Nassau County Legislature Special Meeting: State Of The County Address Public Notice 03/06/2024

Documents:

3-6-24 STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS.PDF

2. State Of The County Address Agenda 3-6-24

Documents:

NCL FULL SPECIAL STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS 03.06.2024.PDF



PUBLIC NOTICE

THE NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE WILL HOLD A SPECIAL MEETING

ON

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2024 AT 7:00PM

WHEREBY COUNTY EXECUTIVE BRUCE A. BLAKEMAN WILL DELIVER THE STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS

AT

THE PETER J. SCHMITT MEMORIAL LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER THEODORE ROOSEVELT EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BUILDING 1550 FRANKLIN AVENUE MINEOLA, NEW YORK 11501

As per the Nassau County Fire Marshal's Office, the Peter J. Schmitt Memorial Legislative Chamber has a maximum occupancy of 200 people.

The Nassau County Legislature is committed to making its public meetings accessible to individuals with disabilities and every reasonable accommodation will be made so that they can participate. Please contact the Office of the Clerk of the Legislature at 571-4252, or the Nassau County Office for the Physically Challenged at 227-7101 or TDD Telephone No. 227-8989 if any assistance is needed. Every Legislative meeting is streamed live on http://www.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/Legis/index.html

MICHAEL C. PULITZER Clerk of the Legislature Nassau County, New York

DATED: February 28, 2024 Mineola, NY

	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	
2	
3	NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE
4	FULL LEGISLATURE MEETING
5	*****
6	HOWARD J. KOPEL
7	PRESIDING OFFICER
8	* * * * * *
9	SPECIAL MEETING
10	*****
11	STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS
12	COUNTY EXECUTIVE
13	BRUCE BLAKEMAN
14	*****
15	County Executive and Legislative Building
16	1550 Franklin Avenue
17	Mineola, New York
18	*****
19	Wednesday, March 6, 2023
20	7:10 p.m.
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	TAKEN BY: ALEXA LORENZO, OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER
	TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-35161

