1. Public Notice And Calendar 4/12/21

Documents:

4-12-21 CALENDAR.PDF 4-12-21 SPECIAL MEETING.PDF

2. Meeting Minutes

Documents:

FULL LEGISLATIVE SESSION, 04-12-21.PDF

LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE SPECIAL MEETING

MINEOLA, NEW YORK APRIL 12, 2021 1:00PM

Please be advised that due to health and safety concerns associated with the COVID-19 virus, the Peter J. Schmitt Memorial Legislative Chamber will be open to a maximum of thirty-five members of the public. Further, this meeting will be available for viewing online at <u>http://www.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/Legis/index.html</u>

Public comment on any item may be emailed to the Clerk of the Legislature at <u>LegPublicComment@nassaucountyny.gov</u> and will be made part of the formal record of this Legislative meeting.

While Chamber capacity is limited, the Nassau County Legislature is committed to making its public hearings accessible to individuals with disabilities. If, due to a disability, you need an accommodation or assistance to participate in the public hearing or to obtain a copy of the transcript of the public hearing in an alternative format in accordance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact the Office of the Clerk of the Legislature at 571-4252, or the Nassau County Office of the Physically Challenged at 227-7101 or TDD telephone No. 227-8989.

EVERY LEGISLATIVE MEETING IS STREAMED LIVE ON http://www.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/Legis/index.html

1.

RESOLUTION NO. 40-2021

A RESOLUTION PURSUANT TO SECTION 153 OF THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT LAW OF NASSAU COUNTY TO RECONSIDER AND APPROVE A LOCAL LAW DISAPPROVED BY THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE IN RELATION TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENTLY ELECTED ASSESSOR. 129-21(LE)



PLEASE TAKE NOTICE THAT

THE NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE WILL HOLD

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE FULL LEGISLATURE

ON

MONDAY, APRIL 12, 2021 AT 1:00 PM

IN

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

Please be advised that due to health and safety concerns associated with the COVID-19 virus, the Peter J. Schmitt Memorial Legislative Chamber will be open to a maximum of thirty-five members of the public. Further, this meeting will be available for viewing online at <u>http://www.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/Legis/index.html</u>

Public comment on any item may be emailed to the Clerk of the Legislature at <u>LegPublicComment@nassaucountyny.gov</u> and will be made part of the formal record of this Legislative meeting.

While Chamber capacity is limited, the Nassau County Legislature is committed to making its public hearings accessible to individuals with disabilities. If, due to a disability, you need an accommodation or assistance to participate in the public hearing or to obtain a copy of the transcript of the public hearing in an alternative format in accordance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact the Office of the Clerk of the Legislature at 571-4252, or the Nassau County Office of the Physically Challenged at 227-7101 or TDD telephone No. 227-8989.

DATED: April 5, 2021 Mineola, NY **MICHAEL C. PULITZER** Clerk of the Legislature Nassau County, New York

NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE RICHARD NICOLELLO PRESIDING OFFICER LEGISLATIVE SESSION County Executive and Legislative Building 1550 Franklin Avenue Mineola, New York Monday, April 12, 2021 1:10 P.M.

```
1
 2
    A P P E A R A N C E S:
 3
 4
     LEGISLATOR RICHARD J. NICOLELLO
 5
          Presiding Officer
 6
          9th Legislative District
 7
 8
     LEGISLATOR HOWARD KOPEL
 9
          Deputy Presiding Officer
10
          7th Legislative District
11
12
     LEGISLATOR DENISE FORD
          Alternate Presiding Officer
13
14
          4th Legislative District
15
16
     LEGISLATOR KEVAN ABRAHAMS
17
          Minority Leader
          1st Legislative District
18
19
20
     LEGISLATOR SIELA BYNOE
21
          2nd Legislative District
22
23
     LEGISLATOR CARRIE SOLAGES
          3rd Legislative District
24
25
```

