreciate that. And I just want to reiterate that we're very excited to move this department forward. We look forward to working with you and all the other members of the Legislature.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Legislator Barraga.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer. I know there are some of you in the room who think that I've been in elected office since birth.

*(\*Laughter\*)*

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Before that.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Before that. That's not quite the case, although you're close. In the 13 years I've worked in the private sector before being elected to public office, I was employed by a large multi-national corporation. As I progressed in management, I assumed the responsibility of interviewing and hiring new employees to fill current vacancies in order to meet expansion requirements in my division. I took this responsibility very seriously. I interviewed discrete, potential employees keeping in mind three important objectives at the time. Number one, I looked for a person who not only could fill the initial opening, but would have the ability in the years ahead to advance at least two managerial positions. I looked for someone who was motivated and willing to continually learn and fully recognize and embrace the goals of the corporation. And three, and most importantly, as it applies to both the public and private sectors, I realized that the person I hired by his or her future performance would reflect positively or negatively on my effectiveness as the leader with my supervisors and their evaluations of me.

A resume can be a very important tool for someone who's doing interviewing and screening and vetting. I noted with Mr. Sini that an entire page was devoted to his time in the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Southern District in terms of the different investigations and prosecutions that he was involved in. And if you read it, it's quite impressive, and it should be because it's Mr. Sini's resume. He's putting his best foot forward.

One thing I learned a long time ago, in order to get proper input and proper evaluation of a candidate, you should reach out to former employees, because former employers will tell you the truth. The employee is gone, they'll pretty much tell you exactly what they thought of him, his pluses, his minuses in terms of overall performance. So Mr. Sini had down here that he spent four-and-a-half years in the U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District, so I picked up the phone and I called that office. The first person I spoke to, I indicated who I was and the intent of my phone call and they listened very attentively, because there are not too many elected officials calling the U.S. Attorney's Office nowadays.

**MR. LIPP:**

It's the other way around (*laughter*).

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

The individual said to me, "*I understand the situation, let me see if I can get the name of an individual you can speak to.*" And within like three or four hours, Mr. Ed Tyrrell phoned me back, he is the Administrative Officer in the U.S. Attorney's Office. And I explained the situation, that the Legislature was going to make a decision on Mr. Sini for Police Commissioner of Suffolk County, that I specifically wanted to speak to someone who was his direct superior when he was at the office, someone who could give me an honest evaluation of his capabilities. Mr. Tyrrell said, "*Look, I understand where you're coming from, Legislator. Let me think about it and I'll call you back;* I wasn't even sure I was going to get a phone call back. The next day he phoned me back, he said, "*Yes. I am going*" -- meaning. Mr. Tyrrell -- "*I am going to reach out to his immediate superior, a Mr. Todd Blanche, and find out whether or not Mr. Blanche is willing to speak with you concerning his performance.*" I said "*Fine*".

Well, I never heard back from Mr. Tyrrell because within 20 minutes I heard from Mr. Blanche. Now, Mr. Blanche, besides being Mr. Sini's superior for two-and-a-half to three years, Mr. Blanche was also the head of the Violent Crime Unit and Chief of the White Plains Division of the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Southern District; he's now retired. Mr. Sini worked for him for approximately three years, and Mr. Blanche is currently in private practice. I asked him straight-out, "*What can you tell*

*me about Mr. Sini's performance while he was under you?" Mr. Blanche indicated that in his judgment, Tom Sini, and I quote, this is -- you know, I didn't know what to expect. "Tim Sini", and I quote, "was a fantastic prosecutor, a person of the highest integrity. He will always do the right thing. The cases he handled were some of the toughest in our department; in one instance, a multi-jurisdictional prosecution, and he was chosen by his peers as the best qualified to prosecute the defendants in question. Tim Sini" -- and this is very important, it was an interesting comment from Mr. Blanche. "Tim Sini knows what he knows and what he doesn't know"; that indicates to me I'm dealing with a person who's willing to learn and grow on the job. His call continues; "If you're looking for someone who is of the highest integrity, intelligence and capability, Tom -- Tim Sini will be a credit to the Suffolk County Police Department and the people of Suffolk County."*

Now, after we finished the conversation and unbeknownst to me, Mr. Blanche took it upon himself to write this letter of support, which is in your packet. I'll just read two paragraphs and I'll finish.

*"In 2011, I" -- in this case Mr. Blanche -- "was appointed as Supervisor in the Violent Crime Unit, and in 2013 I became Co-Chief of the office's White Plains Division. In this capacity, I supervised Tim directly and interacted with him every day. Tim was one of my top prosecutors, and as a result I asked him to take on some of the most difficult and complicated prosecutions. He took on each of these enthusiastically and approached them thoughtfully, diligently and creatively. Most importantly, Tim always performed his work with the highest level of integrity and with a deep commitment to his ethical obligations. Never once, never once did I have any concern about Tim's performance or his ethics. Never once did I hear anyone, a colleague, judge, defense lawyer, law enforcement agent question Tim's integrity or ethics; to the contrary, I only heard the most favorable comments about Tim. In short, Tim was an exceptional prosecutor and a great credit to the United States Attorney's Office. Thanks to his work, dangerous people are off the streets and the people of New York City are safer as a result. I am confident that Tim will be an exceptional Police Commissioner and that he will bring the same work ethic, intelligence and integrity to Suffolk County as he consistently and without fail brought to the U.S. Attorney's Office. If I could be of any further assistance or if any of your members have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Signed Todd Blanche."*

In conclusion, I feel as a member of this Legislature, in Tim Sini we have the right person at the right time to be Commissioner of the Suffolk County Police Department, and I will be proud to cast my vote in the affirmative.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right. Legislator Krupski.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Thank you. When this came up that we were looking for a new Police Commissioner, I did have an opportunity to meet with the County Executive and I asked him, you know, why wouldn't we conduct, I don't know a nationwide search, but cast a wide net and look for a candidate, which normally would be done. And he disagreed with that, he said he had a good candidate who would be able to serve the County very well.

