

# ~MEDIA ADVISORY~



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 23, 2010

Contact: Rob Calarco

Office: 631.854.1400

Cell: 523-1586

## ***Suffolk County Legislator Jack Eddington Requires GPS Monitoring of Homeless Sex Offenders***



Recognizing the importance and efficiency of GPS tracking, Leg. Jack Eddington funded 100 GPS ankle bracelets along with the necessary personnel in 2008 to allow the county's probation department to track in real time the whereabouts of high-risk sex offenders.

***Hauppauge:*** At the March 23 Meeting of the General Legislature, Legislator Jack Eddington, Chair of Public Safety, was joined by all of his fellow legislators to pass his bill to require homeless sex offenders to wear GPS tracking devices.

The new law will ensure that all homeless registered sex offenders who are placed into temporary housing by Suffolk County Department of Social Services will wear a GPS ankle bracelet for the duration of their stay in temporary housing.

Leg. Eddington's new law helps to close a loophole created by the County Executive's recent decision to shut-down the county trailers situated on the campus of the jail in Riverhead, where the homeless sex offenders were being housed.

In New York State, registered sex offenders, once they are released back into the community, are required under the Sex Offender Registration Act to provide their permanent residence address to law enforcement.

The goal is for law enforcement to know where an offender is living and in certain instances for local police to be able to inform neighbors should a high-risk offender move in close proximity to them.

If not for Leg. Eddington's law, the County Executive's decision would have freed homeless registered sex offenders to enter communities and find transient housing (often where women and children live) without local police departments knowing their whereabouts.

Furthermore, GPS monitoring of the homeless sex offenders will prove to be a cost-effective alternative to the trailers. In-house estimates put the cost of shuttling the sex offenders back and forth to the trailers at nearly

one million dollars per year, and that is for transportation alone. By contrast, the estimated cost of the GPS monitoring of 35 homeless sex offenders is \$451,000 annually.

“It is a law that just makes sense all the way around. It will protect potential victims, especially the women and children who have fallen on hard times and must live in shelters, typically alone. It will help our local police do their job when it comes to keeping tabs on these predators, and it will save money,” said Leg. Eddington.