1 2 LEGISLATOR DEBRA MULE 3 5th Legislative District 4 5 LEGISLATOR C. WILLIAM GAYLOR III 6 6th Legislative District 7 8 LEGISLATOR VINCENT T. MUSCARELLA 9 8th Legislative District 10 LEGISLATOR ELLEN BIRNBAUM 11 10th Legislative District 12 13 14 LEGISLATOR DELIA DERIGGI-WHITTON 15 11th Legislative District 16 LEGISLATOR JAMES KENNEDY 17 18 12th Legislative District 19 20 LEGISLATOR THOMAS MCKEVITT 21 13th Legislative District 22 23 LEGISLATOR LAURA SCHAEFER 14th Legislative District 24 25

1	
2	LEGISLATOR JOHN FERRETTI, JR.
3	15th Legislative District
4	
5	LEGISLATOR ANDREW DRUCKER
6	16th Legislative District
7	
8	LEGISLATOR ROSE WALKER
9	17th Legislative District
10	
11	LEGISLATOR JOSHUA LAFAZAN
12	18th Legislative District
13	
14	LEGISLATOR STEVEN RHOADS
15	19th Legislative District
16	
17	MICHAEL PULITZER
18	Clerk of the Legislature
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Call the 3 meeting of the legislature to order and we'll 4 do the Pledge of Allegiance and ask you to 5 just remain standing for a moment after the 6 pledge. I would ask Legislator Arnie Drucker 7 to lead us in the pledge. 8 Can we have a moment of silence for 9 Judge Feuerstein who lost her life in a tragic 10 accident this past weekend. United States 11 District Court judge, former Nassau County 12 Supreme Court judge, accomplished jurist and 13 just a fine person. Thank you. 14 Mike, could you call the roll 15 please? 16 Yes, sir. MR. PULITZER: Will Roll call. Deputy Presiding Officer 17 do. 18 Howard Kopel. 19 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Here. 20 MR. PULITZER: Alternate Deputy 21 Presiding Officer Denise Ford. 22 LEGISLATOR FORD: Here. 23 Legislator Siela MR. PULITZER: 24 Bynoe. 25 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Here.

1	Full - 4-12-21
2	MR. PULITZER: Thank you.
3	Legislator Carrie Solages.
4	LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Here.
5	MR. PULITZER: Legislator Debra
6	Mule.
7	LEGISLATOR MULE: Here.
8	MR. PULITZER: Legislator C.
9	William Gaylor the third.
10	LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Present.
11	MR. PULITZER: Thank you.
12	Legislator Vincent Muscarella.
13	LEGISLATOR MUSCARELLA: Here.
14	MR. PULITZER: Legislator Ellen
15	Birnbaum.
16	LEGISLATOR BIRNBAUM: Here.
17	MR. PULITZER: Legislator Delia
18	DeRiggi-Whitton.
19	LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON:
20	Here.
21	MR. PULITZER: Legislator James
22	Kennedy.
23	LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Here.
24	MR. PULITZER: Legislator Thomas
25	McKevitt.

1	Full - 4-12-21
2	LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Here.
3	MR. PULITZER: Legislator Laura
4	Schaefer.
5	LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Here.
6	MR. PULITZER: Legislator John
7	Ferretti.
8	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Here.
9	MR. PULITZER: Legislator Arnold
10	Drucker.
11	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Here.
12	MR. PULITZER: Legislator Rose
13	Marie Walker.
14	LEGISLATOR WALKER: Here.
15	MR. PULITZER: Legislator Joshua
16	Lafazan.
17	LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: Here.
18	MR. PULITZER: Legislator Steven
19	Rhoads.
20	LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Present.
21	MR. PULITZER: Minority Leader
22	Kevan Abrahams.
23	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Here.
24	MR. PULITZER: Presiding Officer
25	Richard Nicolello.

