

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK

KATE BROWNING
County Legislator, 3rd District
Health and Human Services, Chair



COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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GRAFFITI PREVENTION STRENGTHENED

*Kate Browning Garners Passage of Law That Helps
Keep Spray Paint from Getting in the Wrong Hands*

Mastic, NY – A new law aimed at preventing spray paint from getting into the wrong hands for the wrong purposes was unanimously approved by the Suffolk County Legislature at its December 7 meeting in Riverhead.

The legislation sponsored by Legislator Kate Browning (WF-Shirley) requires retailers to keep spray paint products in the line of sight of a normally occupied work station, either directly or by surveillance equipment, during the regular course of business, or within a locked case; or behind a service counter or otherwise stored in a manner which restricts general access to aerosol spray paint cans without employee assistance.

Legislator Browning has been battling graffiti throughout her district since taking office in 2006, and while Suffolk County prohibits the sale of aerosol spray paint cans to minors, she is finding in many cases that young people still manage easily to obtain aerosol products.

“Graffiti continues to be a major problem throughout the third legislative district,” stated Legislator Browning. “While our police have done a good job of making arrests for repeat offenders, we need to do more to prevent it from happening in the first place. By safeguarding spray paint we can ensure that only the legitimate consumers will be able to obtain it.”

The legislator had originally thought that spray paint was sold out of locked cases, but when she went to local big box stores she found that the practice had been stopped. Instead, cans are frequently found on unattended open shelves in many retail stores throughout the county, leaving these products vulnerable to shoplifting. In addition, several local sales have been found to have made sales to underage purchasers, which is illegal.

The new law, which now awaits the County Executive’s signature, requires retailers to maintain all aerosol spray paint cans in line of sight, under surveillance, or in a locked case or behind a sales counter and that will prevent shoplifting and reduce minors’ access to the products. Legislator Browning believes the new requirements will also aid in the enforcement of the county’s existing age restrictions for the purchase of spray paint.

“We will now be able to keep an eye on these important products so that those looking to obtain it for the wrong reasons will not be able to so easily anymore,” concluded Browning. “This adds another layer that will aid employees in making sure only customers old enough to purchase spray paint will have access to it. They will be able check this at the shelf and at the register.”

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