

# OFFICE OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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## ***PRESS RELEASE***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **You Can't Manage if You Don't Measure**

**Legislature Adopts Gregory's Plan Requiring Agencies Funded by Taxpayers Prove They are Being Effective at Performing the Work They are Paid for**

*AMITYVILLE, NY* – The old business adage, “*You can't manage if you don't measure*” was given some new life at the Tuesday October 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Suffolk County Legislature in Riverhead.

There lawmakers from both sides of the aisle unanimously supported an initiative (R.871) championed by Majority Leader DuWayne Gregory (D-Amityville) requiring that agencies funded by taxpayer dollars prove they are being effective at performing the work they are paid for.

More than 500 community agencies, charitable organizations and specialized service providers contract with the County every year. And while that might seem like a lot, it's with good reason. Because whether it's caring for battered women, conducting critical environmental preservation programs or revitalizing our downtowns – these agency experts provide a higher level of professional service at a cost lower than if County employees were to do the work.

To ensure that these organizations are actually accomplishing the work they are contracted to do, Gregory authored a law requiring that any agency contracting with the County for \$50,000 or more must identify – in conjunction with the contract agency's administering department – key performance measures and to develop an annual performance reporting plan.

– MORE, MORE, MORE –

Currently, County department do oversee the administration of contracts under their jurisdiction. But reporting the efficacy of an agency's efforts is left to individual administrators and there is no standardized reporting mandate or deadline.

Under Gregory's law, County departments and agencies will establish working groups – in conjunction with the County Executive's performance management team – to identify appropriate performance indicators for each contract agency and to evaluate performance measures on a monthly basis.

"I didn't write this law because we have a particular problem with any of our contract agencies. Most of them do tremendous work," says Gregory. "I did this because it's our job as lawmakers to scrutinize every dollar we spend on the public's behalf. These reports will allow us to better measure the effectiveness of our programing priorities. And when we accomplish that then we'll be more successful at managing the allocation of our increasingly limited financial resources."

Starting next year, all agencies funded \$50,000 or more in the 2014 Operating Budget must have submitted – by the overseeing County department in their departmental budget – a statement of the agency's actual performance during that fiscal year. The deadline for those submissions will be no later than September 15th of each year. This annual autumn reporting requirement dovetails directly into the County's budgeting season.

Gregory's law will allow County policymakers to make better informed budgeting and policy decisions when earmarking resources in out years after the performance standards have been implemented, documented and reported. As the reporting continues further into the out months and years, a whole explosion of information, micro-trends and new data will allow for even more effective long-term planning and budgeting.

"Implementing this plan will not only make me and my colleagues more effective and accountable when it comes to spending taxpayers' dollars," says Gregory. "But future lawmakers will really benefit. Because they will have long-term, specific data on how effective individual agencies, policies and initiatives are – or aren't. And not in the abstract or aggregate either. But in real, actual practice right here in the County."

The bill goes next to the County Executive's desk for approval.