So I don't know Mr. Sini, so we did have a meeting and I asked him a lot of -- as a former Police Commissioner, I asked him a lot of questions about staffing, cars, overtime, equipment, kind of the normal police concerns that you would have, and he seemed to have a pretty firm grasp of how a department runs. And then, you know, my concern for my district, of course, we have the East End Police Departments that are separate and independent from Suffolk County Police Department, and I asked him how he would be acting and reacting to those departments, because it's very important because there are some shared services, you know, different things with drug and gang task forces. There's arson, homicide, there's dogs, marine unit, there's a lot of crossover there; they're

independent departments but there is shared services.

Certainly communication, with the 800 Megahertz, has been a big topic on the East End and, you know, he showed a real willingness to work with the East End departments. We've already met with one of the departments, we have a meeting set up to meet with the Southold Chief. And, you know, that kind of willingness impressed me, to recognize that the Police Commissioner of Suffolk County is an important job and it's going to certainly be fairly complicated, because there's a lot of moving parts there. But also, you know, his acknowledgement that the other smaller departments are all part of the larger law enforcement picture in Suffolk County, that some issues have to be addressed locally and some issues are best addressed regionally, and I really appreciated that.

So I also -- I have to give Legislator Browning a compliment. I did attend the Public Safety Committee meeting last week. It went on and on and on, I'm glad I'm not a member of that committee.

*(\*Laughter\*)*

**LEG. BROWNING:**

They're not always like that.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Mr. Sini did a very good job. All the Legislators who were here, you know, did a great job of asking him relevant questions and I think he did a great job of answering him. So I think a lot of my reservations certainly are gone because this seems to be someone who is really -- and one of the questions I did ask him in private was, you know, why do you want this job, and he had a very good answer and I'm happy to see somebody young who really wants to work hard for everyone in the County.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

I appreciate that, and just to echo some of your sentiments. In order to fight crime on Long Island in a way that doesn't break our budgets, we need to collaborate with all of our law enforcement partners in the region and that includes the East End Police Departments, that includes our Federal law enforcement partners, and it includes Nassau County PD. We're going to be rolling out some very exciting initiatives that involve everyone's input and we're going to be able to leverage people's strengths, including tangible assets from the Federal government, so I'm very excited about the collaboration that we're going to have on this Island.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Legislator Cilmi.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I really just wanted to reiterate what I think I made pretty clear during our committee meeting, that while I will not be supporting Tim's -- Tim Sini's appointment today, it has a lot less to do with Tim himself, much more to do with the process or the seeming lack thereof in searching for a qualified candidate to fill this incredibly important position at an incredibly important time in Suffolk's history, particularly when it comes to public safety.

I listened to Legislator Browning a few minutes ago express her concern with respect to some of the folks that came to today's meeting to support Mr. Sini and I can't help but share Legislator Browning's concerns in that respect.

I think when you look at where we are now as a County, when you look at all that's gone on in the past few years and all that's come to light in a very short period of time, it's pretty clear that there's a lot we know now that we didn't know four years ago, most of us didn't know four years ago, and there's a lot we still don't know. And to have an appointee come before this Legislature who is clearly very articulate, clearly very bright, clearly very motivated and interested in serving Suffolk County. But to have the County Executive present that candidate to us, knowing what we know, having had that County Executive appoint and embrace the Chief of this department right out of the gate four years ago, to completely have abandoned any set of search criteria whatsoever -- and I'm not saying we should have had a nationwide search. Folks talked about, *Well, you know, I'd rather have somebody from Long Island, you know, or from Suffolk County*; I don't disagree with that. But the lack of any search and the lack of any criteria, when that was such a big deal, such a big part of the selection process for our previous Commissioner, in light of what we now know and what we still don't know to me is very troubling.

So while I certainly wish Tim the best of luck, he's certainly been very respectful and responsive to me in the time that he's been Deputy Commissioner here and I hope and expect that to continue and I very much look forward to working with him. Because of that lack of process, I unfortunately cannot support his appointment today.

Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Legislator Hahn.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Thank you. I am going to just repeat a few things that I said at committee, I hope you don't mind. Again, I, as well as many individuals here today, I believe are very impressed with you, with your character references, which I do believe are very important given what we've just been through, especially they're outlining, you know, your integrity, how you're open and honest, incredibly hard-working, reform-minded, energetic, motivated, etcetera. I appreciate the need for some cultural change in the department. We need to get towards -- we discussed this at committee -- a system based on merit, not nepotism. And I really look forward to working with you on the reforms that we outlined in the last week or so, and on more to come.

The other items that came up as being just incredibly important to not only the committee, Public Safety Committee, but my district, the drug addiction problem. I appreciate when you outlined your top issues, that being one of the top three. I think it's in -- we have to put all of our strength behind that and I'm so glad to have your mind on that issue.

I think it's very important that you are willing to tell us what you think. When you come here to our committee, to Public Safety Committee, and you're put in that seat, that when we ask you what you need, you tell us what you need and not what you think the County Executive wants you to tell us. We've had problems with Commissioners in the past, and not necessarily just in the Police Department, but the unwillingness to attend the meetings and then to give us to the truth about what is needed in the department when. And we all know that the personnel level is at a 20 plus year low. Clearly we need -- you know, we're facing problems with retirements, a huge number that are going to be eligible. Kate Browning, our Chair of the Public Safety Committee, has talked about this months on end. We really need leadership and strength to put us in a position where we are not facing really terrible circumstances when that call comes to a head.

Also, you know, women on the force and other minorities I know we've talked about at the committee. I look forward to working with you and hearing your plans on how to recruit and retain and promote, you know, a diverse group of individuals. Women particularly need to feel welcome, respected and treated fairly in what amounts to, seemingly at least, an all-boys club over there. So,

you know, I look forward to working with you on that.

