

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



COUNTY LEGISLATURE

KATE BROWNING
County Legislator, 3rd District

Health and Human Services, Chair

Media Advisory
August 10, 2010

1120 Montauk Hwy., Suite G
Mastic, NY 11950
(631) 852-1300
Fax: (631) 852-1303

Contact: Joshua Slaughter
631-852-1300
631-456-1718

TOMORROW
1:45 PM

SUFFOLK CONSIDERS CREATION OF SOBER HOME NETWORK

BROWNING, PROVIDERS, CIVIC LEADERS TO CALL FOR PASSAGE

Who: **Legislator Kate Browning**, Suffolk County, 3rd LD
Senator Brian Foley, New York State, 3rd SD
Assemblyman Marc Alessi, New York State, AD
Assemblyman Fred Thiele, New York State, AD
Richard Koubek, Chairman, Welfare to Work Commission
Kathy Liguori, Vice-Chair, Welfare to Work Commission
Jeffrey Reynolds, Executive Director, LICADD
Civic Leaders

What: Legislator Kate Browning (WF-Shirley) is calling on the Health and Human Services Committee to pass Introductory Resolution 1758-10, which directs the Department of Social Services (DSS) to issue a "Request for Qualifications" (RFQ) for qualified sober home providers. Legislator Browning and Suffolk County's state delegation have been pushing for the creation of regulations for sober homes throughout the county. Respondents to the RFQ would receive referrals from DSS and also possible incentives for running safe homes that create an atmosphere conducive for sobriety.

Why: New York State's Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) has not created the authority to regulate and provide oversight for homes that house recovering addicts. Currently no system exists for recovering addicts in need of housing. Similar regulations do exist for homes created for developmentally disabled individuals and for day care centers.

Legislator Browning held public hearings in October 2009 along with the Welfare to Work Commission, which issued a sober homes report to the Suffolk County Legislature in March 2010. I.R. 1758-10 is in response to the commission's report and recommendations.

The lack of oversight from OASAS has caused recovering addicts to depend on an underground network that most often results in living in boarding houses run by slumlords who are only looking to profit on the taxpayer's dime. The result is a high rate of relapse and crime. This legislation would provide DSS caseworkers, day treatment providers and probation/parole workers with a list of good homes, run by professional experts in the field of drug treatment and recovery. Certain guidelines would be in place that would ensure sobriety as well as allowing for ongoing treatment to be successful. The legislation aims to close the gap between rehab and living a drug free life.

When: Thursday, August 12th, 2010 at 1:45 P.M.

Where: Suffolk County Legislature, William H. Rogers Building, Hauppauge, NY 11788

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