



THE BERLAND BULLETIN

From the Office of Suffolk County Legislator Susan A. Berland



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Welcome to the 16th Legislative District's (16th L.D.) newsletter. Over the course of my first term as County Legislator, I have worked to address the pressing issues facing our district and county. I have and will continue to strive to improve the quality of life of the residents of the 16th L.D.

As your representative on the Legislature, I have sponsored legislation to address the persistent issue of squatters, requiring that the County notify public utilities when homes owned by the County become vacant. Expanding on my efforts as a Town of Huntington Councilwoman, I introduced legislation that requires that a portion of affordable housing units remain affordable in perpetuity, giving

more people a chance to live and work in Suffolk County. As a member of the Legislature's budget working group, I fought to bring cultural and historical funding back to our district, ensuring that our not-for-profit contract agencies remain able to provide services to our constituents and bolstering our local economy.

As a newly-appointed member of the Public Safety Committee, I am committed to supporting our law enforcement personnel and providing them with the resources they need to keep our residents safe. As Chairwoman of the Veterans Committee, I sponsored legislation to recognize May as Military Appreciation Month in Suffolk County and have supported initiatives that ensure greater access to county services so that we may best serve those who have so valiantly served us. As Vice Chair of the Economic Development Committee, I have supported initiatives like the RISE Act to help close the gender pay gap and bring awareness to pay inequity.

Over the course of my first term I have collaborated with residents of the 16th L.D. to serve our common interests, address your concerns and effectuate change. My office door is always open and I welcome your ideas. Please visit our Facebook @SusanABerland as well as our Instagram @LegislatorSusanABerland to receive updates about upcoming and past events throughout our district.

All the best,

LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Combating Illegal Squatters

Illegal squatting is an all too prevalent issue in our County that affects the quality of life and safety of our residents. In an effort to combat illegal squatters, I sponsored legislation which requires that the County notify public utilities when homes owned by the County become vacant. The goal of this law is to prevent someone from turning the utilities on in a home that they are unauthorized to inhabit. This law is a solid first step towards the collaborative relationship that must exist between the County and our public utilities in order to mitigate this ongoing public safety concern. (I.R. 1028-18)

Expanding Housing Options for Suffolk County Residents

I sponsored legislation requiring that a percentage of Suffolk County's contribution to any future affordable housing developments be used to create units that remain affordable in perpetuity. The legislation also requires that when the County gives land for a project pursuant to Section 72h, the house built on that land must be permanently sold at an affordable rate. I sponsored this legislation to continue my work as a Town of Huntington Councilwoman, ensuring that some number of affordable housing units remain affordable in perpetuity, giving more people a chance to live and work in Suffolk County. (I.R. 2209-18)

Honoring Our Veterans' Service

I sponsored legislation to recognize May as Military Appreciation Month in Suffolk County. Suffolk County is home to the largest number of military veterans in the State of New York. Military Appreciation Month encourages Suffolk County residents to publicly show their appreciation for the sacrifices and accomplishments made by our military personnel. (I.R. 1383-19)

Strengthening and Improving County Roads

As a County Legislator I have been and remain committed to maintaining and improving our infrastructure. I co-sponsored numerous pieces of legislation that appropriated funds to improve roads throughout the 16th L.D. (I.R. 1190-19, I.R. 1271-18, I.R. 1299-19, I.R. 1440-18)

Assisting Furloughed Federal Workers

The 2018-2019 partial federal government shutdown was the longest in our history, resulting in 420,000 employees working without pay and 320,000 additional employees being furloughed for five weeks. I co-sponsored legislation giving these federal employees more time to pay their property taxes. (I.R. 1142-19)

Tax Exemptions for Veterans

I sponsored a resolution to provide a property tax exemption for veterans who participated in Operation Graphic Hand, a military action that mobilized personnel to avoid a national emergency in the midst of a mail carrier strike in 1970. Qualified veterans may now apply for the tax exemption with their town's tax assessor's office by March 1, 2020. (I.R. 1768-18)

Supporting Veterans Service Organizations

I co-sponsored a resolution that establishes a 20-year licensing agreement between Warrior Ranch and the County for their use of the Long Island Beagle Club Property. The Warrior Ranch Foundation is a not-for-profit organization that is committed to serving veterans and first responders through horse rescue and interaction. Equine Assisted Psychotherapy has shown to be effective in treating patients, including combat veterans with PTSD, depression and anxiety, among other chronic

conditions. I look forward to seeing all of the amazing work they will do with this new property and the help they will provide to Suffolk County's heroes. (I.R. 1089-19)

EVENTS IN THE 16TH DISTRICT



I had the privilege of joining County Executive Steve Bellone, Laura Ahearn of Crime Victims Center and Mike Bengtson of Splish Splash at the bill signing ceremony for legislation that I sponsored to ensure the safety and well-being of our children at Suffolk County's amusement and water parks.