And then I'm going to put in one last plea, to please, please be the one to solve and solve quickly the 911 operator ongoing crisis. So, you know, discuss.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

As we've discussed, the 911 center is the brains of the Police Department, everything comes through there. It's the most critical aspect of our operations. Watching the dispatchers and the emergency call operators do what they do is incredibly humbling, watching them keep their poise and professionalism. We have to do a very detailed staffing assessment and we're doing that, and I'll be making recommendations to the County Executive.

I also look forward to discussing with you and Legislator Lindsay and everyone else, Legislator Browning, about other ways where we can improve working conditions in the call center and morale. Since it's such an important place in the Police Department, we have to make sure that the employees are treated fairly and they don't feel neglected because they're unsworn members of the department, particularly when they're so critical.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Yeah, and I just don't think it's sustainable, nor -- I'm going to go so far as to say it's dangerous to function on a day-to-day basis where day-to-day staffing relies on mandated overtime. It's just -- it's not sustainable, it's gone on for far too long and it affects -- can affect job performance, but of course morale and the ability to attract and retain qualified individuals. So it's a crisis, it's been a crisis. We've struggled with it and we really need your full attention on it. It's just so critical to all that the department does, so we look -- really just implore you to help solve that quickly.

Thank you, and I very much look forward to working with you on all the other issues we talked about.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Likewise. Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Legislator D'Amaro.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer. Mr. Sini, welcome.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Thank you.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Nice to see you today. I was not present at the Public Safety Committee hearing; however, I did take the opportunity to review the transcript and a synopsis of that transcript and it was impressive. And I think credit to the Legislators that were there as well, they did a fine job of asking many of the right questions that concerned me, so I'm going to be pretty brief today.

I haven't really had an opportunity to have a discussion with you, other than a meeting with you for a couple of minutes at an event, but I wanted to go into three areas with you very quickly. It's such an important job here in Suffolk County, what you're proposing to take on, at a time where it's extremely difficult in dealing with some of the circumstances and the cloud that's surrounding the Police Department. And that's not to disparage the members of the police force, but unfortunately a few can tarnish the reputation of many and so we need to change that, and I'm sure everyone would

agree with that. But looking at your opening remarks and focusing on firearms, drug offenses, more transparency and accountability, these are all good things to be focused on.

I know Legislator Cilmi had brought up the heroin epidemic and I know that's of concern to you as well and that's another area of focus. However, what I wanted to talk to you about first was just the management of a large Police Department. In your testimony to the committee, you said that *I'm under no illusions that I have a wide variety -- "I'm under no illusions that I have a wide array of managerial experience, especially with a department that is the size of the SCPD,"* meaning, and I think it's candid of you to say, you know, *I don't have this type of experience, you know, 20, 30 years in, 15 years in of managing a large Police Department,* so I appreciate that candor. But when you're coming into any department in the County with a large workforce, there's something there called the status quo, and that's what you're going to be coming up against. What I'd like to know from you is given the fact that you feel that you don't have maybe quite the level of experience that would be helpful to you in taking on the management of this department, what are you going to do when come against the status quo? How are you going to make these changes?

**(\*The following was taken and transcribed by  
Lucia Braaten - Court Stenographer\*)**

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Well, I think, you know, the notion that I haven't been embedded in this particular department is a strength in that sense, because I do bring a fresh perspective to all the systems that I'm evaluating on a daily basis. Part of what I've done is put a leadership team in place, and very quickly, who I believe shares my values in terms of moving the Department forward, or identifying areas where we can make improvements, increase efficiencies and thinking out of the box. We're going to be bringing, and we have brought, individuals from other departments, both law enforcement agencies, as well as County departments, to take a look at some of our systems. Frankly, that's something that's never -- from my understanding, historically has not been done with an agency like the Police Department.

The Police Department, like most law enforcement agencies throughout the country, tend to be a bit guarded, and there's good reason for that. But one of the things we're going to be doing is increasing transparency about our system so that we can improve them. So I put the right leadership team in place to do that. I've had them assess all the commands in a very detailed fashion, and I've brought outsiders in for their perspectives, whether it's the Commissioner from Nassau County P.D., whether it's our Federal Law Enforcement Partners, whether it's individuals from the County Executive's Performance Management Team, whether it's Budget. You know, I've been giving people access to information, which they -- which they're lawfully entitled to, that they've never seen before. So we really are starting to have a debate in the Department about ways we can improve things that I think is very refreshing to a lot of individuals.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So, you're -- what you're saying, I believe, is that to the extent that you maybe need some assistance, you have the right team in place, you feel, to give you the type of assistance that you need to manage the Department, at least at the beginning, as you -- as you take on the task of learning how the Police Force works. I mean, I know you've been there for a little while now, and I'm not trying to say that you can't do it, but the concern that I have is that this is a very large department in Suffolk County and it's a very special department in Suffolk County. It's a department that, you know, deals with public safety, obviously. It's our front lines. It's come under a lot of criticism lately. It needs someone in there that not only can manage, but it needs someone who is willing to say no, who is willing to say to the status quo it is not going to be like that anymore, and maybe even take some risk in doing that. And we need a candidate, we need a Commissioner that is willing to do that, because, frankly, the public is fed up, fed up with the notion

that it's just a big club, it's a big club that takes care of itself, okay? Now I'm not saying whether that's true or not, but that is certainly the perception out there.

So that would lead me to my second question to you is, as the public loses faith in its Police Department, what do you propose to do to turn that around?

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Most people's perception of the Police Department is based on their individual interactions with officers. So it's very important that we invest in training, invest in particularly communication training, and implicit bias training, so that we police our diverse communities more effectively. That's the number one thing we'll be moving forward.

I'm very excited, because, you know, one of the benefits of having the settlement agreement with the Department of Justice is that in some ways it's a consulting service. And I've requested and received some positive feedback that they pilot a new implicit bias training in the department. That would be tremendous, because the Department of Justice has the benefit of examining all these departments throughout the country, so that it's a real good resource.

