

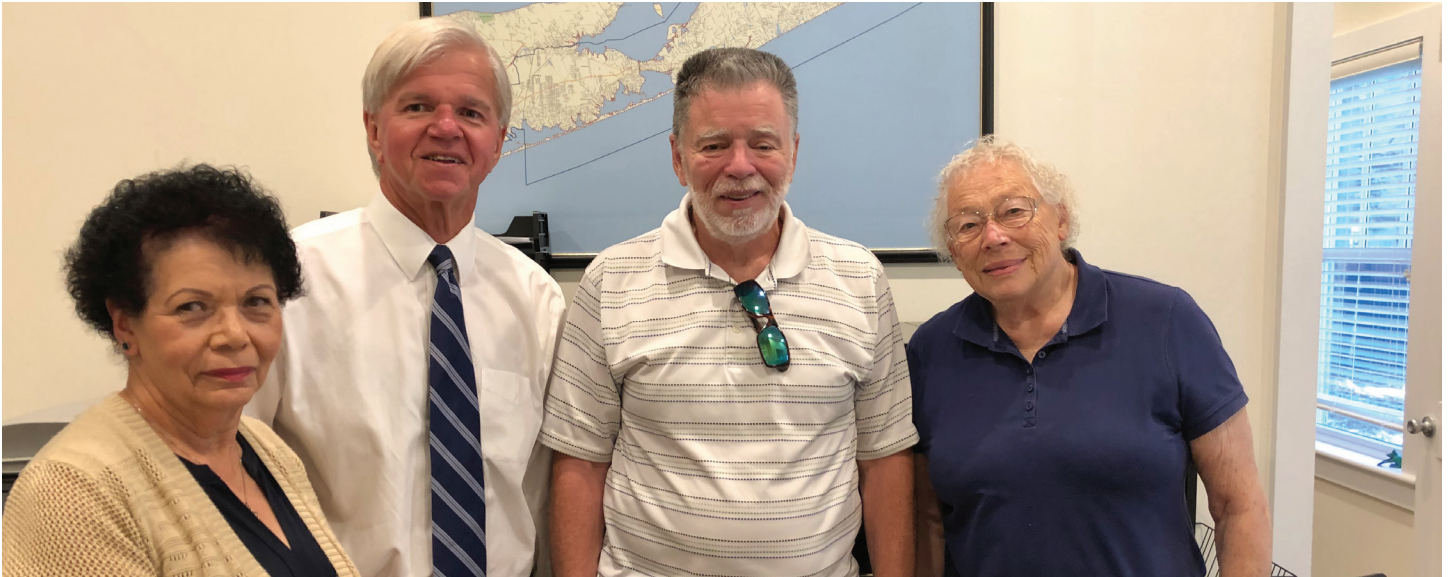


# Assemblyman **Fred W. Thiele, Jr.**

Fall 2019



## **Reports to the People**



*Members of the Manufactured/Mobile Home Park Owners Association of Suffolk County visited my new district office in Sag Harbor to discuss increased protections under Section 233 of the Real Property Law.*

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

### **Peconic Bay Region Community Housing Funds**

Affordable housing has reached a crisis on the East End. Senator Ken LaValle and I have passed legislation in the State Legislature that will authorize the five East End Towns to establish Community Housing Funds. The bill must still be signed by the Governor. Town Boards could establish the fund subject to a mandatory referendum to be held in 2020. The final decision would ultimately be up to the voters.

The Community Housing Fund would be empowered to provide financial assistance to first-time homebuyers, construct community housing for sale or for rent, create public/private housing partnerships including employee housing, rehabilitate existing buildings for housing, and provide housing counseling.

The Town Community Housing Fund would be financed by a 0.5% real estate transfer tax. The exemption from the transfer tax would be increased from \$250,000 to \$400,000 in Towns of East Hampton, Southampton and Shelter Island, and from \$150,000 to \$280,000 in Southold and Riverhead.

This result will be lower closing costs for homebuyers purchasing homes under \$1 million on the South Fork and Shelter Island, and for purchases below \$800,000 on the North Fork.

### **Enhanced Rent Protections for Manufactured/Mobile Home Park Residents**

Manufactured and mobile home (MMH) parks are a critical source of affordable housing, particularly for senior citizens living on fixed incomes. Under a new law which I sponsored, MMH park residents across the State can fight back against rent gouging. Park residents typically own their home and rent the land where the home is located. Under the new law, rent increases are capped at 3% and residents can challenge any increase above 3%. The burden of proof will be on the park owner to demonstrate that the increase is justified.

Other enhanced protections include: lowering the cap on late fee charges from 5% to 3%, prohibiting MMH park owners/operators from charging attorney fees (unless awarded by court order), granting tenants greater protections, if the park's use is changed.

## PROTECTING OUR DRINKING WATER

New York State has adopted the most stringent standards in the nation for the emerging chemicals PFOA and PFOS at 10 parts per trillion. Drinking water in Wainscott, Sagaponack, Hampton Bays, East Quogue and Westhampton have all been impacted by these chemicals.

The 2017 Water Quality Infrastructure Bond Act committed \$2.5 billion over a 5-year period for the support of drinking water infrastructure, wastewater infrastructure and water quality protection. This year's enacted State Budget appropriated an additional \$500 million to fund investments in clean water projects throughout New York.

My work to permit the utilization of up to 20% of the annual revenue of the Peconic Bay Community Preservation Fund (CPF) for water quality improvement projects, in conjunction with the state's water quality programs, will help to reverse declining water quality on the East End.

