

HOME RULE MESSAGE REQUESTING THE STATE OF NEW YORK TO ENACT LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING A BI-COUNTY COMMISSION IN THE COUNTIES OF NASSAU AND SUFFOLK TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING THE STATE OF LONG ISLAND (SENATE BILL S.4398 AND ASSEMBLY BILL A.6391)

WHEREAS, Long Island sends billions of dollars annually to Albany in taxes on income, corporations, sales, mortgage, tobacco, insurance and alcohol, as well as racing and motor vehicle fees and MTA commuter taxes; and

WHEREAS, while Long Island receives billions of dollars in direct local aid, tuition assistance, highway aid, pension payments, lottery money, MTA subsidies and Medicaid payment from the State, a 2004 report prepared by Stony Brook University Center for Regional Policy Studies and Department of History and updated in 2008 by Dowling College's Long Island Economic and Social Policy Institute found that Long Island sent \$3 billion more to Albany than what was returned to the taxpayers of Suffolk and Nassau counties; and

WHEREAS, if this inequitable tax distribution was remedied, the average Long Island family of four would realize approximately \$4,000 per year in tax savings; and

WHEREAS, there has been a growing demand for Suffolk and Nassau counties to consolidate into one government to be known as the Commonwealth of Long Island or the State of Long Island; and

WHEREAS, the imbalance of payments between Long Island and Albany could be addressed by the creation of a state made up of both counties allowing the residents in the counties to exercise more control over their finances and relieve them of Albany mandates; and

WHEREAS, Long Island is geographically larger than the states of Rhode Island and Delaware and has a population of just under 3 million residents, which is larger than the combined populations of 17 states; and

WHEREAS, the feasibility of establishing Nassau and Suffolk Counties as a separate state should be seriously studied by representatives of both counties; now, therefore be it

1st RESOLVED, that this Legislature hereby supports Senate Bill No. S.4398 and Assembly Bill No. 6391 to establish a bi-county commission to study the feasibility of establishing the State of Long Island and authorize a non-binding ballot referendum for Nassau and Suffolk Counties in November, 2015; and be it further

2nd RESOLVED, that the Clerk of this Legislature is hereby directed to forward copies of this Resolution to Governor Andrew M. Cuomo; to the Majority Leader of the New York State Senate Dean Skelos; to the Speaker of the New York State Assembly Sheldon Silver; to the Minority Leaders of the New York State Senate and the New York State Assembly; and to each member of the Long Island delegation to the New York State Legislature.

DATED: April 23, 2013 **NOT ADOPTED**