	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	
2	LEGISLATOR HOWARD KOPEL
3	Presiding Officer
4	7th Legislative District
5	* * *
6	LEGISLATOR THOMAS MCKEVITT
7	Alternate Presiding Officer
8	13th Legislative District
9	***
10	LEGISLATOR JOHN FERRETTI, JR.
11	Alternate Deputy Presiding Officer
12	15th Legislative District
13	***
14	LEGISLATOR SCOTT DAVIS
15	1st Legislative District
16	***
17	LEGISLATOR SIELA BYNOE
18	2nd Legislative District
19	* * *
20	LEGISLATOR CARRIE SOLAGES
21	3rd Legislative District
22	* * *
23	LEGISLATOR PATRICK MULLANEY
24	4th Legislative District
25	
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	
2	LEGISLATOR SETH KASLOW
3	5th Legislative District
4	* * *
5	LEGISLATOR DEBRA MULE
6	6th Legislative District
7	***
8	LEGISLATOR JOHN J. GIUFFRE
9	8th Legislative District
10	***
11	LEGISLATOR SCOTT STRAUSS
12	9th Legislative District
13	***
14	LEGISLATOR MAZI MELESA PILIP
15	10th Legislative District
16	***
17	LEGISLATOR MICHAEL GIANGREGORIO
18	12th Legislative District
19	***
20	LEGISLATOR C. WILLIAM GAYLOR, III
21	14th Legislative District
22	* * *
23	LEGISLATOR ARNOLD W. DRUCKER
24	16th Legislative District
25	* * *
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	
2	LEGISLATOR ROSE MARIE WALKER
3	17th Legislative District
4	* * *
5	LEGISLATOR SAMANTHA GOETZ
6	18th Legislative District
7	***
8	LEGISLATOR JAMES KENNEDY
9	19th Legislative District
10	***
11	MICHAEL PULITZER
12	Clerk of the Legislature
13	
14	JAMES DARCY, ESQ.
15	Attorney for Clerk of the Legislature
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3	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: We're
4	going to get started. As always, we
5	start with the Pledge of Allegiance. I
6	ask you to all rise and join the Pledge
7	to be lead by Legislator Goetz.
8	(Whereupon, the Pledge of
9	Allegiance is said by all.)
10	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.
11	Mr. Pulitzer, would you please call the
12	roll?
13	CLERK PULITZER: Thank you,
14	Presiding Officer.
15	Deputy Presiding Officer Thomas
16	McKevitt?
17	LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Here.
18	CLERK PULITZER: Alternate Deputy
19	Presiding Officer John Ferretti?
20	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Here.
21	CLERK PULITZER: Alternate Deputy
22	Minority Leader Siela Bynoe?
23	LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Here.
24	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Carrie
25	A. Solages?
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	
2	LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Here.
3	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Debra
4	Mule?
5	LEGISLATOR MULE: Here.
6	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator C.
7	William Gaylor, III?
8	LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Present.
9	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator John
10	Giuffre?
11	LEGISLATOR GIUFFRE: Here.
12	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Mazi
13	Pilip?
14	LEGISLATOR PILIP: Here.
15	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Scott
16	Davis?
17	LEGISLATOR DAVIS: Present.
18	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator James
19	Kennedy?
20	LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Here.
21	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Patrick
22	Mullaney?
23	LEGISLATOR MULLANEY: Here.
24	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Seth
25	Koslow?
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	
2	LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: Here.
3	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Scott
4	Strauss?
5	LEGISLATOR STRAUSS: Present.
6	CLERK PULITZER: Deputy Minority
7	Leader Arnold Drucker?
8	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Here.
9	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Rose
10	Marie Walker?
11	LEGISLATOR WALKER: Here.
12	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Samantha
13	Goetz?
14	LEGISLATOR GOETZ: Here.
15	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Michael
16	Giangregorio?
17	LEGISLATOR GIANGREGORIO: Here.
18	CLERK PULITZER: Minority Leader
19	Delia DeRiggi-Whitton?
20	LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: Here.
21	CLERK PULITZER: Presiding Officer
22	Howard Kopel?
23	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Here.
24	CLERK PULITZER: We have a quorum,
25	sir.
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	
2	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Let me
3	let you all know that we have to wait a
4	minute or two. Please put your phones on
5	mute, if you haven't already.
6	(Whereupon, a brief recess.)
7	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Ladies and
8	gentlemen, it is my great pleasure to
9	introduce the county executive, County
10	Executive Bruce Blakeman.
11	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: Did
12	they have to stop the music, it's
13	definitely going to be more fun than my
14	speech (laughter).
15	First of all, I want to thank each
16	and every one of you for coming out here
17	tonight for our State of the County
18	speech. This is my third one, and I think
19	we've got a lot of great things to talk
20	about.
21	First of all, as I as I did in my
22	inauguration, I want to first, thank God,
23	as we say in my religion, HaShem, for
24	giving me the strength to be county
25	executive. I pray that God continues to
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	
2	give me the wisdom, courage, and
3	compassion to serve the residents of this
4	great county to the best of my ability.
5	With that, I would ask you all to please
6	rise at this point for a moment of
7	silence as we remember, and we pray for
8	some of the people that we lost this
9	year.
10	(Whereupon, all rise.)
11	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: As you
12	all know, we had a very horrific bus
13	accident of our Farmingdale High School
14	band up in Orange County, and we lost two
15	great teachers, Beatrice Ferrari and Gina
16	Rose Pelletiere. We also had a horrible
17	drunk driving incident that took two of
18	our young athletes, two young tennis
19	players from Roslyn, Drew Hassenbein and
20	Ethan Falkowitz.
21	And we also want to remember our
22	veterans, our military that lost their
23	lives. We want to remember all of our law
24	enforcement personnel throughout the
25	country who gave their lives. We want to
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	
2	also remember all our first responders.
3	In addition, we also mourn the
4	innocent victims of the HAMAS attack on
5	Israel, the recent loss of our military
6	personnel in Syria, and the recent loss
7	of police and EMT in the state of
8	Minnesota. So if we could have a moment
9	of silence, please.
10	(Whereupon, a moment of
11	silence is observed by all.)
12	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: Thank
13	you very much. Please be seated.
14	(Whereupon, all seated.)
15	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: First of
16	all, I want to thank our presiding
17	officer, Howard Kopel, and I want to
18	officially congratulate him on becoming
19	presiding officer. Let's have a hand for
20	Howard.
21	(Whereupon, applause.)
22	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: And
23	congratulations to our new Minority
24	Leader, Delia DeRiggi-Whitton.
25	Congratulations to you.
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	
2	(Whereupon, applause.)
3	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: And to
4	all the members of the Legislature, both
5	old and new, thank you for giving me this
6	opportunity in these beautiful chambers
7	here to address you all today.
8	I am blessed to have great, great
9	colleagues in government that join with
10	me: Our terrific Comptroller, Elaine
11	Phillips. Thank you, Elaine; our Clerk,
12	who does an amazing job and has done for
13	decades now, Maureen O'Connell; and our
14	District Attorney, Anne Donnelly, our
15	chief law enforcement officer, who does
16	such a great job each and every day for
17	us to keep us safe here in Nassau County.
18	And I want to especially thank and
19	congratulate her on a re-election, our
20	supervisor from North Hempstead Jen
21	DeSena. Thank you so much. And Joe
22	Saladino, I believe, is en route and will
23	be here shortly from the great Town of
24	Oyster Bay. So thank you to each and
25	every one of you.

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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	
2	And thank you to all in the
3	audience, many of whom are part of our
4	administration. Thank you for your hard
5	work. Specifically, I want to thank all
6	of our union representatives and leaders
7	that are here today. We really
8	appreciate that you took the time off to
9	be with us so we could talk about
10	important issues.
11	And while I'm at it, I want to thank
12	our great county employees. Our employees
13	are doing an amazing job, whether it's a
14	blizzard or hurricane, whether it's our
15	police, our firefighters who work so
16	tirelessly to train volunteers here in
17	the County, to our EMTs. I want to thank
18	our doctors and nurses, our corrections
19	officers, our deputy sheriffs. Everybody
20	that works to make this a better county,
21	I want to thank you all for your hard
22	work and we couldn't do it without you.
23	It's the men and women who work for our
24	county each and every day that make all
25	of us look good. So thank you so much.

