



CITIZENS SAY ENOUGH. TIME TO END SUFFOLK COUNTY'S ILLEGAL FEES

SMITHTOWN – On October 2, Reclaim New York Initiative hosted a press conference with Suffolk County residents, and Legislator Rob Trotta.

The press conference addressed Suffolk Bill 1850: A Charter Law to Ensure the Legality of Suffolk County Fees.

Under state law, fees cannot be more than the cost of specific services. Any surplus money passed to a government's general fund is an illegal tax. Suffolk County lawmakers know this. Their legal counsel advised them that the law was likely illegal.

If passed, Trotta's bill would put the cost of fees front and center. The county would be required to disclose the true cost of services before finalizing a budget. In addition, the bill would prevent future illegal fees by prohibiting the county from transferring fee revenue to the general fund.

"Reclaim New York Initiative applauds Legislator Trotta for taking a stand against Suffolk County's predatory fees," said **Executive Director Brandon Muir**. "Suffolk

County residents have suffered for far too long. They're already struggling under New York's high taxes and burdensome regulations. They don't need lawmakers robbing them blind. This legislation would finally provide Suffolk County residents with the transparency they deserve."

"Excessive illegal recording fees from Suffolk County discriminate against real estate investors and directly impact the local businesses and communities they work hard to improve," said **Melissa Shea**. "LIREIA supports Reclaim New York in working to reduce these fees so that it doesn't hurt Long Island Families."

"Instead of finding ways to help keep Long Island's youth from leaving, the Suffolk County Legislature is actually going out of their way to make the cost of buying a home here even worse" said **Joseph Latini**, a local Mortgage Banker in Hauppauge on Tuesday. "These fee increases raise the cost of an average closing by approximately \$1400 per transaction. What is worse, is the people who get hit hardest by these fees are the people who are purchasing lower cost housing, which are predominantly first time home buyers and Long Island's elderly."

"This administration's use of exorbitant fees as a mechanism to plug budget holes is simply a back door tax," said **Legislator Trotta**. "This bill would prevent these irresponsible practices from continuing and ensure greater transparency."

"Suffolk County residents are tired of getting nicked and dimed by these hidden taxes. It amazes me that my colleagues would continue to push through these fees when their very legality is still in question," said **Legislator Flotteron**.

A vote on the bill is to be scheduled for October 16th.