In addition, you know, we need to make sure that we are getting out the message about all the great things the Police Department is doing, saving people and rescuing people on a weekly basis. You know, that's going to be -- that has to be communicated to the people effectively. You know, we don't use social media effectively at all. We don't have a Facebook page that's in Spanish. These are all things that we're already looking to change. We need to make sure that we have the proper translation services at our community meetings in Brentwood and other areas where there's a large percentage of people who speak Spanish. So there's a multitude of different things that we need to do to improve our relationship with the people we serve. But the overall objective is to make sure that on an individual and on a daily basis, on an individual basis, our officers are treating people with the respect and dignity they deserve, and we're able to communicate people -- communicate with people from different cultures.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Now, as Commissioner, and I agree with you and I think that's the right answer, we've all heard stories about some type of selective enforcement or bias in enforcement. And, again, this is not to disparage the members of the Police Force, which do a great job, and I appreciate the cops tremendously, but there are some bad apples. And the problem we have is that when there's a couple of bad apples, whether it's a story that's been related to me personally about a police officer specifically always pulling over young females, for example, okay, and there's other things out there, and some has been reported in the press, okay?

The question in my mind is how do you connect as Commissioner? Before this conduct happens or when it happens, how do you know? I mean, you're the Commissioner of Police now. You're making policy, you're managing a department, but you have an entire force out on the street. You can't be with everyone in all places at all times. So what's the structure? How do you manage a department so that when you have the few bad apples, or the occurrences that are occurring that shouldn't be happening, how are you going to know about this? How -- you know, you can't even fix a problem unless you know about it. And I think that's where a lot of the frustration comes in, because people will view you as, yeah, you're the Commissioner of Police, but you don't really know what's going on out on the streets with a few of the uniformed officers, again, not all of them. So how do you -- how do you manage that?

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

One of the issues that we realized immediately was that Internal Affairs was not properly staffed or structured in a way that we could know what we needed to know about what was going on in the

streets, and that was part of the top-to-bottom assessment. So we changed the structure a bit, and then we also staffed it appropriately. So we now have Internal Affairs Bureau, which is properly staffed and managed. And it's important that people feel comfortable filing complaints with the Police Department.

It's important that people are speaking their language, particularly Spanish. And it's important that we're engaging with community groups, because many -- as you may know as a Legislature, people may not feel comfortable filing an IAB complaint, but they certainly feel comfortable telling their, you know, block president or the president of the civic group about what happened. And we need to make sure that we're connecting with those individuals on a regular basis, not just, you know, every once in a while. We have to make sure these people have regular access to the Department.

So it's a carrot and a stick approach. We have to make sure that our officers are properly trained, and we're going to be rolling out innovative training programs regarding implicit bias and communication skills. And then, also, those who don't live -- who don't fulfill their obligation need to be punished. It's discipline, and in order to properly discipline officers in a department this size, you have to have a properly functioning Internal Affairs Bureau, and that's what we have now. And we're going to be -- we're going to be on top of it, we're going to be monitoring it.

There is some legislation that was proposed by Legislator Calarco that I think is helpful in terms of keeping the spotlight on the Department, about what type of Internal Affairs cases are coming in, and what we're doing with those cases, how fast are we getting through them, and, you know, we'll keep fine-tuning it. But I think it's a combination of training, which is the beginnings of changing culture, and also discipline.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Yes, I agree with you, training is crucial. You know, if you can be proactive and prevent the occurrences, and, you know, have the right mind set when -- even, you know, if it's through the Police Academy, and, you know, the right mind set and approach to the job as a police officer.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

And part of the changes that we're making to Internal Affairs will be to better equip the Department to proactively identify patterns and trends in terms of police misconduct. So that way, if we see something, a disproportionate number of complaints coming out of a precinct, or coming from a particular officer, or coming from a particular supervisory chain, or if we're seeing a lot of cases coming out of a particular set of circumstances, we can -- we then know, okay, we have a problem here and we can address it more proactively.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Now, as Commissioner -- and thank you for that answer, I appreciate that. And I think -- I think the carrot and the stick approach is exactly right. You want to use more of the carrot if that works. But if it doesn't, I think that folks need to know that there are serious repercussions, and you will get caught and you will be brought to justice. You know, when you're a police officer, whether you're a Legislator or a U.S. Attorney, you're serving the public. No one has free rein, and no one makes it up as they go along, and no one's immune to prosecution. And I think it's very important, going into the Police Department, or any department in government, that people know that the tone gets set at the top. And if the Commissioner has zero tolerance for that type of conduct, I think that filters down and sets a great example. I think that's a terrific answer.

I had one more question for you. And, again, I did read the transcript of the hearing, and I did look at your background, very impressive. As a fellow attorney, I'm very impressed with your service with the United States Attorney's Office in the Southern District. I had a short stint there myself about 400 years ago, but it's a long time ago. But it's a great place to work and there's a lot of good

people there, so I appreciate that you're coming out of that. And the areas that you were involved in as a U.S. Prosecutor are very pertinent to the job that you're taking on or seeking to take on here today and it's very impressive. I want to ask you one more question, a little bit maybe off topic, but as Commissioner of the Police Department, you will be serving at the pleasure of the County Executive, correct?

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Yeah. Do you think it would be more effective for you to have a term of office, as opposed to serving at the pleasure of?

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

I've never -- I've never thought about this. And, you know, I think there are benefits to a term, just like -- it's the same principle in terms of elected -- same principle that would apply to an elected official. You know, you -- it gives you a certain sense of independence, because you can't be taken out of a position simply because you do something that the County Executive does not agree with.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right. It would have to rise to a real level of malfeasance, or something like that, yeah.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Right. With that said, I think the County Executive has the right to appoint commissioners who are in line with his -- with his policy, with his policy positions. And I can see the drawbacks of a term and that I can see how a term does not fulfill those objectives.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Yeah. Well, my opinion is that you should serve at the pleasure of, because, at the end of the day, it's the elected official that's going to be accountable for your actions. And I think that is a great check and balance on your actions as Commissioner, or any department head. There is some merit to having a term, there is, but I think, again, when you -- I think when you look at the issue of accountability, it really runs through you to the County Executive, and I think as -- for that reason, the County Executive should have the right to judge you on a daily basis, as opposed to having to wait, let's say you had a three or a five-year term, to make a policy change.