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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	NC FOLL LEGISLATORE STATE OF THE COUNT 03.00.2024
2	I'm also proud to report that the
3	state of our county is strong and our
4	future is bright.
5	(Whereupon, applause.)
6	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: This
7	year is the 125th anniversary of Nassau
8	County and we have so much to celebrate.
9	We have a rich history dating back to
10	1899, when we first broke away from the
11	City of New York. I look forward to
12	holding many historical and celebratory
13	events throughout the year to mark this
14	
	historic occasion, and to stimulate our
15	small businesses and our economy with all
16	types of events and honor our past while
17	we continue to look to make our future
18	better.
19	Over the past year, my
20	administration has tackled issues head on
21	that have been swept under the rug for
22	far too long by previous administrations.
23	By making the tough decisions, we were
24	able to make the County safer and more
25	affordable for our residents.

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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	(Whereupon, applause.)
3	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: Since
4	taking office in 2022, I have sworn in
5	over 200 new police officers and added
6	more funds to increase the number of cops
7	on our streets. I have budgeted for 75
8	additional officers over and above the
9	headcount of the previous administration.
10	In Nassau County, we back the blue and we
11	fund our police.
12	(Whereupon, applause.)
13	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: Thank
14	you. Thank you. Let's hear it for our
15	cops.
16	(Whereupon, applause.)
17	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: Joe,
18	you just missed it, I said nice things
19	about you.
20	And because of the hard work of our
21	men and women in law enforcement, we have
22	reduced major crime by over 6% from last
23	year. That's thanks to Commissioner
24	Ryder and our intelligence-led and
25	community-based policing strategies, and
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	the financial investments that we have
3	made here in Nassau County for law
4	enforcement. And I want to congratulate
5	my partners in the Legislature for
6	joining me in that effort. Thank you.
7	(Whereupon, applause.)
8	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN:
9	Residential burglaries are down over 17%,
10	Grand larceny is down 7%, and stolen
11	vehicles are down from last year, almost
12	8%. But we have more work to do. I have
13	initiated Operation Overwatch, a roving
14	patrol unit of 20 cars, which we
15	instituted under my administration, to
16	serve both as a deterrent and to act as
17	the cavalry should an incident occur.
18	We also are tackling the migrant
19	crisis and cashless bail, which continue
20	to make our residents less safe. Nassau
21	County is not a sanctuary county.
22	(Whereupon, applause.)
23	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: There is
24	no migrant program in Nassau County.
25	Unfortunately, Nassau County has become a
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	
2	border county because of the misguided
3	policies of the State and the City of New
4	York, who are a sanctuary state and a
5	sanctuary city. We don't want that here
6	in Nassau County the homelessness and
7	the crime.
8	While our school districts are
9	losing funding, the governor's budget for
10	this year earmarks \$2.4 billion of your
11	tax money for housing and legal aid and
12	transportation and food for migrants
13	entering our nation illegally. That's
14	bizarre and it needs to stop.
15	Tragically, fentanyl is pouring in
16	through our southern border and making
17	its way to this region. Unvetted migrants
18	have engaged in crimes depleting our
19	local resources.
20	I recently went to Washington and
21	testified in front of the Congressional
22	Committee on Homeland Security to urge
23	Congress and President Biden to secure
24	our southern border, to make sure that
25	we're safe throughout the nation and here
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—NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024	3.06.2024	03.	COUNTY	THE	OF	STATE	LEGISLATURE	FULL	NC
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in Nassau County.

3 (Whereupon, applause.) COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: 4 At home, 5 our Police and Sheriff's Department are 6 working closely with our federal 7 partners, including ICE and Customs and Border Patrol, to make sure that we work 8 9 together to manage and fight back against 10 this foreign invasion. 11 (Whereupon, applause.) 12 COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: Now, 13 when a crime is committed, and let's say 14 it's committed by a migrant who has no 15 ties to the United States, if they commit 16 a burglary, larceny or even other crimes, 17 they know that they can get away with it 18 because of the cashless bail law in New 19 York State. We have to repeal cashless 20 bail because what we're having is 21 criminals getting arrested and getting 22 out the very same day and committing

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crimes. Our police are doing a great job

