

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATOR KARA HAHN



FIFTH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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HAHN'S PARKLAND PROTECTION MEASURE APPROVED

*Proposal to mandate eminent domain compensation is used for
open space preservation passes unanimously*

RIVERHEAD, NY – The Suffolk County Legislature last week unanimously approved a bill that will protect parkland and advance conservation efforts despite eminent domain pressures. The initiative, sponsored by Legislator Kara Hahn (D-Setauket), requires that all future compensation realized by the County as a result of an eminent domain acquisition of its parkland by New York State will be used specifically for the preservation of other open space parcels. This comes in response to a 2014 taking of 1.5 acres of county owned parkland by the New York State Department of Transportation for construction of a recharge basin in Smithtown.

“When the county buys parkland, it uses money specifically set aside for land acquisition, funded by sales tax revenues. But there is no specific fund when the money flows the other way,” said Legislator Hahn. “I just want to make sure any money we are reimbursed gets put back toward its original intended purpose of saving open space and protecting drinking water.”

With over 46,000 acres of parkland under its management, Suffolk County has the largest county owned park system in the country. Purchase of thousands of acres

[More]

within this vast system can be directly linked to programs or funding mechanisms approved by voters through public referenda.

The bill now goes to County Executive Steve Bellone for his signature. Once signed, the policy will become effect immediately upon its filing with the New York Secretary of State.

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