So all right. I want to thank you for answering my questions today. Again, I wish you the best of luck. I fully intend to support you here today. And if you're confirmed, I would certainly look forward to working with you and managing the Police Department together. Thank you.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Thank you, likewise.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Legislator McCaffrey.

**LEG. MC CAFFREY:**

Thank you. Hey, Tim. I can say that, because me and Tim kind of know each other probably better than most here and -- but we did get to know each other, and I think we've gained an appreciation of each other's skills and abilities. And one of the things that I said at the Public Safety Committee was echoed, a lot of comments that were made, that you were a compassionate, comparing -- caring person. You definitely work very hard, and I think you're going to bring those same qualities to the Police Commissioner, you know. And as you took the time right after you were named as a

prospective candidate to come and visit me and we talked, and, you know, I gave you my concerns, and those are ones I still have now, you know, and that is the selection process, and the fact that we'll never know who's out there, you know. And when we first met, it was like two weeks after the election, and you said you wanted to be Police Commissioner, and I said, "Well, two weeks ago, I thought you wanted to be the County Legislator," you know. And so --

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

But you beat me.

**LEG. MC CAFFREY:**

Barely, barely.

*(\*Laughter\*)*

But, at the end of the day, I was concerned that it was a stepping stone.

So one of the questions I have, the first question I want to get out of the way is the -- I've heard the talk about possibly down the road becoming the District Attorney. And, you know, you sound very committed to this job of -- as Police Commissioner, putting in a lot of time and effort into it. And so the question is would you leave us if the opportunity came up to run for District Attorney?

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

I'll let Legislator Trotta run for District Attorney.

*(\*Laughter\*)*

No, I have no -- I have no intentions of running for District Attorney. And I think the DA is up in 2017. I have -- I'm not running for District Attorney in 2017.

**LEG. MC CAFFREY:**

You could follow up. Well, we'll worry about that. But, you know, just going back to -- you know, I just want to get that out of the way. But as I said before when we met the first time, was that I was concerned about not having a selection process. And four years ago, when we were looking for a Commissioner, we cast a pretty wide net. I wasn't here, but I had the opportunity to look at what -- what was asked of prospective candidates. And we talked about this at the hearing as well. Law enforcement background, I think the requirement was eight years, managerial experience. And I was concerned about, you know, your limited experience, even not just law enforcement, but also managerial. But I do have to tell you, I was very impressed. I think you handled yourself very well during those hearings. You actually convinced a very stubborn Irish woman over there to change her mind, which we sometimes don't -- aren't equipped to do.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Who's that?

*(\*Laughter\*)*

**LEG. MC CAFFREY:**

And so it was -- that was impressive, and I thought you did a good job doing that. But, as I said, I am still concerned with the fact that we didn't see who's out there and that is a concern of mine. And, as I said in those hearings and I said before, if we went through a process and it turns out that Tim Sini is the best guy out there, I would be the one to make the motion to confirm. But if we did no selection process or see who was out there, I would have to vote against you. And, unfortunately, I still feel that way, but I would not be surprised if you turned out to be one of our

better Commissioners we've ever had. So thank you for your time.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Thank you. And I look forward to working with you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Legislator Anker.

**LEG. ANKER:**

I also want to thank you, you know, of course for coming here today. Of course you have to come, you had to come here today. But, you know, you think about the people that run for public office, you know, and the issues and how challenging it can be. And I am very impressed the amount of energy and time that you've put forth, you know, towards your dedication in acquiring this position, and so I have to give you a lot of credit.

I also wanted to mention, also, I'm impressed with the way that you're changing the process within the Department by focusing locally on crime pertaining -- specifically pertaining to drug busts. And I know we had worked together in addressing some of those issues, because one of the most challenging problems within communities is when a home is identified as a -- as a drug dealer's home, and it takes time to build a case to put that person in jail and remove them from the neighborhood. But you -- even now, you know, you're working to make the system better. You've created a better system that decentralizes this process and focuses on the local ability for the precincts to identify those homes and really go after the drug dealers. And I have to give you credit, because I have gotten so many complaints from residents saying, you know, "Look, they know the drug dealer's there, what are they doing?" And you've expedited that process substantially, so I do want to thank you, and that's just within the past two or three weeks.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Yeah. And the reforms that we implemented to be able to address drug dealing out of residences was largely driven by members of this body. I've spoken to Legislator Kennedy about it, yourself and others, and it was because we centralized our narcotics operation. And as I've recognized, there are benefits to that. We did seize a lot of drugs in 2015, 2014, but the number of search warrants was down. So we're going to be focusing more on addressing community concerns about homes where drug dealing is occurring, and we're going to be hitting those homes more frequently with search warrants and felony arrests. And we're able to do that, because we're going to be leveraging our relationships throughout the region to go after the larger drug dealers, and that's the fact that we're committed to the DEA Task Force now. And we'll be rolling out very soon an unprecedented initiative, partnering with many other of our partners in the region to deal with the opioid epidemic. So, because we're leveraging relationships that we didn't previously, we're able to focus more on the drug homes.

**LEG. ANKER:**

And I also want to thank you for doing that. It's also part of the point that I wanted to bring up, is that open communication, networking, working with all levels of government and agencies is needed, and I feel that you basically are hitting the ground running with that. And it's a huge improvement from what I've seen in addressing the issue with, you know, the opiate addiction.

Another point I just want you to, you know, keep on your radar is that, you know, and with me saying working with other agencies, working with the Sheriff's Department. What Vinny DeMarco has done at the jail, and reduced recidivism substantially by rehabilitation, is a very important part in, you know, working with the jail, and keeping those drug dealers, you know, from selling drugs, rehabilitate when possible. You know, and again, you know, there's two types, there's a low level dealer and there's the kingpin. We need to address those particular individuals differently. And I

had conversations with the Drug Court Judges, and we all -- you know, in working on this, we understand that.

