

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE  
COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



Office of Suffolk County Legislature Republican Caucus Leader Kevin J. McCaffrey

For Immediate Release  
Date: June 3, 2015

Contact: Gregory Atherton  
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## **REPUBLICAN CAUCUS SUCCESSFULLY PROMPTS DEMOCRATS TO MAKE ESSENTIAL BUDGET CUTS**

Hauppauge, NY: As Suffolk County rests at the very cusp of financial ruin, experiencing unprecedented levels of borrowing and lavish spending, last week the Suffolk County Legislature's Republican Caucus presented a number of suggested cuts to the Capital Budget Working Group's proposal. The Republican plan essentially reduced spending on a number of projects by 10%, which amounted to a savings in excess of \$10,000,000. This cost-saving proposal was immediately dismissed out-of-hand by the Democrats, who essentially labeled it as unrealistic and even disingenuous, claiming it was just too late in the process for saving any of the public's money in 2016.

The fact that the Legislature's Democrats would not even fathom such a proposal by the Republican Caucus's is attributed to something much deeper than typical partisan politics. The refusal to give even a shred of credence to a solution that could put the County on the road to fiscal stability is ingrained in their destructive tax-and-spend philosophy, which as of late has become intensified. However, the "spend now, ask questions later" members of the Legislature began to rethink their position when they learned the Republicans would be filing their proposed cuts as a resolution.

Fast-forward only one week to the June 2<sup>nd</sup> General Meeting, and the Democrats mysteriously seemed eager to reduce spending, particularly in relation to the proposed serial bonding for 2016. The pre-amended version of the Working Group's 2016 Capital Budget proposed \$8,875,000 in such bonding, which was in excess of the County Executive's plan. The Democrats, now singing a new tune, voted with the Republicans to bring the serial bonding down to zero. This end result closely mimicked the Republican Caucus's plan presented last week, which is proof positive of its merit and necessity.

"The Republican plan was clearly the motivation behind the Democrats' suddenly being interested in the fiscal health of the County," said Republican Caucus Leader Kevin McCaffrey

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(R-Lindenhurst). “After all was said and done, the Republican plan to cut the borrowing and spending spree – a practice which has the potential of bringing the County into bankruptcy – obviously resounded in the minds of its original opponents. Regardless of who wants to take the credit for this positive direction, let us hope we stay the course.”

Other members of the Republican Caucus were also happy with the amended Capital Budget and were eager to share their insight. Legislator Leslie Kennedy (R-Nesconset) explained that “[a]s pragmatic realists, we worked to come up with cuts to support that which should be done from that which should be deferred, always remembering the difference between wants and needs and the fact that we work with the people’s money.”

Similarly, Legislator Tom Cilmi (R-East Islip) explained that while he was “...disappointed that the Democrat majority of the Legislature rejected our call for additional modest cuts, we’re encouraged that our leadership ultimately resulted in last minute changes to a budget amendment that otherwise would have added close to \$10 million to the proposed budget for 2016. We continue to believe that the County could and should be much more frugal when it comes to spending taxpayer dollars, particularly when it means borrowing to do so.”

It remains to be seen whether this common-sense approach to budgeting in Suffolk County will continue to prevail in future deliberations at the Legislature. Despite the misgivings of some, Legislator McCaffrey remained optimistic. “The events at yesterday’s meeting just might represent the spark that returns Suffolk County to an ideal financial position,” added McCaffrey. “We can certainly streamline government operations, while simultaneously maintaining both our infrastructure and public safety. We owe it to the people of Suffolk County to get our finances back in order and ensure that the economic environment improves for our children.”

*The Suffolk County Legislature’s Republican Caucus is comprised of 6 members: Thomas F. Barraga; Tom Cilmi; Leslie Kennedy; Kevin J. McCaffrey (Leader); Tom Muratore; and Robert Trotta.*