

NEWS FROM Legislator

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SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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Fighting Back in Huntington Station

Legislator Lou D'Amaro Unveils Additional Community Measures to Deter Crime and Eliminate Gangs



Pictured from left, Suffolk Legislator Lou D'Amaro (D-Huntington Station) discusses Huntington Station safety initiatives with Suffolk County Police Commissioner Richard Dormer and County Executive Steve Levy.

(HUNTINGTON STATION, NY...August 23, 2010) – Seeking to enhance the County's comprehensive response to criminal and gang related activities in Huntington Station, Suffolk County Legislator Lou D'Amaro (D-Huntington Station) recently met with County Executive Steve Levy and Police Commissioner Richard Dormer to discuss his new proposals to help guaranty the safety of local residents.

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Specifically, D'Amaro outlined several new ideas to combat the recent spate of street violence plaguing the area, including the creation of an electronic neighborhood watch program and the formation of a new sub-sector in the 2nd Precinct to patrol the most at-risk areas of Huntington Station.

Introductory Resolution 1876 – 2010, which D'Amaro introduced at the August 17, 2010 General Legislature meeting, directs the Suffolk County Department of Information Technology to determine the feasibility of establishing and maintaining an electronic neighborhood watch program using the 25 security cameras presently owned by the Huntington Station Business Improvement District (BID). Under the measure, the Department will have 60 days to submit a report back to the Legislature detailing the benefits, drawbacks, costs and practical implications of the proposal. The bill has been assigned to the Legislature's Ways and Means Committee, which D'Amaro chairs, and will be up for consideration at the September 8th committee meeting.

"The Huntington Station BID security cameras have been essential in capturing key evidence that has led to the arrest and prosecution of several criminals," said Legislator D'Amaro. "It makes perfect sense to enhance their deterrent effect by capitalizing on the ability to stream the cameras' images on a live video feed that is accessible to the public via the internet. Innovative programs such as this are being utilized with much success in different states across the country and are proving pivotal in creating an electronic neighborhood watch where residents can monitor their community at all times and report suspicious criminal behavior to the police."

The new sub-sector initiative will allow the 2nd Precinct to more easily focus on hotspots in sectors 202 and 203, which encompass both the residential areas near the Jack Abrams School and the New York Avenue commercial corridor near the railroad tracks.

"The formation of a special sector within a sector will provide enhanced police patrols, in a block by block approach, to the most at-risk areas of Huntington Station," said D'Amaro. "This unique micro-targeting concept will allow the police to more efficiently focus their resources in order to respond to the trends and needs of the community."

Both County Executive Levy and Police Commissioner Dormer were receptive to the proposals and pledged to work cooperatively with Legislator D'Amaro on their swift implementation.

"This type of comprehensive, multi-level approach in law enforcement has enabled us to begin to turn the tide on crime, and more importantly, provides a level of reassurance for homeowners and residents that they can feel safe in their own communities," said County Executive Levy.

D'Amaro's new measures come on the heels of a host of other County actions taken in response to recent criminal incidents. In particular, the area near Jack Abrams School recently received beefed up patrols with the addition of 4 officers (on both foot post and car patrol) transferred specifically to the school from the Suffolk County Police Department Headquarters. These patrols are on top of the 21-member Special Operations Team (the undercover unit, still operating in Huntington Station, that was instrumental in the high profile arrests of 10 Latin King gang members this Spring) and FBI units that are still actively pursuing local gangs.

"I was also able to secure the commitment of County Executive Levy to form a new Friday Night/Saturday Night patrol unit that will monitor social media sites like Facebook and work the community to learn the locations and dates of large gatherings," D'Amaro said. "This unit will work in coordination with the other patrols to crack down on any illegal activities that occur at parties and social spots and is yet another example of an outside the box response that goes beyond traditional patrolling."

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“This is an ongoing, concerted effort by all levels of government to push back against violence and revitalize Huntington Station,” D’Amaro added. “Community leaders have pledged to meet with area elected officials every month to get police updates, to discuss concerns, and to brainstorm for new ideas. I thank the County Executive for supporting my new initiatives, and I am committed to proactively working with him, other Huntington elected officials, and the entire community to secure our streets and safeguard our residents. It is a fight we will win.”

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Suffolk County Legislator Lou D’Amaro (D-Huntington Station) represents the 17th Legislative District, which includes parts of Huntington Station, Huntington, South Huntington, Melville, West Hills, Dix Hills, Deer Park, North Babylon and West Babylon. He is Chairman of the Ways and Means committee, Vice-Chairman of the Environment, Planning and Agriculture committee, and Vice-Chairman of the Budget and Finance committee of the Suffolk County Legislature.