So it's good to know that there's someone with new ideas and energy, and not afraid to work within the system to make it better, you know, and change it, you know, without redoing everything, but, again, working with those individuals and those agencies. So, again, I want to thank you for addressing that specifically. I think 2500 people is a lot of people to oversee, but I feel confident that you can do the job.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Thank you, and I look forward to working with you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you. And I think at this point I'm going to interject and just say, you know, it's really been a pleasure to see you, you know, assume the position, if you will, for the past several months. It kind of -- it actually brings me back to my time in the military. And when I was a young Specialist, my Battalion Commander, David Slotwinski, who was -- he was tough as nails, very demanding, and he had recommended me to go to OCS to get my commission. And we had this long conversation, which I won't regurgitate the whole 45-minute conversation, but it really came down to this: He said there's several types of leaders, and there are leaders that assume the position, and then there are leaders that let the position assume them, position of leadership, and I see you as a person who assumed the position. You could have easily said, "Well, I got the County Executive behind me, he's appointed me as his designee, you know, I seem to have the support of the Legislature, I'm getting support of senior members in the Police Department, I could just come in and kind of coast," but you haven't done that.

You really have taken a real concerted effort to go through each department and meet with people to get an understanding of those things that perhaps you didn't have an understanding of, or certainly a better understanding of. You're coming up with creative and innovative ideas in policing to address some of the concerns of the people here. You know, we represent over 1.5 million people, and I think you're addressing a lot of the concerns that they have in our individual districts, and that's impressive. And I would ask that you continue to use that drive, and energy, and inquisitiveness, and desire to learn more about the Department as you go forward, and don't get comfortable, because there's a lot to learn.

And as I learned as a young officer, you know, there are people under your charge and direction that could literally lose their lives and -- or at least certainly get physically hurt by decisions that you make, and that, you know, I'm sure will keep you up at night, and always keep that in perspective. And you certainly -- as you know, we've spoken, and you have my support. So you've been very impressive thus far.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right. Legislator Stern.

**LEG. STERN:**

Yeah, thank you. And I'll be -- I will be brief, because Tim was kind enough to -- was very gracious with his time. We had the opportunity to meet in Yaphank, and he was able to answer all of my questions, and I was able to learn a lot more about the vision that he has for the Department. And it's also great to see that in just a few short weeks, working with his top staff, he's been able to implement already many of those plans that he had going forward.

I also asked him if he would make time in his busy schedule to meet with important members of the community, because, ultimately, we all have communities that we represent, and sooner or later it is their judgment that is the most important. And so Tim was gracious with his time in meeting with community leaders. I'm sure he did the same in many of our districts over the past many weeks. And I had the opportunity to be there and to listen to the dialogue, and can tell you at least the dialogue that I listened to, that I was a part of, community leaders and parents, they were asking a lot more difficult questions than Tim's getting at this Legislature. And so it was an impressive dialogue, and I know that he impressed many of the members of the community that had the opportunity to meet with him. And I spoke with them afterwards, many of them, and they said that they had never met a Police Commissioner before. They had relationships with Inspectors in our precincts, they had personal relationships with many of the outstanding men and women of the Suffolk County Police Department in their duties, but they had never met a Police Commissioner before, and they really appreciated the fact that you took the time to meet with them. But they were also very insistent that after this process, and as time goes on, that you continue to make the time to meet with them.

The question was asked before, how do you know, and your answer I thought was right on. You know because it's important to not just sit in Yaphank and manage an extraordinary department, but it's also very important to listen to the people that you work for and that you represent. And I know that you're committed to that. I know you'll continue to do that as time goes on. And you had their confidence, which was most important, so you certainly have mine.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Thank you very much. I look forward to working with you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Legislator Trotta.

**LEG. TROTТА:**

I was hoping the County Executive would be here, because I would like to know his thoughts on this, but apparently he's not coming.

I'm disappointed. I'm disappointed in the process that was used here. We had an opportunity, a great opportunity to seek out an experienced, professional, independent Commissioner, one who could restore the -- you know, the faith in the Department, and he didn't even try. Not you, the County Executive didn't even try. Having said that, everything I've seen up to this point, Mr. Sini has said all the right things. He's not doing brain surgery, he's basically restoring what was there four years ago.

I would have liked to see -- seen someone else, at least a process that was used, and we didn't see that. I would have liked to -- I feel bad for Mr. Sini, that he ran for office. Rich Schaffer brought him out. He was walking around town handing stuff out, special assistant to Rich Schaffer. These were all negatives in my mind, that it's a political appointment, and he's got -- you know, he's -- I'm trying to get over those things that are negative about it, and I'm having trouble doing it because there was no search. There was nothing done, other than, "Hey, this guy lives a few blocks from me, he seems like a nice guy, he seems like a straight guy, let's make him the Commissioner." It could very well turn out that he's the greatest Commissioner of all time, but we'll never know what else was there, we'll never ever get that, and that's not your fault at all. I don't blame you at all, but that's something we're not going to have. And I think all of us owe it to the citizens of this County to do that, but, unfortunately, we don't pick the Commissioner.

I'm sure you're going to rely on your staff and the guys around you to make good decision, you know, putting NESOT back in, which, as Sarah Anker pointed out, I was doing that 20 years ago, you know, the search warrants out of the precinct.

The bar is set so low for you, you can't be anything but a superstar at this point. I mean, you're going to do a great job, there's not a doubt, not a doubt about it, but cannot support you knowing that there wasn't a process that went through. I mean, I'd be like a hypocrite if I said, "Oh, Tim Sini is the best thing since sliced bread, let's pick him," knowing that there could have been somebody better, more effective, with more experience. You know, you might do a better job than them, but we don't know.