making those arrests. But the criminals

that are robbing homes and stores and

	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	being released before our cops can even
3	finish the paperwork is unacceptable.
4	Unfortunately, in New York State,
5	criminals have more rights than victims
6	and that has to end.
7	(Whereupon, applause.)
8	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: People
9	are getting hurt, property is getting
10	stolen and there are no consequences. So
11	again, we need to let our state
12	legislators know and the governor know
13	that this is unacceptable here in New
14	York State. The revolving door of
15	criminality is something that has to end,
16	and we must continue to work together to
17	make sure that happens. While some places
18	are defunding the police, here in Nassau
19	we are continuing to invest in our
20	police.
21	(Whereupon, applause.)
22	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN:
23	Commissioner Ryder is going to like this
24	one, it's his pet project.
25	We recently broke ground on our \$12
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	million Nassau County Police Department
3	Training Village, which will be completed
4	in October of 2025. It will be state of
5	the art, the best in the world, and
6	people not only will train here in this
7	region, but people from all over the
8	world will be coming here to train at our
9	new facility. Congratulations.
10	(Whereupon, applause.)
11	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: We also
12	broke ground on our new Second Precinct
13	station, which was destroyed by a fire. I
14	made the determination immediately after
15	inspecting the building that it wasn't
16	worth saving, and that we needed a new,
17	state of the art police facility in the
18	Second Precinct, so you will get that,
19	Joe Saladino.
20	(Whereupon, applause.)
21	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN:
22	Vulnerable children need protection and
23	we take that very seriously here in
24	Nassau County. My administration
25	instituted a program where now we are
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	going to hire retired law enforcement
3	officers with a background in
4	investigations to assist our Department
5	of Social Services in reducing the
6	caseload in child protective services
7	cases that has been seriously backlogged
8	for years. When I came into office, there
9	were too many cases for too few
10	caseworkers and investigators, and we are
11	going to put an end to that. We are here
12	to protect our children and to make sure
13	that no child falls between the cracks.
14	(Whereupon, applause.)
15	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: We have
16	also hired 87 new corrections officers
17	since I took office in 2022, to ensure
18	that our jail is safe for our officers,
19	secure for our neighborhoods, and humane
20	for those we incarcerate. The sheriff
21	didn't even clap for that. Come on,
22	Sheriff.
23	(Whereupon, applause.)
24	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: I might
25	add that Sheriff LaRocca is also doing an
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	outstanding job, as is our Chief Fire
3	Marshal, Michael Uttaro, one of the
4	consummate professionals. Thank you for
5	what you're doing.
6	(Whereupon, applause.)
7	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: We
8	continue to be fiscally prudent. We
9	continue to market this county, because
10	it's a great place to do business, to
11	visit, and to work.
12	While the previous administration
13	had proposed \$150 million tax increase
14	for 2024, my administration has
15	eliminated this tax increase.
16	(Whereupon, applause.)
17	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: There
18	will be no tax increase for 2024. There
19	will be no tax increase for the next
20	three years. We have a three year plan
21	that will not have a tax increase.
22	Despite the fact that we have record high
23	inflation, we are managing the county in
24	a prudent way, and we are doing things
25	that we know will increase the tax base
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	so that we don't have to increase
3	property taxes.
4	(Whereupon, applause.)
5	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: Recent
6	reports from the Regional Planning
7	Council indicate that Nassau and Suffolk
8	County send over \$14 billion more in
9	taxpayer funds to Albany than we get
10	back. We are a cash cow. We are the piggy
11	bank for the State of New York. And you
12	know what? It would be nice if the State
13	would join us in some of the things that
14	are important to our residents, and not
15	things that are important to other
16	regions in the state.
17	(Whereupon, applause.)
18	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: My
19	administration has significantly reduced
20	the tax refund liability by \$437 million.
21	It was \$707 million in 2022. This past
22	year, we paid out only \$270 million,
23	saving our taxpayers over a half a
24	billion dollars.
25	(Whereupon, applause.)
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2	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: Due to
3	our aggressive marketing of the County,
4	through our program of going out and
5	advertising all Nassau County has to
6	offer, sales tax revenues have increased
7	by over \$165 million over budget this
8	last two years. Our economy is strong and
9	it's getting stronger because we are
10	finally letting people throughout the
11	world, not just the United States, know
12	what a great place this is, how we have
13	the best parks, the most beautiful
14	beaches. We've got world class shopping,
15	we've got great restaurants, we've got a
16	healthcare network that's second to none.
17	But more importantly, we've got great
18	people here in Nassau County. And a great
19	housing stock.
20	(Whereupon, applause.)
21	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: I am
22	happy to report that we have now closed
23	the books on 2023, and our surplus will
24	be in the tens of millions of dollars.
25	We're not running a surplus we're not

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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	NC FULL LEGISLATORE STATE OF THE COUNTY 05.00.2024
2	running a deficit, rather; no deficit
3	here. We're going to have a surplus this
4	year, and that will make life more
5	affordable for our residents here in
6	Nassau County.
7	(Whereupon, applause.)
8	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: Andy
9	-
	Persich, who runs our our Budget and
10	Management Department here in the County,
11	and David Chang, our Treasurer, they
12	said, Bruce, we haven't had a county
13	executive in 12 years go to the rating
14	agencies and make the case for the fiscal
15	integrity of Nassau County. If you do
16	so, I think they'll be receptive to your
17	message of economic development. So I
18	went two consecutive days to New York
19	City. We met with all the rating
20	agencies, and I'm happy to report they
21	agreed with the policies of my
22	administration, and they gave us a bond
23	rating increase. So we upgraded our bond
24	rating, which is going to save our
25	taxpayers money when we go out to bond.

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(Whereupon, applause.)
COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: And we
can improve our roads and our
infrastructure with the extra money.
Again, the way to keep real property
taxes down is to expand the tax base, and

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taxes down is to expand the tax base, and that's what we need to do. We need to attract businesses and people to Nassau County. If we lift the tax base, if we increase economic development, we won't have to increase property taxes and that's a fixed cost on our young people; it's a fixed cost on our young people; it's a fixed cost on the middle class; it's a fixed cost on our senior citizens. And we have to protect our senior citizens because they're the ones who are the foundation of this county and built this county. We've got to make sure it's affordable for them to stay here in Nassau County.

