

# Suffolk County Legislator

## Tom Muratore Community Report



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Winter 2011

*Dear Neighbor:*

*I want to thank you all for allowing me the privilege of representing the Fourth Legislative District. My first year as Legislator has been very exciting. In 2010, I was pleased to keep a campaign promise by successfully passing the Gas Tax Cap in Suffolk County.*



*The following newsletter covers all the legislative highlights for 2010. This past year has afforded me the opportunity to meet some wonderful constituents and business owners, all of whom make me proud to call the Fourth District my home. As I continue my tenure in 2011, I promise to work hard through these tough economic times to control county spending and help stretch the taxpayer dollar.*

*My staff and I are here to help. There are many resources available to the residents of Suffolk County. Feel free to call at 631-854-9292 if we can be of assistance. We will keep you posted throughout 2011 with quarterly newsletters, which will be posted on the county website. If you would like to be added to our email list, send your contact information to [tom.muratore@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:tom.muratore@suffolkcountyny.gov).*

*Sincerely,*

*Tom Muratore*

*Tom Muratore*

# Suffolk County Legislature Approves Muratore's Gas Tax Cap Bill

Suffolk County Legislator Tom Muratore's (R, 4<sup>th</sup> L.D.) resolution to cap tax on gasoline was approved by an overwhelming majority vote of 15-3 at the Suffolk County Legislature on Tuesday, August 3, 2010.

## ***Purpose and Intent of Proposed Legislation:***

This resolution (IR 1629), which was co-sponsored by Ed Romaine (R, 1<sup>st</sup> L.D.) and Kate Browning (WF, 3<sup>rd</sup> L.D.) caps the County sales tax on motor fuel and diesel motor fuel priced more than \$3.00 per gallon. The start date of the "Gas Tax Cap" is March 1, 2011.



"We are pleased that this bill has been approved; we will now have the opportunity to provide stability and much needed tax relief to small business owners and families in Suffolk County to deal with the volatility of the gasoline and diesel prices," said Legislator Muratore.

Muratore continued, "Motor fuel and diesel motor fuel are a necessity. Because of our geographic location, size and lack of public infrastructure, we are forced to travel to conduct business and deal with family issues. With the war in the Middle East, the BP oil disaster and our national economy, motor fuel prices have been completely unstable. This instability has hurt many Long Island families and small business owners. Many companies over the last year have been forced to suspend services, increase costs or add fuel service charges to their products. This has further undermined our local economy and recovery. We are grateful to have the support of our colleagues and community leaders to provide much needed relief to Long Islanders."

Suffolk County Legislator Edward P. Romaine noted that, "Capping the sales tax on gasoline will grant some relief to the already overburdened Suffolk County taxpayer, especially those on the East End where gasoline continues to sell for more than \$3.00 per gallon. The financial impact to the County because of this resolution will be minimal because this is money we don't currently have. We should return these funds and try to provide relief."

"This resolution will provide relief for all County residents that are truly feeling the squeeze at the pump," said Legislator Lou D'Amaro (D, 17<sup>th</sup> L.D.) who voted to approve the bill out of the Budget and Finance Committee. "This is the perfect time to cap the tax on gasoline because any tax above \$3 a gallon would be a windfall to the County since the wholesale price of gas is still below \$3 and we do not get any revenue from this tax at present. Our operating budget for next year will simply not depend on this projected revenue that doesn't exist now, thereby forcing the County to live within its means and giving Suffolk residents a break should gas prices continue to increase. I applaud Legislator Muratore for sponsoring this legislation and am pleased my colleagues supported this fiscally sound proposal."

Brookhaven Town Receiver of Taxes Louis Marcoccia also supports the cap. "At a time when I see more and more taxpayers having to make tough choices in meeting their household expenses to pay their property taxes, this legislation is a welcomed opportunity to bring some relief," commented Marcoccia.

The bill will now be sent to Suffolk County Executive's office for approval. "I will sign the bill and certainly hope the savings are in fact passed down to the motorists," states Executive Steve Levy.