And I don't know how anybody is -- everyone here in this horseshoe should be a little bit mad at the County Executive that not -- this wasn't done, and for that reason, nothing against you, I hope you do a great job. I will do whatever I can amongst the guys who -- you know, you know how -- maybe you don't know how cops are, but cops are saying, "Oh, he's 35 years old," this and that, you know. I will do whatever I can to dissuade that until you make a mistake, but I don't think you're going to. I think you're professional. I'm expecting big things from you. I'm expecting you to clean up this Department and take control over it, again, because it was out of control. I mean, you don't have to look further than today's New York Times to see that it was out of control.

So good luck. You're going to pass, but, unfortunately, I can't support -- I support you, but I'm not supporting this process.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Thank you. I look forward to working with you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Legislator Fleming.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Hi. Good afternoon. I'll be really brief, too, because we did speak to you at committee. And I want to just echo the sentiment of absolutely every single person who's opined on that committee process. You clearly proved yourself and I appreciate it.

In our districts, Legislator Krupski and mine, we have our own small police departments, and we rely heavily on a good relationship with the Suffolk County Police Department, which has historically been sometimes good, sometimes bad. But right now, we definitely need that, and I appreciated your commitment to it, particularly with regard to training, your approach to community policing and Intelligence Led Policing, which are both critically important to our communities, collaboration with regard to drug investigations, particularly with the opioid addiction and opioid sales Countywide, even Island-wide. We can't police our communities without your help in that regard, so I appreciate your commitment to that.

I'd just like to say one thing about the process. I mean, I was an Assistant District Attorney for almost a decade in Manhattan DA's Office, not far from where you practiced in the Southern District. I was a Unit Chief in the unit that prosecuted fraud in public programs. So I was listening carefully to your answers and to the good questions that were put to you and I was really quite satisfied. I heard no one say anything that was a detraction from your skills, so I do appreciate that.

I also appreciate the County Executive's perspective in choosing someone who is not part of the status quo, who does have a terrific relationship based on experience with Federal law enforcement authorities on whom we are relying to get to the bottom of some very bad things that are being alleged. I also appreciate the alacrity that had to -- you know, that had to take place to get a team

in place running the Police Department in a time when the Police Department is -- alacrity means speed.

*(\*Laughter\*)*

In a time when the Police Department is in turmoil. Truthfully, you had -- I think the County Exec did have to move quickly. No one has been able to say that there's any fault in the qualifications that you bring to the table. You know, it's a paramilitary organization. Our communities rely on it for the very safety of our day-to-day lives. And so for the confidence that the community needs, the trust that the community needs, and that the rank and file needs in the Police Department, I appreciate the fact that the County Exec moved with speed. And I'm really pleased that he was able to come up with someone who is, obviously, such a fine candidate in such a difficult time, so I thank you for that.

**MR. SINI:**

Thank you.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you. And you stirred quite a conversation about the use of alacrity. We were all trying to figure out what that meant.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Alacrity, A-L-A-C-R-I-T-Y.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Alacrity, all right. Legislator Kennedy.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

I will be brief. Good afternoon, Mr. Sini.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Good afternoon, Legislator.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

I will be meeting with you on Thursday to talk about some of the issues in my district, and I am thankful. Your resume is fabulous. You are obviously a marvelous litigator. I have heard that your community involvement in your town was excellent. I just got an email from one of my group leaders that said, "Has Mr. Sini been nominated yet?" So you've made a great impression.

I will tell you exactly what I said, and I'll cut it short, from committee. A gentleman, I wrote his name down, Mr. Ashby, spoke this morning. He said everything that I am feeling. It's the process. You may be the best candidate, but we needed a search. We needed a search for the people. I talk to a lot of people, not just in my district. I go all over the Island and speak to people. And what I hear about Suffolk's Police Department since the news broke of these last three incidences is the same thing I hear about politicians since Preet Bharara has come in and decided to do what's right.

People are seeing your appointment as a political appointment because you are picked by the County Executive. I explain that it is his right, that we don't choose and there's no election for it, and the Police Department does not choose who their Commissioner is going to be. But in these times, they are not satisfied. They do feel that there's an issue with the Department. So what I'm going to say to you is you owe it to the people, but you owe it to the Department, because I have worked for 13 years as an Aide and as a Legislator with two precincts, and I have never been disappointed with the results. It may take time, but they follow through on everything from

domestic violence, to robberies, to burglaries. I could go on and on and on. I think our Department deserves more than another argument over behaviors.

So until we find a way to change the process, I am going to abstain today, and it is not because of you or your record. Thanks.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Thank you, and I look forward to our meeting on Thursday.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. That's all the speakers that I have. Oh, Legislator Muratore.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Thank you, Mr. P.O. Commissioner, how are today?

**MR. SINI:**

I'm doing well, Legislator. How are you?

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Good. And thank you for being so responsive to me, you know, the few phone calls I had. I want to thank you for having the courage, you know, the courage to take this job as Commissioner of the Suffolk County Police Department in the times and troubles we're having. You know, and maybe the County Exec saw something in you that he knew we were going to pick you if we had 100 people to choose from, so maybe that's why you came forward. I can't answer. I know a lot of my colleagues have issues with the process, but I think -- you know, I served 35 years in the Suffolk County Police Department, and I went through a lot of Commissioners, a lot of County Execs, a lot of presidents in the PBA, so I went through a whole quandary of men and women who lead this County.

When I spoke with you the first time, I saw a man a lot different than commissioners, and men and women that were in our Department that were leaders. And I really feel you are going to bring something new to the Suffolk County Police Department. I think you are a new -- a new sense of new technology, of new ideas, new leadership. A lot of men and women you're promoting I trained, so I know what you have there, I know you have really good quality people. So, you know, I want to give you my support. From after the -- I wasn't here on Thursday, present, I wasn't present in the building, but I sat at home for four-and-a-half hours and listened to what you went through, and I want to congratulate you, you did a great job. So, again, I'm going to be supporting you, and welcome to the Suffolk County Police Department. Good luck.