(Whereupon, applause.) COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: There's been a lot of talk about Nassau University Medical Center in the last

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2	couple of days. Nassau University Medical
3	Center is a quality healthcare facility.
4	It is an important healthcare facility.
5	But some people are under the mistaken
6	impression that this is a County run
7	facility. It is not a County run
8	facility. It is a independent public
9	benefit corporation created by the state
10	with state employees, and they must pay
11	their fair share, making sure that those
12	who are uninsured or under-insured get
13	quality healthcare here in Nassau County
14	and the region. Nassau University Medical
15	Center not only takes care of our
16	population here in Nassau County that's
17	vulnerable, but we also do so for Queens
18	and Western Suffolk County. It is worth
19	saving. But how do we save an institution
20	that in 2017, state aid for NUMC was \$189
21	million and this past year, 2023,
22	shockingly, the State reduced their
23	investment to only \$30 million? This is
24	not the mismanagement of NUMC. This is
25	not because of the employees of NUMC who

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2	were outstanding healthcare
3	professionals, from our nursing staff to
4	the people who provide maintenance and
5	security there. This is because the State
6	is defunding our only hospital here that
7	is a safety net for our most vulnerable.
8	Our voices need to be heard. When we are
9	sending over \$14 billion in Nassau and
10	Suffolk County more to the State than we
11	get back, it would be a pittance to send
12	down a \$100 million a year, which is a
13	lot less than what was given in 2017,
14	2018, 2019 and 2020. Because, you know
15	what? The management of the hospital has
16	improved and is getting better, but you
17	can't take away \$150 million plus in
18	state aid and expect it to operate. It's
19	important for our residents. It's
20	important for our firefighters with a
21	burn center. We should make sure that we
22	let the State know that they have to
23	fulfill their obligations to Nassau
24	County and this region.
25	(Whereupon, applause.)
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: The
3	State is now interjecting itself, sadly,
4	in our local elections, by changing local
5	elections from odd years to even years.
6	That means that our local officials, our
7	county and town officials like Jen
8	DeSena, they're going to have to run in
9	presidential and gubernatorial years.
10	Now, can you imagine how long the ballot
11	will be? There's already ballot drop off
12	in those years.
13	What about the local issues? Our
14	community issues that will get drowned
15	out by federal and state issues. This is
16	outrageous. For 125 years, our elections
17	have been held on odd years. Why are they
18	changing it now? I would say it's
19	blatantly political, it's cynical and
20	it's wrong. It's instructive to note,
21	they didn't change the law for New York
22	City. The mayor and the city council are
23	still going to run on odd years. So if
24	they claim they're saving money and being
25	more efficient, why aren't they doing it

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1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	in New York City, which is much larger
3	than Nassau and Suffolk County, and much
4	larger than every other county in the
5	state of New York? It's not fair to our
6	residents, and it's not right. And I'm
7	calling on all of our elected officials
8	on the county and town level to step up
9	and say, this is wrong. This is partisan
10	politics. It's blatantly political, and
11	we have to change it back to where it
12	was.
13	(Whereupon, applause.)
14	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: It seems
15	the State is always coming up with
16	another ingenious way to tax the
17	residents of Nassau County. Now they have
18	congestion pricing. If you work in
19	downtown New York City, downtown
20	Manhattan, you now have to pay a large
21	fee, they're talking about \$24, just for
22	the privilege of driving south of 60th
23	Street in Manhattan. There are people
24	that go to school there. There are people
25	that work there. There are people that

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1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	want to visit there. Maybe their kids are
3	living there. It's not right. It's a tax
4	on people who live outside of Manhattan.
5	It's a tax on the people of Brooklyn and
6	Queens, Bronx and Staten Island, Nassau,
7	Suffolk County, Westchester County. It's
8	a tax and it's not right. And by the way,
9	I think it's foolish because a lot of
10	people are going to get fed up and
11	they're going to shop here in Nassau
12	County, and they're going to move here to
13	Nassau County.
14	(Whereupon, applause.)
15	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: We have
16	to continue to fight against congestion
17	pricing.
18	For over 25 years, there has been
19	proposal after proposal after proposal
20	for development of the HUB and they've
21	all failed. I put forth a proposal that
22	got the backing of almost everybody in
23	the Legislature; it passed 17 to 1. That
24	proposal would put a world class hotel,
25	entertainment center, convention center,
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2 and world class spa and casino here in 3 Nassau County creating thousands of permanent jobs and thousands of 4 5 construction jobs, over \$5 billion in 6 construction. It would keep the men and women of Nassau County working. It would 7 provide permanent jobs. It's good for the 8 9 economy. It'll provide \$100 million to 10 Nassau County, to the Town of Hempstead, 11 and to the communities that members of 12 the Legislature serve to make them better and more affordable. We've got to 13 14 support that application. We gotta back 15 that application. 16 (Whereupon, applause.) 17 COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: If the 18 licensing process is fair and even and 19 based on the merits, Nassau County should 20 get that gaming license and we will be 21 the highest grossing casino in the United 22 States, guaranteed. 23 Again, we have to be mindful that we 24 have working people in our building 25 trades, in service unions. They're going TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-3516 _____31 =