1	Full - 4-12-21
2	LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Here.
3	MR. PULITZER: We have a quorum
4	sir.
5	LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank
6	you. The only item on the calendar is
7	Resolution 40 of 2021. It's a resolution
8	pursuant to Section 153 of the county
9	government law of Nassau County to reconsider
10	and approve a local law disapproved by the
11	county executive in relation to the
12	establishment of an independently elected
13	assessor.
14	That item is moved by Legislator
15	Rhoads. Seconded by Deputy Presiding Officer
16	Kopel. That puts the item before us.
17	I would like to make a few remarks
18	and then open it up to anyone else who would
19	like to speak. And then we have a couple of
20	slips of public comment.
21	First off, let's be clear about
22	what this does and does not do. What it does
23	not do is establish an office of elected
24	assessor. What it does do is establish a
25	referendum whereby the people would decide

Full - 4-12-21 2 whether or not there would be an elected 3 The referendum would be this assessor. November on Election Day. The actual election 4 5 for the assessor would be the following June 6 during primary day. Again, it establishes a 7 referendum and then the people will decide 8 whether or not Nassau County will return to 9 having an elected assessor.

1

10 This is all about trusting the 11 people to make the right determination. The 12 county provides many important services to our 13 residents, who are all aware of most of them, 14 police, sewage, roads, etcetera. But the 15 assessment function is one of the most 16 important functions that a government can do. 17 Quite simply, if you get it wrong you can --18 not only do you have a lack of fairness in 19 someone paying an unfair amount of taxes, you 20 can literally cause people to lose their 21 homes. So, assessment has to be accurate. It 22 has to be fair and it has to be an open, 23 That's the last transparent process. 24 component I would like to focus on. 25 This administration has done a

> Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 miserable job in terms of transparency in this 3 assessment process. From the very get-go when reassessment was moving forward it was the 4 5 legislators and not the Department of 6 Assessment that went out throughout all our 7 communities, held town halls, answered 8 questions and provided information that the 9 people needed. It was the legislature that 10 had to force the county to send out a tax 11 impact mailing to our residents. 12 Obviously, when your assessment 13 changes, especially when you change the ratio, 14 the numbers, when you get them in your home, 15 really don't tell you much. So, we had to 16 force the county to tell people what the 17 effect would be on their taxes. 18 A resident, Mr. Duffy in Lynbrook, 19 had to sue the county because the county 20 refused to provide him with the formula to 21 determine his assessment. Other residents, 22 led by Mr. Berliner, had to sue the county 23 because of the confusing nature of the 24 information that the county was putting out 25 with respect to assessment. That lawsuit was

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 settled six months ago. A settlement 3 agreement was entered into by the county to 4 provide various information, to remove the 5 ladder report, to provide the factors that the 6 county uses to determine assessment, to 7 provide a narrative description of what the assessment process is. 8 9 Six months went by without no 10 action by the county. We have filed, and 11 later on it's going to be considered in 12 committees, a resolution that will force the 13 county to finally do what they agreed to do 14 six months ago. 15 Most surprising of all, I guess 16 that's one way of putting it, is that 17 legislators from this body had to sue the 18 county to ensure that they put up on the 19 website the tax impacts over the course of the 20 phase-in. 21 After a resolution that we passed 22 five months ago and the county failed to do 23 it, legislators had to actually sue the county 24 to force the county to do what they were 25 required to do by law.

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 I'm not blaming the staff of the 3 Department of Assessment. I think they're all hard working, dedicated people. But I am 4 5 blaming the leadership of this administration 6 because it has failed completely in its duty 7 to be open, to provide the information that 8 people need about assessment. It has been 9 secretive, it has been arrogant in many ways 10 and it has deliberately withheld information 11 that the public could use about this process. 12 Most recently, the county executive 13 put out a mailer to this entire county which 14 deliberately misled the public into what's 15 responsible for the increases in their taxes. She blamed our school districts for tax 16 17 increases. Whereas, as Newsday reported, some 18 65 percent of Nassau's residents are going to 19 feel tax increases as a result of assessment. 20 It's obvious, anyone who 21 understands this, it's obvious that 22 assessment, especially when it's done wrong, 23 can lead to a tax increase. But to attempt to 24 divert attention and point the finger to our 25 school districts is just a terrible misuse of