**ACTING COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Thank you very much, sir.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Anyone else? Okay. We have a motion and a second to approve. All in favor? Opposed? Okay. Can we have all Legislators to the horseshoe?

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Roll call.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. I'll do -- we have a motion to approve and a second. Roll call.

*(Roll Call by Mr. Richberg, Clerk of the Legislature)*

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Yes.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Yes.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Yes.

**LEG. STERN:**

Yes.

**LEG. MC CAFFREY:**

No.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

No.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Abstain.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Yes.

**LEG. CILMI:**

No.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Yes.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Yes.

**LEG. ANKER:**

Yes.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Yes.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Yes.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yes.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Yes.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Yes.

**MR. RICHBERG:**

Fourteen.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

All right. Congratulations.

**(\*Applause\*)**

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

I want to thank you for the support. And I'm humbled by this experience, as I started off at the Public Safety meeting expressing that sentiment. That remains, and I'm going to do everything in my power to move this Department forward and do the right thing by the residents of Suffolk County.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. All right. Congratulations, Commissioner. Okay. We are on Page 6, Veterans.

**VETERANS**

***Procedural Motion No. 1 - Designating Veterans Organizations to receive funding for Memorial Day Observances for 2016 (Stern).***

**LEG. STERN:**

(Raised hand).

**P.O. GREGORY:**

I'll accept a motion to approve by Legislator Stern, second by --

**LEG. CILMI:**

(Raised hand).

**P.O. GREGORY:**

-- Legislator Cilmi. Anyone on the motion? All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

Eighteen.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Can I ask a question?

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Yes.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Can I ask a question? I can't remember who passed -- whose resolution it was, but there was a resolution to make sure that a lot of these organizations are properly vetted through the County. Is that a requirement on this?

**LEG. CILMI:**

If I may, Mr. Chair. Yeah, that was a bill that I had sponsored and was later amended by Legislator Stern, possibly. I don't -- I don't exactly recall. But it may have been Doc Spencer, actually, now that I think about it. So I passed the initial resolution, Doc Spencer, I think, amended that and -- but in direct answer to your question, whether or not that's a prerequisite for this resolution, I'm looking at -- well, you know what, I don't know the answer. Many of the organizations that are listed in this resolution are exempt from the requirements of that resolution, because they're constitutionally or congressionally chartered Veterans organizations.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yeah, okay.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I can't say definitively that all the organizations listed here are.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Just a question, because I know there was an issue come up some time ago and I just wanted to be sure, because I know --

**LEG. CILMI:**

I think that resolution had to do with raising money, you know --

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Right, right.

**LEG. CILMI:**

-- publicly.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

I would have assumed that if the County is giving the money, it would still apply.

**LEG. STERN:**

Yeah. If I may, Presiding Officer. It does not apply in this situation. This is something that we go through as a matter of course. These are well-known organizations that are just receiving the resources that they need for Memorial Day observances. They are not, in this instance anyway, in the process of raising funds for the purpose of benefitting, or, unfortunately, too often not benefitting our local Veterans, but that requirement would not apply here.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. Thank you. Okay. All right. ***I.R. 1003 - Authorizing the reconveyance of County-owned real estate pursuant to Section 215, New York State County Law to Marie A. Gasrel (Calarco).***

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Motion.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion by Legislator Calarco.

**LEG. TROTТА:**

(Raised hand).

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Second by Legislator Trotta. On the motion, anyone? All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

Seventeen. (Not Present: Legislator Hahn)

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. If you go to the manila folder, ***I.R. 1137 - Accepting and appropriating grant funds from the Suffolk County -- excuse me -- Suffolk Community College Foundation for a grant award received from the Kisco Foundation in support of Suffolk County Community College's Office of Veterans Affairs, 100% reimbursed by private funds at Suffolk County Community College (County Executive).***

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Motion.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion by Legislator Martinez, I'll second. Anyone on the motion? All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

Eighteen.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. ***Procedural Motion No. 3 - Authorizing public hearing for renewal of Ferry License and Fares of Tony's Freight Service, Inc. (Presiding Officer).***

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Motion.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion by Legislator D'Amaro, I'll second. Anyone on the motion? All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

Eighteen.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. If go to the red folder, CNS, we have ***I.R. 1075 - Delegating authority to refund certain erroneous tax payments to the Suffolk County Comptroller (County Executive).*** I'll make a motion, second by Legislator Calarco. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

Eighteen.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. 1103 we did. ***I.R. 1153 - To appoint Andrea Neubauer as Deputy Director of the Suffolk County Department of Probation (County Executive).***

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Motion.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Motion by Legislator Browning.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Second.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Second by Legislator Lindsay.

**LEG. CILMI:**

On the motion.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

On the motion, Legislator Cilmi.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Sure. If I could ask why this is necessary.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

I actually did call Lisa. I don't know if she's still here. But similar to the DA's Office, she's Deputy Director in Probation. Her brother is in the Suffolk County Police Department. They were not aware that this had to be done because of the Nepotism Law, didn't know it applied, so that's why they're doing this.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right. So she's been there for some time?

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yeah. She's been there for a couple of years, I think.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay. Thank you.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

And I can say nothing but good things about her.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Thanks.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. We have a motion and a second. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

Eighteen.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Late starters. I'd like to waive the rules and lay the following resolutions on the table:

I.R. 1152 to Ways and Means; I.R. 1154 to Budget and Finance; I.R. 1156, to health; set the public hearing for March 1st at 2:30 p.m. at Riverhead; I.R. 1157 to EPA; I.R. 1158 to Public Works; set public hearing for March 1st, 2:30 p.m. in Riverhead; I.R. 1159, Budget and Finance. Do I have a second?

**LEG. CILMI:**

Second.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Second by Legislator Cilmi. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**MR. RICHBERG:**

Eighteen.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. That is all that we have. We stand adjourned. Thank you.

*(\*The meeting was adjourned at 5:18 p.m. \*)*

*{ } - Denotes Spelled Phonetically*