	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	to get jobs. It's going to provide for
3	their kids. They're going to have
4	apprentice programs with Nassau Community
5	College so kids coming out of community
6	college will have a career waiting for
7	them. It makes sense that we back this
8	proposal.
9	Hofstra University continues to
10	prosecute this hurtful lawsuit aimed to
11	frustrate our efforts. They should be
12	ashamed of their NIMBYism.
13	Hofstra President Susan Poser lied
14	about her collusion with another gaming
15	entity competing for a gaming license in
16	Queens. What a poor role model for
17	Hofstra and its students. Susan Poser, if
18	successful, will destroy our effort to
19	produce thousands of union jobs here in
20	Nassau County, and it is wrong.
21	(Whereupon, applause.)
22	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: We have
23	to make sure that we let President Poser
24	know that her job is to work with us, not
25	work against her host county.
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2	Speaking of our great unions, our
3	CSEA, our police unions, our corrections
4	officers, all the wonderful people that
5	work here in Nassau County, when I came
6	into office, longevity is something that
7	had been going on for years and years and
8	years and couldn't be solved. We solved
9	it in a few months. We got everybody
10	together. I personally took part in the
11	negotiations and the mediation. And you
12	know what? We fixed it. The problem was
13	good for the taxpayers and it was good
14	for our workers.
15	(Whereupon, applause.)
16	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: We also
17	have signed agreements with all of our
18	unions but one, which we will resolve
19	hopefully in the next couple of weeks.
20	Finally, the men and women who work for
21	the County will have labor peace, and
22	they will have the security of knowing
23	what their contract is in the future and
24	what benefits they have for themselves
25	and their families.

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2	During the course of the CSEA
3	contract negotiation, which I believe
4	resulted in a fair deal for both sides,
5	the Union came to us and asked us to
6	change their healthcare plan to make the
7	figures work. And within months, after we
8	made this agreement and our employees
9	joined the State insurance fund
10	Excelsior, the State, with very little
11	warning, canceled the program, putting
12	our employees healthcare in jeopardy.
13	Another blow against Nassau County by the
14	State. I don't think it's a coincidence.
15	It's funny, as soon as Nassau County and
16	their CSEA employees entered the State
17	run Excelsior Health Plan, it was
18	canceled. I don't think there's a
19	coincidence there. I think that we need
20	to stand up, our union employees need to
21	stand up and tell state government to
22	stop playing games with their lives.
23	(Whereupon, applause.)
24	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: This
25	past year, we had phenomenal events in
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1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	every corner of the county. We had record
3	breaking concerts, including the 40,000
4	people who came out to see Boyz II Men in
5	Eisenhower Park, a truly phenomenal event
6	of a stature and amount that we've never
7	seen in Nassau County.
8	For the first time, we held the
9	Korean American Games here in Nassau
10	County, with over 10,000 participants and
11	fans coming from around the world to
12	compete in athletic events here in Nassau
13	County.
14	My first order of business as county
15	executive was to restore the Empire Games
16	for the physically challenged, and make
17	sure that Nassau County was the home to
18	this great state athletic event, and that
19	we hold this at Mitchell Field and some
20	of our other facilities so that our
21	physically challenged can have an
22	opportunity to be in a premier athletic
23	competition and display and showcase
24	their athletic abilities. I urge you all
25	(Whereupon, applause.)

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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	NC FULL LEGISLATORE STATE OF THE COUNTY 05.00.2024
2	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: If you
3	want inspiration, go to the games for the
4	physically challenged. They truly are
5	real athletes and we are blessed to have
6	have their competition here in Nassau
7	County.
8	And for the second year in a row we
9	have held the Feliz Navidad ceremony and
10	celebration at Mitchell Field partnering
11	with the United States Marine Corps and
12	Toys for Tots so that the Spanish
13	speaking residents of Nassau County could
14	be a part of County Christmas events and
15	enjoy the holiday season, the most
16	wonderful time of the year.
17	This year in 2024, already we held a
18	Chinese Lunar New Year celebration at the
19	Tilles Center just a few weeks ago, and
20	we had over 2000 people of Asian American
21	background who came to enjoy the Lunar
22	New Year. It was a wonderful, wonderful
23	experience. It's something that we are
24	going to make bigger and better each and
25	every year, because it was a lot of fun
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1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	and our residents really appreciated it.
3	(Whereupon, applause.)
4	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: We've
5	also had numerous meetings with the black
6	and Hispanic, local minority owned
7	businesses. We talked to them and had
8	forums with them, and we've actually
9	engaged in making the process easier for
10	our minority owned businesses to operate
11	and do business with the County of
12	Nassau. I think that's a great thing
13	that we need to do and it's too long in
14	not coming. I made it a priority that we
15	would leave no community behind and make
16	sure that all of our local, minority
17	owned businesses had an equal opportunity
18	to do business here and in the county of
19	Nassau.
20	(Whereupon, applause.)
21	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: We were
22	approached recently by former Congressman
23	Steve Israel, who used to represent parts
24	of Nassau County. And he told me that it
25	was a desire of his all his life to have