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 public funds and of our ability to communicate 3 to the public. 4 So, again, I'm going back to the 5 beginning. We have had this experiment with 6 an appointed assessor for the last dozen or so 7 years. It has failed. Not just with this assessor but going back over the last few 8 9 vears as well. It has not worked. We need to 10 have an assessor that is not responsible to 11 the county executive or the deputy county 12 executive but an assessor who is responsible 13 to the people. And ultimately, whether you 14 agree with us or not, we believe it's up to 15 the people to choose whether that position is 16 going to be elected or appointed. 17 Would anyone like to say anything 18 else? Mr. Rhoads. 19 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Presiding 20 Officer, I would like to say something. I 21 don't know if anyone from the dais. 22 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Sure. 23 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Thank you. 24 Can I go Rich or you have somebody else? 25 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Yes.

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1	Full - 4-12-21
2	Definitely. Can you hear me?
3	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I can hear
4	you but I couldn't make out if you were
5	allowing me to go or want me to wait.
6	LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Go ahead.
7	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Thank you.
8	So, just a few things and comments in regards
9	to the item that's before us today.
10	First and foremost, I think we kind
11	of know where this vote's going to go. The
12	Minority delegation has voted against this
13	measure before. Obviously we are here for an
14	override today which is the prerogative of the
15	Majority. So, I totally understand. But I
16	don't envision this vote going any
17	differently. I've already requested my
18	delegation to vote against and I envision this
19	will be 11-8 against.
20	Let's go a little bit further. And
21	Presiding Officer, when I was hearing your
22	comments you talked about that accountability
23	is necessary for this process. And I'll say
24	this, though mistakes have been made with the
25	administration and there have been technical

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 aspects of assessment as it's been rolled out 3 that needed to be addressed, I don't think the county executive has ever run away from the 4 5 fact that her responsibility, as it pertains 6 to any mistakes or errors, are not subject to 7 being at fault of her administration. I don't 8 think she's ever said that. I think every 9 single taxpayer in this county understands 10 that if they want to hold somebody 11 accountability they can hold the county executive accountable. 12

13 What this items does more than 14 anything else, and this is why we have a 15 strong issue with why it's being presented 16 today and not over the last seven or eight 17 years prior, is because it's political. The 18 fact is the county executive, the previous administration, froze assessments for 19 20 countless years. Which every person in the 21 sector will tell that you frozen assessments 22 are not the way to go. They froze assessments 23 for countless years and from that standpoint 24 wrecked havoc on our assessment system. Not once did the Majority, yourselves, come 25

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

Full - 4-12-21

1

forward to say we want to be able to have an elected assessor. We want to be able to have a say, an elected voice in this process.

5 We've talked about lawsuits that 6 the legislative majority as well as folks in 7 the public have to sue the appointed assessor 8 versus an elected assessor. If memory serves 9 me correctly, I know there's only a handful of 10 us that was there, Mr. O'Shea was sued. He 11 was an elected assessor. And, quite frankly, 12 the court, by consent decree, determined that 13 he had to basically comply with doing a 14 full-blown reassessment.

15 So, lawsuits to me are part of the 16 process. Whether you're appointed or you're 17 elected lawsuits are part of the process. So, 18 I wouldn't go to stretch of the imagination 19 and say that she needs to be more 20 accountable. We had to sue to be able to get 21 her to do stuff. We had to sued or people 22 from the public had to sue, and I remember the 23 Coleman case, had to sue an elected assessor 24 in Mr. O'Shea. So, lawsuits are, to me, 25 really not the issue.

