

# SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Legislator DuWayne Gregory  
15th Legislative District



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**Committees:**

Chair- Budget and Finance  
Vice Chair-Public Safety  
Member- Labor, Workforce & Affordable Housing  
Member-Consumer Protection

## **Gregory Rallies Bipartisan Coalition of Officials, Community Leaders To Fight Sex Offender Shelter**

Suffolk County Legislator DuWayne Gregory on Monday rallied a bipartisan coalition of public officials and community leaders to battle Suffolk County's plan to place shelters for homeless sex offenders in Legislator Gregory's district.

"I'm asking everyone to keep the pressure on," said Legislator Gregory to the crowd that gathered at one of the sites under consideration in the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative District. "Our communities have been targeted as the site of this shelter and that is just wrong.

"The county has identified eight sites. Three of them are located on open space in Yaphank and we all know that Suffolk County is not going to build a new building to house homeless sex offenders in these terrible economic times. That leaves the five industrial sites in my Legislative District to place this shelter. And if we get one, we'll get another. Count on it."

Legislator Gregory was sharply critical of the failure of the county to conduct the search for a shelter in an open and honest way. "They tried to do this in the holiday season under the cover of darkness," he said. He said he met with the county Director of Social Services who gave him no warning that his district was being targeted only to discover three days after the meeting that all the potential locations were in his district.

"I heard about this three days ago," said Village of Farmingdale Mayor George Starkie. "There's been no communication whatsoever. I want Steve Levy to tell me why. I want him to make his case."

"We're all together and unified and that is so important," said Suffolk Legislator Wayne Horsley. "Route 110 is the economic engine of Suffolk County and to put this shelter here makes no sense."

"I stand in solidarity with all of you here," said Nassau County Republican Legislator Joseph Belesi. "We have to stop this. This is a bipartisan, bi-county effort." He pointed out that there was a sex shop 200 yards from the proposed shelter site. "That's like hiring an alcoholic as a bartender," he said.

"One community shouldn't have to bear the social ills of all of Suffolk County," said Sandra Thomas, president of the Concerned Taxpayers of Wheatley Heights. "Community leaders were never notified. This is not a dictatorship. How is Wyandanch supposed to rise up when you put this shelter here?"

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The five sites under consideration by the county include the site where the press conference was held, 2328-240 Route 109 in East Farmingdale, as well as 150 Marine Street in East Farmingdale, 79 Grazza Boulevard in East Farmingdale and two sites on the border of Wyandanch and West Babylon, 125 Edison Avenue and 123 Dale Street.

“We have to keep the pressure on,” repeated Legislator Gregory. “Call your friends, your neighbors, your extended families. Keep the pressure on.”

Among the community leaders that supported Legislator Gregory and took part in the rally, in addition to those quoted above, were:

--Helen Norgen, Eileen James and Carmen Tinkler of the Woodland Civic Association.

--Sondra Cochran, Sadie Badone, Bridget Stokes and Sarah Kelly of the Wyandanch Community Development Corporation.

--Phyllis Henry and Nancy Holiday of Wyandanch Weed and Seed.

--Jordan K. Wilson Sr., Alice Cone and John Narris of Belmont Lake Civic Association.

--Glenda Lassiter and Louise P. Jones of Hollywood Baptist Church.

--Rev. Joseph D. Jenkins of Bethel African Methodist Church

--Dennise Little of the First Church of Wyandanch Ministries.

--Dr. Veronica Henry of the Office of the President of Farmingdale State University.

--Thomas Humphrey of the Long Island Men’s Center.

--Dennis Cassone of Prime Time Day Care Center.

--Michelle Friedman of Primetime Schools.

--Activists Delores Quintyne and Eugene Bernet.

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