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1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
2	a big, beautiful book festival here in
3	Long Island. And this year they've chosen
4	the beautiful community of Oyster Bay to
5	have the first Gold Coast Book Festival,
6	of which Nassau County will participate
7	and sponsor. And we will make this the
8	biggest and best book festival in America
9	in the coming years.
10	(Whereupon, applause.)
11	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: So we
12	promote literacy so our kids know the joy
13	of reading books.
14	I was approached recently, very
15	recently, in the last six months, by the
16	International Cricket Commission. They
17	had been looking for a place to hold
18	their World Cup, which is basically the
19	second largest sporting event in the
20	world. They were negotiating with New
21	York City, and Mayor Adams was very much
22	in favor of it. But some of the City
23	Council members were giving them a
24	tremendous amount of grief and problems.
25	They said, look, we like Mayor Adams. We

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2	agree with him that New York City is a
3	great place, but we got to look for
4	another place. They were going to leave
5	the region. They were going to leave this
6	area and not hold an event in the New
7	York Metropolitan region. They
8	approached me and they said, would you be
9	interested in having the World Cup of the
10	International Cricket Commission? And I
11	didn't know much about cricket at all,
12	other than a lot of our residents seem to
13	enjoy playing it. And I said, yeah, I
14	would be interested. I was interested but
15	didn't know that much about it. And they
16	said, our India versus Pakistan event
17	will eclipse your Super Bowl here in
18	America. I said, what are you talking
19	about? He said, well, how many people
20	watch the Super Bowl? I said, I'm not
21	sure, hundreds of millions? He goes,
22	about 250 million. He goes, the India
23	versus Pakistan event, which I believe
24	Nassau County can get, will have 1.2
25	billion people watching around the world.

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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	What a great place and a great venue to
3	showcase all that we have to offer here
4	in Nassau County. And I said, yes. And
5	with the approval of the County
6	Legislature, we now have the first World
7	Cup of International Cricket ever held in
8	the United States here in Nassau County.
9	And yes, we got the premier event, India
10	versus Pakistan.
11	(Whereupon, applause.)
12	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: We have
13	a temporary modular stadium, the same one
14	that was used at Formula One in Las
15	Vegas, the same one that's used in
16	professional golf tournaments around the
17	world. They are busy constructing that
18	stadium right now. That is providing
19	jobs, that is providing work. There's a
20	multiplier effect with our local
21	businesses who will benefit. We will
22	have so many new visitors from around the
23	world coming to Nassau County to
24	appreciate everything we have here, and
25	it is going to be an economic tremendous
	TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-351640

1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	driver for our county and for the
3	businesses located there. So we are very
4	happy. And I want to thank the
5	International Cricket Commission for
6	choosing Nassau County for their premier
7	event. Thank you so much.
8	Some people think that I am critical
9	of Governor Hochul. I am when I think
10	she's wrong. And when I think she's
11	right, I'm going to compliment her as
12	well. I am very pleased that the State of
13	New York will be hosting at Belmont State
14	Park, the number one golf event in the
15	world, the Ryder Cup, right here in
16	Nassau County. It's going to be a great
17	event. And yes, it is an international
18	competition. More people will be coming
19	in again from outside to see what Nassau
20	County has to offer. And contrary to what
21	our Police Commissioner says, the Ryder
22	Cup was not named after him.
23	(Whereupon, applause.)
24	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: I also
25	want to be fair and compliment the
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2	governor for approving the New York
3	Racing Association's \$400 million
4	investment in the renovation of Belmont
5	Racetrack. It's long overdue. It's home
6	to the most important leg of the Triple
7	Crown, and it will provide, again, more
8	and more jobs and better opportunities.
9	It'll be a financial boom to that part of
10	the county. We are very happy that the
11	Elmont community will continue to host
12	Premier Racing because of the investment
13	being made at Belmont Racetrack.
14	When I came into office, the
15	assessment system was a complete
16	disaster, with error after error being
17	made and being uncovered by our
18	residents, and it cost us a lot of money.
19	My administration, working with
20	Comptroller Elaine Phillips, has gotten
21	under the hood and made the assessment
22	system more fair, more accurate, more
23	transparent and more user friendly, and
24	we are going to continue to improve. By
25	doing that, we have significantly reduced

_____TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-3516 _____42 ___

	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	NC FULL LEGISLATORE STATE OF THE COUNTY 05.00.2024
2	our tax refund liability by over a half
3	\$1 billion. We will continue to improve
4	our assessment system. It's working. And
5	I made a pledge and a promise, and that
6	promise is going to be kept. Thank you.
7	(Whereupon, applause.)
8	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: We have
9	allocated over \$13.8 million in opioid
10	funds to various organizations for opioid
11	prevention, treatment, and enforcement.
12	And that money is being put to good use.
13	There are those who say we should take
14	the \$90 million and just spend it. No. We
15	are taking a very measured, methodical
16	and important choice to make sure that
17	whoever gets these funds uses them in the
18	right way. So basically, we're giving the
19	money out on an annual basis. We've got a
20	four year plan now, and we have given it
21	to organizations like the Catholic Health
22	System. We have given it to NUMC to
23	support their substance abuse programs
24	and their mental health programs. And
25	we've given it to a lot of community