The League of Women Voters hosted a Student Day event at the Suffolk County Legislature. My colleagues and I spoke with a group of future voters about what it means to be a Suffolk County Legislator and the importance of participation in local government.



In January, I attended the New York State Association of Counties conference in Albany with my colleagues in the Legislature and my peers in county government from across New York State. This conference gives us an opportunity to gather and exchange ideas and define our collective bi-partisan priorities to deliver county services efficiently and best serve our constituents.



Each year, Suffolk County Legislators are tasked with selecting one woman from their districts to become their "Woman of Distinction." This year's choice was clear for me. Lynn, whose children attended a day camp trip where children were assaulted, sprang into action calling for legislation to address the incident. Lynn is an example of what civic participation can and should be and what happens when constituents and elected officials collaborate to effectuate change.



I was proud to join my colleagues in government to bring awareness to Equal Pay Day. April 2, 2019 is the date women must work until in order to earn the same salary that men earned in 2018. Women in New York continue to make less than our male counterparts; 88 cents for every dollar, adding up to \$6,735 this year as compared to \$5,766 last year. I was proud to co-sponsor the RISE Act as a means of addressing this persistent pay gap and my colleagues and I will continue to work to close the gap.



To celebrate March as Women's History Month, the Legislature's media team followed me around to get a look into what my average day looks like. I had a great time showing all of the amazing things the 16th Legislative District has to offer. One of our stops was The John and Alice Coltrane Home in Dix Hills to check in on the great progress they are making on its restoration. We also visited Gurwin Jewish Nursing and Rehabilitation Center and the Suffolk Y JCC's Jewish Sports Hall of Fame!



As a member of the budget working group, I fought to bring funding back to our district and, for the first time, allocated funding to the Jewish Sports Hall of Fame. The Suffolk Y Jewish Community Center is home to the National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame which is one of the few of its kind in our country. This unique cultural attraction will preserve an important part of history and attract people from all over to the 16th Legislative District.



Half Hollow Hills Central School District and the Special Olympics.

It is not every day that someone celebrates their 104th Birthday, which is why I was honored to attend the Commack Hills Tova Hadassah Chapter Luncheon to celebrate Gladys Meresman's 104th Birthday and to present her with a proclamation and 16th Legislative District pin in recognition of the occasion. Gladys is an active member of the Commack Hills Tova Chapter, an inspiration to her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren and is an asset to our community!



I was delighted to attend the award ceremony for my friends at the Town of Huntington's developmentally disabled bowling tournament. Congratulations to the bowlers on a job well done!

EVENTS IN THE 16TH DISTRICT

As the mother of an Eagle Scout, I know the time and dedication needed to achieve the rank of Eagle and just how special the Eagle Court of Honor Ceremonies are for the young men and their families. These young men, through hard work and determination, are bettering our community. I wish them all the best in their future endeavors and cannot wait to see the great things they will achieve with their new eagle wings.



From left to right: Troop 106 Eagle Scouts Joshua Kimelstein, Tristan Delaney, Dylan Campbell and Thomas Kawalski; Troop 157 Eagle Scouts Michael Joyce and Richard Incandela; Troop 309 Eagle Scouts Jason Bruckner and Benjamin Rochler; Troop 309 Eagle Scout Blaise Vastola.

Over the last few months, one of my favorite things has been traveling to elementary schools in the 16th L.D to participate in their P.A.R.P or Pick A Reading Partner program. P.A.R.P is important because children who read at home are better prepared to succeed in formal education. The program encourages a partner, be they a parent, grandparent, sibling or someone else to spend 20 minutes reading to and with a child at home each day. Encouraging children to develop a life-long love of reading early on is vital. I was so happy to be invited to read some of my own favorite childhood stories to these classes to show them how important reading is and how fun it can be.



Hemlock Elementary School



Countrywood Elementary School



Deer Park Elementary School



Sunsquam Elementary School



Brentwood Elementary School



Signal Hill Elementary School