## Hopes for a New Park

Legislator Tom Muratore recently sponsored Resolution 714-2010 which authorized planning steps for the acquisition of land under the Suffolk County Drinking Water Protection Program. The piece of property this resolution is looking to protect is a piece of land approximately 9.86 acres and it is located on Coleman Road and Ruland Lane in Centereach. Legislator Muratore is looking forward to using this lot for active parklands, including ball fields. The property would be maintained by the Town of Brookhaven who is looking to improve the property for use as active parklands and soccer and athletic fields, something the residents of the fourth legislative district could definitely enjoy the use of.

## Emergency 911 Dispatchers Now Have Access to the AED Database



In March of 2010, Suffolk County Legislator Tom Muratore co-sponsored a resolution to direct the Department of Health Services to make its database of automated external defibrillator locations available to emergency 911 dispatchers. Many businesses and public buildings in Suffolk County have begun purchasing AEDs to have on-site in order to treat individuals experiencing cardiac problems while waiting for emergency medical care to arrive.

Under Resolution IR-1095, when purchasing an AED in New York State, the purchaser is required to register the location of the AED with their local Department of Health Services. Emergency 911 dispatchers now have instant access to the AED database as a tool they can use when taking medical emergency calls.

“I am proud to co-sponsor this potentially life-saving resolution,” stated Legislator Muratore. “Time is of the essence when a victim is suffering a heart attack. With this database in place, EMTs and first responders will now have faster access to the defibrillators, which in turn means faster response time to the victim.”

### ***Reestablishment of the Lake Ronkonkoma Advisory Board***

The Suffolk County Legislature passed a resolution to reestablish the Lake Ronkonkoma Advisory Board. Over the past two decades, a Lake Ronkonkoma Advisory Board has periodically functioned to provide oversight, guidance and planning for the prudent use and rehabilitation of the Lake and its surrounding watershed. The board is providing oversight of many projects around Lake Ronkonkoma such as revitalization, watershed protection efforts, facilitation of storm drain cleaning and increasing lake water testing efforts. The advisory board, which Legislator Tom Muratore is a member of, is also sponsoring a collaborative grant application between the Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, and the State Department of Environmental Conservation. At each meeting there is a public portion section, so people are welcome to stop in and speak in front of the board. For any further information or to find out the dates of the meetings, feel free to contact Legislator Muratore's office at (631) 854-9292.

### **LIPA Oversight Committee Formed**



Suffolk County Legislators Ed Romaine, Tom Muratore, Jay Schneiderman and former Legislator now Assemblyman Dan Losquadro passed a resolution in the County Legislature to create a Long Island Power Authority Legislative Oversight Committee. When the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) was formed, the County of Suffolk established safeguards to ensure

that the authority was accountable to its ratepayers.

The committee has been established to look at LIPA's rates, contracts and practices and determine if LIPA is working in the best interest of the Suffolk County taxpayers. Recent information had surfaced about LIPA's rates and practices which suggested the authority had not always acted in the best interest of all of its ratepayers in Suffolk County.

The oversight committee will determine if LIPA's actions are adverse to the County's ratepayers and may warrant the consideration of legal action.

"This resolution obligates the elected officials of the County of Suffolk to oversee LIPA to ensure that LIPA is now and will continue to be accountable to the ratepayers. The residents of Suffolk County deserve no less," remarked Legislator Muratore.

## Energy Drinks – Dietary Supplement or Unregulated Loophole?



Legislator Tom Muratore teamed up with Legislator Lynne Nowick and other legislators to support two resolutions regarding the sale of energy drinks on the market. The first would ban the sale of such drinks to minors in Suffolk County (under the age of 19) and the second would alert consumers to the health risks associated with energy drinks.

Energy drinks are very popular, particularly among young people and are being consumed predominantly by children in middle and high school. The consumption of energy drinks by minors has been associated with hyperactivity, lack of concentration, poor nutrition and dental problems. The consumption of energy drinks can also cause serious adverse effects: aggravating heart conditions, headaches, rapid heartbeat, nervousness, irritability, sleeplessness, dehydration, abnormal heart rhythms, stomach upset and even death. These effects may be exacerbated in minors and occur after consuming smaller amounts of caffeine or other stimulants.