_____TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-3516 _____43 ___

1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
2	based organizations. We will continue to
3	give all of that money out, but we will
4	do it so it is done where the money is
5	spent wisely.
6	(Whereupon, applause.)
7	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: But, as
8	we tackle the opioid epidemic that has
9	plagued our country, the Federal
10	Government continues to have porous
11	borders where people can come over. We
12	don't know who they are. They haven't
13	been vetted. They could be terrorists.
14	They could be criminals. We know some of
15	them are engaged in drug dealing, and
16	they're bringing deadly fentanyl into the
17	United States that's making its way here.
18	That's killing 300 of our young people in
19	America each and every day. We will not
20	be safe in the United States until we
21	seal our borders and then the fentanyl
22	will dry up, and it will make a safer
23	place for all of us.
24	(Whereupon, applause.)
25	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: Until

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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	that happens, we will continue to work
3	with our local agencies to make sure that
4	anybody who has an abuse problem gets the
5	treatment and the care they need.
6	(Whereupon, applause.)
7	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: Nassau
8	County is home to one of the largest
9	Jewish populations in the world. On
10	October 7th, it was a terrible day for
11	many of the residents here in Nassau
12	County who had friends and family that
13	lived in Israel. Israel has been our
14	closest ally in the Middle East, and they
15	share the same democratic principles that
16	we do. When our residents of Nassau
17	County saw the terror that was inflicted
18	in Israel by a terrorist organization,
19	HAMAS, we within three days, organized a
20	rally of 6000 people to support the
21	people of Israel at our Harry Chapin
22	Lakeside Theater in Eisenhower Park,
23	where every race, religion and ethnic
24	group participated in support of our
25	ally. We will continue to support the

_____TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-3516 _____45 ___

State of Israel.

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3 (Whereupon, applause.)
4 COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: Thank
5 you. Thank you. Sit down, it's almost
6 over (laughter).

7 We've also had a tumultuous last ten days. I was hearing from many girls and 8 9 women who participate in girls and women 10 only sports that they were concerned 11 about what was happening around America, 12 where biological males were injecting 13 themselves into female and girls leagues 14 and teams, and it created an unsafe 15 environment, unfair competition, and 16 quite frankly, it was wrong. So I issued 17 an executive order to protect the women 18 and girls of Nassau County from that type 19 of bullying. And it is bullying. We are 20 not anti-transgender. We are not 21 transphobic here in Nassau County. And my 22 order made sure to mention that those who 23 are biological males who wanted to 24 identify as transgender females, had an 25 opportunity to compete. They could

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2	compete against other biological males.
3	They could compete in co-ed leagues and
4	teams where everybody knew that the
5	competition was going to be mixed between
6	males and females. And if they want, our
7	great Commissioner of Parks and
8	Recreation, Commissioner Belyea, and I
9	will sit down. If they want to start a
10	transgender league or a transgender team,
11	we are a loving county. We are home to
12	every race, religion and ethnic group and
13	every lifestyle. But the bullying of
14	women is something that we cannot accept
15	here in Nassau County. We don't want
16	unsafe environments for our girls. They
17	work hard. They train hard. And for
18	decades we have been working on ways to
19	make it more fair for women to compete in
20	athletics and sports. We've been doing
21	that for 50 years since the passage of
22	Title IX, and we have to nurture and
23	support that. The only way to do it is
24	to keep women's sports and girls sports
25	for biological females, and not

_____TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-3516 _____47 ___

1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	biological males who want to bully their
3	ways onto those teams. That is not
4	acceptable.
5	(Whereupon, applause.)
6	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: We will
7	abide by the law. We will abide by the
8	Federal Constitution. Under Federal Law
9	and our United States Constitution, women
10	are a protected class, and we will
11	continue to make sure that we fight for
12	their right to be safe, secure and have a
13	level playing field to compete.
14	So I ask all of you, especially our
15	legislators who are here today, to join
16	us in this common sense approach so that
17	we can have fair competition and we can
18	have a community and a county where
19	people know transparently what they're
20	competing against and who they're
21	competing against.
22	Legislature, I ask you to join me.
23	(Whereupon, applause.)
24	COUNTY EXECUTIVE BLAKEMAN: In
25	closing, Nassau County is one of the best
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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
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2	places to live in America. It is a
3	welcome home, as I said, to every race,
4	every religion, ethnic group and
5	lifestyle. But this is no time for us to
6	rest on our laurels. I will continue to
7	work with you to fight to keep Nassau
8	County safe, affordable, and on a path of
9	continued prosperity. And with the help
10	of my colleagues, especially the
11	honorable members of this Legislature,
12	the best is yet to come.
13	Thank you. God bless Nassau County
14	and God bless the United States of
15	America. Stay safe.
16	(Whereupon, applause.)
17	(Whereupon, the State of the
18	County concludes.)
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	TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-351649

	NC FULL LEGISLATURE STATE OF THE COUNTY 03.06.2024
1	
2	CERTIFICATE
3	
4	STATE OF NEW YORK)
5	: SS.:
6	COUNTY OF NASSAU)
7	
8	I, ALEXA LORENZO, a Notary Public
9	for and within the State of New York, do
10	hereby certify:
11	That the above is a correct
12	transcription of my stenographic notes.
13	IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto
14	set my hand this 6th day of March, 2024.
15	
16	<u>Alexa Lorenzo</u>
17	Alexa Lorenzo
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
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25	
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