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 But most importantly, more than 3 anything, because I've heard this argument from several of my colleagues before, well, 4 5 what do you have to lose? What do you have to 6 lose that is critical to the people? You know 7 what? I would have more credibility for that 8 argument if we applied that to everything. 9 So, when this legislature wanted to take the 10 action to have an independent inspector 11 general that was my argument. What do we have 12 to lose? Just going to put it up for a 13 referendum. The people will decide whether or 14 not we want an inspector general. It went 15 nowhere. No one from the Majority wanted to 16 push that item forward. Not one soul. 17 Forgive me, and I have tremendous 18 amount of respect for my 11 colleagues on the 19 other side, however, the action today, a 20 couple of months before an election, just 21 comes off as a little bit disingenuous. Ι 22 would have loved to have seen this level of 23 effort in the previous administration or maybe 24 even a year into the current administration.

25 But now to do it in an election year it looks

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 like we are just spiking for her because we 3 know it's an election year and we think the county executive may be vulnerable on this 4 5 issue. But we're not focused on really trying 6 to fix the issue at hand as it pertains to 7 assessment. Because if we were focused on 8 that issue we would have done something four, 9 five years ago when the previous 10 administration froze the assessments. 11 That being said, I'm going to ask 12 my colleagues to stay with their votes. I'm 13 sorry. I'm going to ask my Minority 14 delegation to stay with their vote and vote 15 against the override today. Thank you. 16 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you 17 Minority Leader. Just going to make a couple 18 of points before turning it over just in 19 response. 20 In terms of this being 21 disingenuous, yes, we actually put up this 22 idea, we floated this idea two years ago. It 23 was defeated. But at the time the rational 24 given by the county executive and my 25 colleagues in the Minority was that you needed

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 a certified assessor. Someone who had the 3 appropriate certifications. You needed 4 someone with assessing background. 5 So, we understood at the time it 6 was defeated it was unlikely to go forward. 7 But when the county executive turned around 8 when our assessor decided to step aside and 9 nominated somebody with zero assessing 10 experience and zero certifications we figured 11 well, all right, you've bought onto the line, 12 you're with us now. That's why this came up 13 again. It was because of a change in the 14 approach by the county executive, again, to 15 appoint someone without certification when she 16 insisted that you have to have 17 certifications. To appoint somebody who has 18 no assessing experience, which she insisted 19 that you needed someone with assessing 20 experience, led us to believe yes, the elected 21 assessor was the way to go. 22 Just one other point. 23 We have actually gone back to the 24 future here. There were complaints about the 25 prior administration with the frozen

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 assessment rolls. We have a frozen assessment 3 There's complaints about the prior roll now. administration with their mass settlement 4 5 program because it shifted the burden from one part of the population to the other. We have 6 7 a mass settlement program now. We have a 8 combination of what led us into the problem to 9 begin with. A frozen assessment roll, a mass 10 settlement program, some 100,000 grievances 11 were settled at an average of seven percent. 12 So, yes, the exact same thing is happening on 13 the prior appointed official as is happening 14 now with the appointed assessor. 15 Legislator Rhoads.

16 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you 17 Mr. Presiding Officer. First of all, I just 18 want to say I'm happy that the minority leader 19 made the comments that he made. And T 20 certainly agree that the faults or the 21 numerous errors that have taken place, whether 22 it's the hundreds of thousands of mistakes 23 with respect to valuation, whether it's the 24 mistakes that we continue to see now that the 25 tax bills have actually gone out with respect

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1

to the Seasons in Seaford, with respect to our veterans exemptions, with respect to, on the flip side, the inappropriate application of certain exemptions that have impacted every county resident. The mistakes with respect to tax impact notices.

8 I agree with the minority leader 9 that it should be, the blame for that should 10 be squarely put at the feet of County 11 Executive Laura Curran.

