

**Press Release**  
**COUNTY OF SUFFOLK**



**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**  
**H. Lee Dennison Building**  
**100 Veterans Memorial Highway**  
**P.O. Box 6100**  
**Hauppauge, New York 11788-0099**  
**(631) 853-4000**

**Steven Bellone**  
**SUFFOLK COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

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**Contact Information:**

**Vanessa B. Streeter, Justin Meyers**

**631-853-7801 (office), 516-967-2345**

**631-885-2298 (cell)**

**Press Release**

**Bellone and Legislator Martinez Announce Opening of  
Suffolk County Resource Center In Collaboration with  
Make the Road New York**

*Suffolk County Departments of Labor, Social Services and Human  
Rights Commission will provide services on site*

**(Brentwood, NY-February 20, 2014)** County Executive Bellone was joined by Legislator Monica Martinez, Javier Valdes, Co-Executive Director of Make the Road NY, the Departments

of Social Services, Labor and the Human Rights Commission to announce on-site county services to be offered at Make the Road New York in Brentwood, NY.

“Ensuring that all residents have access to County services is of the utmost importance to my administration,” said County Executive Steve Bellone. “Today, we have the opportunity to do just that in the Brentwood and Central Islip communities. We have created a county resource center in Brentwood that will be staffed one a week with representatives from the Departments of Labor, Social Services and the Human Rights Commission. These services are made possible by the County’s collaboration with Make the Road NY, 1090 Suffolk Ave., Brentwood, NY. I thank Legislator Monica Martinez for her continued advocacy and leadership in ensuring services reach those who are in need.”

The partnership with Make the Road NY developed over the past 6 months as Suffolk County is looking toward increasing access to county services by underserved communities. Many residents of the Brentwood and Central Islip communities have had limited access to County services in the past due to a variety of reasons ranging from language access, to a lack of awareness about what is available, to limited transportation allowing them to access County buildings where services are delivered. In an effort to ensure full access to all services available, Suffolk County’s Department of Social Services, Department of Labor, and Human Rights Commission will station representatives on site at Make the Road NY, a non-profit organization with strong ties to the Brentwood and Central Islip community.

“As legislator of the 9th district, in collaboration with County Executive Steve Bellone and Make the Road New York, I feel extremely gratified to be able to bring one of my campaign platform points to fruition, stated Legislator Monica Martinez. “Providing residents with a resource center, allows the community to access the Department of Labor, Department of Social Services and the Human Rights Commission at the heart of the community. By bringing these services, it allows us to empower our community through education, skill building, and advocacy. This accomplishment is tangible evidence that working together with the community, organizations, and elected officials, the 9th district has made and will continue to make progress.”

“Make the Road New York is proud to partner with Suffolk County to bring County services closer to the community,” stated Javier H. Valdes, Co-Executive Director of Make the Road NY “Hundreds of members of the Suffolk community come through our doors every week and will benefit from increased access to County services. Efforts like this show Suffolk County's commitment to an open and accessible government for all.”

### **Description of Services**

Every Thursday from 9am – 1 pm, Suffolk County will have a DSS representative and a DOL representative at Make the Road offices in Brentwood in order to educate and provide technical assistance in a location convenient to the community.

- DSS will offer on-the-spot food stamp enrollment and Medicaid enrollment as well as eligibility screening and referrals to public assistance (TANF). They will also provide

referrals to shelters, transportation, and subsidized childcare to eligible residents as appropriate.

- DOL will offer on-the-spot resume and job search assistance as well as eligibility screening and referrals to vocational and work readiness training programs. They will also provide referrals to GED, Adult Basic Education, and English as a Second Language classes to eligible residents as appropriate.

In addition, the Human Rights Commission will be available to meet community members by appointment at the Make The Road site to discuss and offer assistance for any claims of unlawful discrimination. All services will be available in English and in Spanish.

“As a resident of Central Islip and a member of Make the Road NY, I am really excited about the partnership that my organization and Suffolk County are launching today,” said Carlos Reyes, Salvadorian Immigrant and member of Make the Road NY. “Many low income immigrants and individuals in my community need access to county services, and having these services at a place we trust and consider home is a great advantage. Many people will be able to access services in their own language and at a place where they will feel comfortable regardless of who they are or where they come from.”

### **About Make the Road NY:**

Make the Road New York (MRNY) builds the power of Latino and working class communities to achieve dignity and justice through organizing, policy innovation, transformative education, and survival services.

At our Suffolk County office, Make the Road New York provides crucial support services to members of the community. Our culturally and linguistically competent staff provide legal assistance, naturalization clinics, ESL classes, health access services, and civic engagement opportunities.

Through our services about 300 come through our doors each week and we hold periodic clinics and drives periodically which draw many more.



(Roderick Pearson, Executive Director-Suffolk County Community Services, John Nieves, Department of Social Services, Javier Valdes, Co-Director, Make the Road NY, Rabbi Moss, Chairperson-Suffolk County Human Rights Commission, John O'Neill, Commissioner-Suffolk County Department of Social Services, Dr. Hafiz ur Rehman, Commissioner-Suffolk County Human Rights Commission, County Executive Steve Bellone, Jennifer Blaske, Executive Director of the Suffolk County Human Rights Commission, Legislator Monica Martinez, Karina Claudio, Lead Organizer-Make the Road NY, Carlos Reyes, Salvadorian Immigrant and member of Make the Road NY, Katherine Daniel, Assistant to the Commissioner of Labor, Licensing and Consumer Affairs, Gloria Maher, Suffolk County Department of Labor technician)