Finally, legislation I sponsored was signed into law by the Governor that will ensure that polluters, not taxpayers, pay for the clean-up of contamination (Chapter #442 of the Laws of 2019). The new law will clarify the statute of limitations for public and wholesale water suppliers to recover damages from contamination of a public water supply, permitting more time to bring such legal actions. This will strengthen the ability to hold polluters responsible for clean-up costs.



### District Office

*My new district office is located at 3350 Noyac Road, Building B in Sag Harbor.*



### Domestic Violence Awareness

*I met with representatives from The Retreat and Brighter Tomorrows on Domestic Violence Awareness Day in Albany.*



### SIA Conference

*East Hampton High School students, Kendall Stedman and Brody Eggert, were selected to participate in the annual Students Inside Albany (SIA) Conference sponsored by the League of Women Voters of New York State Education Foundation, Inc.*

## SUPPORTING OUR MILITARY AND OUR VETERANS

This year, I passed legislation to enable military voting for all school district elections—including Board of Education members, school district public library trustees and the adoption of the annual budget. I also passed legislation to permit Nassau and Suffolk Counties to waive fees associated with veterans' organizations. Both of these bills were signed into law by the Governor on Veterans Day.

# HISTORIC ELECTION REFORMS

Significant reforms to the state's antiquated electoral system were enacted to expand New Yorkers' access to the polls and bring more transparency to campaign financing. Voters are now able to take advantage of a 9-day early voting period before an election and vote in Federal and State primaries on the same day in June.

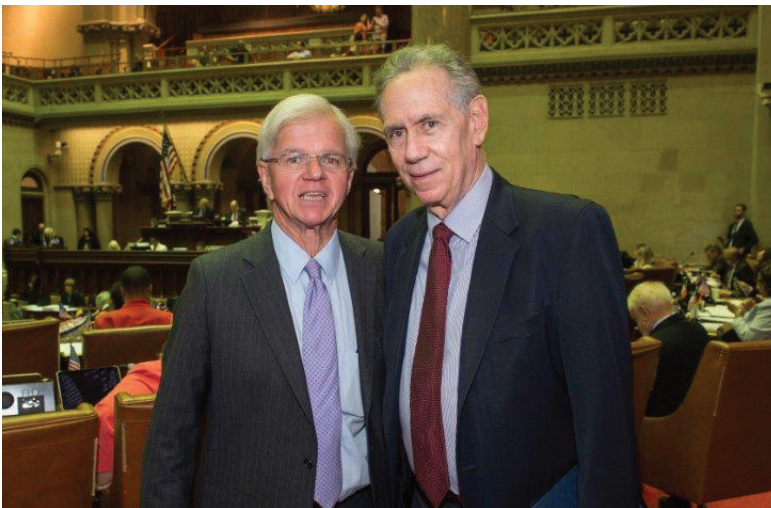
Another revision to the Election Law will give New Yorkers additional time to enroll or change party affiliation and still be eligible to vote in a presidential, congressional and state primary.

The deadline to do so for next year's presidential primary scheduled for April 28, 2020 is February 14th. Further, the placement of a \$5,000 cap on the annual political spending of Limited Liability Companies (LLC) along with increased disclosure requirements will help ensure fairness in New York elections.



**Sabrina McManus**

*Sabrina McManus shared her class project with me to raise awareness of endangered species during my visit to Sag Harbor Elementary School.*



**Art Shamsky**

*Let's go Mets! Art Shamsky, former right fielder of the New York Mets (1968-71), was in Albany on June 18th to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1969 World Champion "Miracle Mets."*

# COMMUTER CONNECTION PROGRESS REPORT

More than 35,000 East End residents have taken the South Fork Commuter Connection (SFCC) since it began on March 4. It has more than doubled the ridership on the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) on the South Fork. I will continue to work with the LIRR to provide more convenient and frequent services. Future infrastructure improvements have been included in the MTA Capital Budget including installation of sidings along the line so that trains can pass each other. This will allow for the operation of additional trains in the near future.



## LUPUS Awareness

*Assembly Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes and I welcomed advocates from the Lupus Agencies of New York State to the Assembly Chamber in recognition of Lupus Awareness Day.*



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## **Reports to the People**

- *Affordable Housing*
- *Protecting Our Drinking Water*
- *Election Reforms*
- *Supporting Military And Veterans*
- *Commuter Progress Report*

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEWS**

### **New Chairmanship**

I was honored to be appointed as the Chairman of the Assembly Committee on Local Governments by the Speaker. The Local Governments Committee oversees issues relating to the needs of New York State's counties, towns, and villages and special districts.

### **Restoring AIM**

In my first year as the Assembly Local Governments Committee Chair, I successfully fought for the 2019-2020 Budget to include a full restoration of the Aid and Incentive to Municipalities Program (AIM) funding, totaling \$715 million. AIM has provided essential state aid to towns, villages and cities outside of New York City since the 2005-2006 Budget.

### **Road Recovery Funding**

I fought to restore \$65 million in State funding for the Extreme Winter Recovery (EWR) program. The EWR program provides necessary support to our municipalities and local governments for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of local highways and roads. This funding is in addition to the \$478 million in State funding provided through the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPs) and Marchiselli programs, and \$200 million for PAVE-NY and Bridge NY.

### **Making the Property Tax Cap Permanent**

I voted to make permanent the 2% property tax cap. The cap has proven to be an effective tool to limit property taxes. New York property taxpayers have saved \$25 billion statewide since 2012.