

PRESS RELEASE FROM  
PRESIDING OFFICER DUWAYNE GREGORY



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Monday, August 3, 2015



CONTACT: KATIE BAKER  
Office: 631-853-4857  
Cell: 740-485-1125  
[Katie.Baker@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:Katie.Baker@suffolkcountyny.gov)

## Gregory, Stern Call on State to Allow Counties to Restrict Residency of Sex Offenders

*Ask State Assembly To Convene Special Session Before School Starts*



**DIX HILLS, N.Y.** – Suffolk County Legislature Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory and 16th District Legislator Steve Stern on Thursday called for the state to allow counties to restrict the residency of sex offenders. The lawmakers were joined by Parents for Megan’s Law and the Crime Victims Center, who hosted a press conference in front of Rolling Hills Primary School in Dix Hills.

In February, the New York State Court of Appeals struck down local laws limiting the residency of sex offenders, finding such regulation was [preempted by state law](#). As a result, [Suffolk County’s law](#), which prohibited all registered sex offenders from residing within a quarter of a mile of any school, licensed daycare center or playground, is no longer valid. State law only places residency requirements on certain classes of sex offenders and also allows sex offenders to live closer to schools.

In order for the Suffolk County law to be reinstated, the New York State Assembly must pass legislation that clearly gives municipalities back the power to regulate the residency of sex offenders. The New York State Senate [has already passed a bill](#) that does this, but the State Assembly has yet to act, and a special session must be convened in order to usher through the bill before school starts this fall.

“Suffolk County has a responsibility to protect its children from sex offenders, and we have been stripped of that power,” said Presiding Officer Gregory. “I urge the New York State Assembly to clarify legislative intent and give control back to the local governments that are closest to the communities they serve. Let us protect our kids.”

“Our laws must afford communities and victims of sex crimes protections from those we know pose a risk to their safety,” said Laura Ahearn, executive director of Parents for Megan’s Law and the Crime Victims Center. “The Court of Appeals decision stripped counties across New York from protections provided by lawmakers through their implementation of sex offender management initiatives. It is my honor to stand with Legislator Gregory and county and state lawmakers to advocate for counties across the state to have their legislative power restored.”

“Many of us are enjoying our summer vacations,” Legislator Stern said. “Our children are on vacation from school, our state legislature is not in session. But sex offenders don’t take vacation. We cannot have our most vulnerable children at risk when they return to school in September. I call on our state representatives to get to work now to protect our children.”

The event was also attended by 3rd District Legislator Kate Browning, 6th District Legislator Sarah Anker, 9th District Legislator Monica Martinez, and 12th District Legislator Leslie Kennedy.

**Attached Photo: Suffolk County Legislature Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory, at podium, called on the state to give counties back the power to regulate the residency of sex offenders at a press conference July 30. The event, held in front of Rolling Hills Primary School in Dix Hills, was hosted by Parents for Megan’s Law and the Crime Victims Center and 16th District Legislator Steve Stern.**

###