12 But the issue with respect to the 13 elected assessor is greater than that. The 14 issue is with respect to independence and with 15 respect to simple honesty. If you've taken a 16 look since 2018 when this process started this 17 process started with a lie. The county executive agreed when she came to this 18 19 legislature that she was going to abide by 20 state law. Assessment caps. That she wasn't 21 going to manipulate or change the level of 22 assessment to bypass taxpayer protections that 23 were in the Real Property Tax Law in 485U. 24 Six months later that's exactly what she did. 25 Based upon her promise, this

1	Full - 4-12-21
2	legislature voted to move ahead and continue
3	the process of reassessment that started back
4	in 2015. But six months later she dropped the
5	level of assessment by 60 percent. Deflating
6	assessed values. Then, as a result of that,
7	remove taxpayer protections from 95 percent of
8	Nassau County homeowners.
9	There was a strategic
10	communications plan that was put out by the
11	administration. In May of 2018 that strategic
12	communication plan was basically how the
13	administration was going to explain to the
14	public and make sure that the public was fully
15	informed about how the reassessment was going
16	to take place. That included mailings. That
17	included press releases. That included news
18	conferences and interviews. It also included
19	over 30 public information sessions with
20	scheduled dates, times and locations.
21	Actually calendared for when those meetings
22	were going to take place and those were going
23	to be through the fall of 2018.
24	Not a single one of those over 30
25	meetings actually ever happened. For whatever

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 reason, the shift changed from having a fair, 3 open and transparent process to one of 4 opacity. How can we make it as opaque as 5 possible? How can we make it as difficult as 6 possible for the public to understand? 7 We've spent the last two years now 8 fighting to try and open up that process so 9 that people could understand. Whether it was 10 tax impact notices. Whether it's the lawsuit 11 that we had to bring in order to restore the 12 five year phase-in information back to the 13 county's website. Which magically now all of 14 a sudden has been put back. Whether it's our 15 legislation today to try and force the county 16 executive to comply with the Berliner 17 settlement, which magically, once this 18 legislation was introduced, now all of a 19 sudden the information is out. 20 It seems to be throughout the 21 course of this entire process that if it 22 wasn't for us fighting to shed light on it 23 homeowners would still be kept in the dark. 24 The presiding officer mentioned a 25 great point. To actually send out a taxpayer

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 funded mailing to tell homeowners that the 3 reasons that their taxes went up in some cases 10, 20, 30, 40, if you happen to be new 4 5 construction your taxes went up 100, 200 6 percent, was because of school districts. The 7 average school taxes went up, average budgets 8 went up 1.8 percent. How can you with a 9 straight face tell somebody that received a 20 10 percent, 30 percent, 40 percent tax increase that it's the school district's fault? 11 12 Especially when you got the same percentage 13 increase on your general taxes which had nothing to do with schools. 14

15 So, part of the issue with an 16 elected assessor is the fact that if you have 17 somebody who is independent, if you have an 18 administration that is looking to keep 19 information from the public, it is in that 20 elected assessor's best interest to provide 21 full explanations, full disclosure and conduct 22 the accurate assessment that we thought we 23 were going to get and the taxpayers obviously 24 didn't with respect to the reassessment that 25 was conducted by this administration.

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 Because ultimately with an elected 3 assessor it's his or her rear end on the line and they're going to make sure they're doing 4 5 the job that obviously the administration has 6 not done with respect to this reassessment. 7 And we all have criticisms about --8 I became a legislator in 2015. One of the 9 first votes that we actually took was starting 10 the process of reassessment. Having a frozen 11 roll is a bad idea. But frozen roll happened 12 under an appointed assessor. These mistakes 13 with respect to assessment happened under an 14 appointed assessor. This lack of transparency 15 happened under an appointed assessor. 16 Yes, to Minority Leader Abrahams 17 point, there have been lawsuits in the past. 18 But I don't recall there ever having to be 19 lawsuits to actually force an administration 20 to be transparent. There may be technical 21 lawsuits on how an assessment is supposed to 22 be conducted. But to actually have homeowners 23 sue to force the administration to disclose

25 to be able to understand their assessment I

the formula that taxpayers paid for in order

24

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 think is probably unprecedented. And for us 3 to have to get the administration to sue --4 for us to sue to get the administration to 5 comply with the law that this administration 6 signed and then delayed five months to me 7 speaks volumes about the lack of 8 transparency.