“Manufacturers have found a loophole – energy drinks are considered dietary supplements, and therefore are not regulated under the FDA. This is mind-boggling – any consumable product should disclose contents and risks, especially when the well-being of minors is at stake. We need to do all we can to ensure the health and welfare of children by restricting their ability to purchase energy drinks,” stated Legislator Muratore.



### **Legislator Muratore – A Strong Advocate for Pool Safety**

Suffolk County Legislator Tom Muratore joined with Party 105 Radio Station to promote pool safety this past summer. Party 105 donated \$10,000 in free PSAs to help promote pool safety and has already agreed to run more PSAs for 2011.

Pool Safety is everyone’s concern. Every year there are deaths from pool drowning that may be prevented. Everyone should learn pool safety tips.

“Children are our best resource. We must do whatever we can to protect our children. Remember – Don’t Leave Your Children Alone. Not for a Minute. Not for a Second. Not Ever,” reminds Legislator Muratore.

Legislator Muratore urges residents to learn CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). This year Legislator Muratore will be holding monthly CPR/AED classes at his office with the first class scheduled for February 7, 2011 at 7 p.m. (see community happening for details). For more information, please call 631-854-9292 or email [Tom.Muratore@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:Tom.Muratore@suffolkcountyny.gov).

## Fighting Heroin Addiction



In response to the large rise in heroin use, overdoses and deaths among the adolescent and young adult population of Suffolk County, Legislator Tom Muratore co-sponsored legislation reallocating \$1,032,477.00 to the Suffolk County Health Department's "The Heroin Treatment Program for Young Adults." This new initiative will provide medication-assisted treatment services to the affected youth in Suffolk County.

Along with co-sponsoring this legislation, Legislator Muratore also served as a member of the Suffolk County Heroin and Opiate Advisory Panel. This panel brought together members of the legislature and the health care community to discuss and develop ideas for prevention, treatment, and recovery support.

"The panel's recommendations are only a start. We need to increase the amount we educate our children as well as their parents to the devastating affect this drug can have on someone's life and our community as a whole," said Legislator Muratore. To see the recommendations made by the panel, go to the Suffolk County Legislature's website at <http://legis.suffolkcountyny.gov/>

# Community Happenings

## Learn CPR

Legislator Tom Muratore will now be holding monthly **CPR/AED** classes at his office. The first CPR/AED class is scheduled for **Monday, February 7, 2011 at 7 p.m.** You must pre-register by calling the office at 631-854-9292. Space is limited. The class is being offered at no charge. Legislator Muratore's office is located in the Selden Plaza, 325 Middle Country Road, Suite 3, Selden, NY. If you are in need of certification, please call the office and we will direct your call.

## Legislator Muratore Hosting His Third Blood Drive

Suffolk County Legislator Tom Muratore has announced his office is hosting their third blood drive this March in conjunction with the Centereach Fire Department and Long Island Blood Services. The date has tentatively been scheduled for Friday, March 18, 2011.



This blood drive is being held at the Centereach Fire Department, located at 9 South Washington Avenue in Centereach, New York. The blood drive will begin at 2:30pm and run until 7:00 pm.

"Our last two blood drives were very successful, but we would love to exceed the number of pints donated this time," stated Legislator Muratore. "Walk-ins are certainly welcome, but it would be ideal to schedule appointments in advance to help meet the goal of 50 pints of blood. Please consider supporting our drive and giving the gift of life."

If you have questions or would like to schedule your appointment, please contact the Office of Legislator Tom Muratore by calling (631) 854-9292, or emailing [tom.muratore@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:tom.muratore@suffolkcountyny.gov).

# Halloween Party 2010



September 2010

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# Summer Concert

July 2010



# Blood Drives



# Grand Openings



*Dr. Michael Campo, chiropractor located in Farmingville*



*Denny's Grand Opening in March 2010 located on Middle Country Road, Centereach*



*Opening of the Nature Explorium in the Middle County Library*



*Grand Opening of Helping Hands Ministries located in Medford*



*Nishiki Hibachi Sushi & Lounge, Independence Plaza, Selden*

# Community Gatherings & Events