9 So, this is not about whose 10 assessor this is. This isn't about whose 11 mistakes these are. And this process has 12 demonstrated the need for separation between 13 the administration and how this assessment is 14 conducted. And all this override vote is 15 today is to allow the voters, the people of 16 Nassau County, the people who pay the bills 17 and keep the lights on in this place, gives 18 them the ability to actually have a voice in 19 how their government is run.

We've tried this experiment. We've had three assessors I think since 2008. Clearly this experiment has failed, and it's time to give the people an opportunity to be able to be heard with respect to this and decide on their own whether they want to

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1

continue with the system or whether they want to move back to an elected assessor as we had for 65 some odd years since the Department of Assessment -- since the county essentially -county executive was founded in 1938.

7 So, I would urge my colleagues on 8 the other side to do the right thing by the 9 people of Nassau County and to allow them a 10 voice in their government and to vote to 11 override the county executive's veto. Again, 12 it doesn't means we're going to have an 13 elected assessor tomorrow. It simply means 14 that we as a legislature and we as a county 15 government are putting power back in the hands 16 of the people that send us here to make 17 decisions as to how their government is going 18 to be run. So I would urge you all to support 19 the override. Thank you.

20 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Would any 21 other legislators like to be heard? 22 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: I would 23 Rich.

24 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Sure. Is
25 that you Minority Leader or someone else?

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1	Full - 4-12-21
2	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: John
3	Ferretti.
4	LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: John, your
5	connection is a little bit difficult.
6	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: How is
7	that? A lot better?
8	LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: We can
9	hear you but go ahead.
10	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Sorry about
11	that.
12	You know, look, I think at the end
13	of the day we've been through this vote
14	before. It seems like it's deja vu all over
15	again to take a quote from the late, great
16	Yogi Berra. But here's the reality. For sale
17	signs are going up everywhere in my
18	community. I'm sure you're seeing it all my
19	colleagues on the legislature. And the
20	question that I get all the time from
21	residents is, what can I do to stop this?
22	What can I could? How can you help me?
23	Well, today, the Minority has been
24	given a second chance, a second bite at the
25	apple to fix the mistake that they made two

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 years ago when they prohibited their 3 constituents from having a voice in the 4 reassessment process. I think what we all can 5 agree on, at least based on the minority 6 leader's comment, is that there have been 7 errors in this process. There have been 8 mistakes. This has cost taxpayers money. 9 What we seem to have a little bit 10 of disagreement on is whether or not the 11 county executive has taken responsibility for 12 that. I would argue that she has not. That 13 she's tried to shift the blame. But put that 14 We all agree that there have been aside. 15 errors. We all agree that this has been a 16 flawed process. 17 I think we also agree that this 18 vote may be political. I just think it's the 19 other way around. I think it's a political 20 vote for the Minority, because I think we all 21 know that they don't want to run on the 22 reassessment issue because it's been a 23 disaster. There's no other conceivable reason 24 that they would vote no. You look at every 25 single reason that they gave for voting no two

1

2 years ago to the override and every one was 3 wiped away when the county executive nominated 4 a completely unqualified assessor.

5 There's simply no excuse or no 6 justification for not giving the residents 7 their voice at this juncture. Every one of 8 the reasons given to not have that referendum 9 two years ago is now moot because the county 10 executive nominated a completely unqualified 11 assessor.

12 So, the reality is, what are you 13 afraid of? What is the fear here in giving 14 the residents a voice, a seat at the table? 15 Because I can tell you right now, when every 16 one of them contemplating putting a for sale 17 sign on their front lawn comes to me and says what can I do? I want to be able to tell them 18 19 you can go out and have your voice heard. You 20 can go out and vote whether you want to 21 continue down this path or not. 22 Those residents deserve that 23 opportunity, and I would strongly urge the

24 Minority to reconsider their position. Do the 25 right thing by the residents of Nassau

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 Give them a vote. Give them a County. 3 choice. Let their voices be heard. Because I can tell you right now, it's not hurting the 4 5 Department of Assessment. They don't even 6 answer the phone. Let's do the right thing 7 and let's get this done today. Thank you. 8 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you 9 Just one other point Legislator Ferretti. 10 from me. Legislator Rhoads reminds me that one of the reasons for an elected assessor 11 would be that they would ensure that their 12 13 office was properly staffed. There's been 14 budget for additional staff for the assessor 15 for over a year now. Those positions have 16 been unfilled. If that was an elected 17 assessor every one of those positions would be They'd be better able to answer the 18 filled. 19 phone. Better able to do all the different 20 functions of the department. That's another 21 reason in favor. 22 Any other legislators have any 23 other comments? Hearing none, I have two 24 slips of public comment. First one is Jeanine

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

Driscoll, the receiver of taxes at the Town of

25

Full - 4-12-21

2 Hempstead.

1

3 MS. DRISCOLL: Thank you Presiding Officer Nicolello and members of the 4 5 legislature. I appreciate the opportunity to 6 be here today to speak to this very important 7 issue. And I do agree that the residents of Nassau County should be the ones to decide 8 9 whether or not the county assessor is an 10 elected official or someone appointed by the 11 Nassau County executive. 12 I can tell you one very obvious 13 reason that I support that is, as you all 14 know, you are all elected officials like 15 myself, I listen to what the residents are 16 saying, my constituents. I get emails. Ι 17 answer them or someone at my staff answers This is the biggest complaint that I'm 18 them. 19 hearing about the Department of Assessment. 20 There's no accountability. There's zero 21 transparency. They're not answering the 22 phone. 23 Every resident that calls us says

24 the same thing. We've tried to call over 25 there. Can you help us? There are certain

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1

things that we can do in our office and we try to do them to assist the residents. However, again, the biggest problem is that we don't have the capability to assist each resident. We've had a lot of problems with this assessment.

8 I'm here today to urge you to 9 reverse your decision. To allow the residents 10 to make this determination in the fall. The 11 critical role of the assessor has always been 12 to assess the properties. That is going to 13 have a direct effect on every single property 14 owner in the county. It's also going to 15 affect who stays in our county.

16 Time and time again we deal with 17 seniors who have raised their families here who are now being forced out because they 18 19 can't foot the bill. We've seen increases 20 anywhere in the area of five percent up to 187 21 percent due to this assessment. It's 22 obviously not working the way it should have 23 worked.

During the most recent bill cycle,which was the first generated off the 2019

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 reassessment, we've seen a 58 percent increase 3 in delinguencies on the school tax bill and a 25 percent increase in delinguencies on the 5 general bill.

4

6 Now, again, we are coming out of a 7 tough year with COVID. But a lot of that also 8 has to do with the fact that people had 9 unexpected stark tax hikes. I have done over 10 50 tax seminars since October, and I would say 11 at each one we have approximately seven 12 residents that show up with their file. Thev 13 are absolutely in a state of despair because 14 of the amount of the hike and it all stems 15 directly from that reassessment.

16 School tax roll this year was 17 delivered to us a little bit late. 18 Immediately prior to that we received a 19 telephone call from the county assessor's 20 office alerting us that 12,000 properties were 21 still pending with the SCAR petition process, 22 which is the Small Claims Assessment Review. 23 That's the level after the grievance level. 24 Since then we have been able to correct most of them. We still have 2200 bills that we 25

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 sent out last November that we're still 3 waiting on corrections for. 4 The problem is most of the 5 residents that did pay, because they did not 6 want to get hit with late fees, are now going 7 to have a problem. We're not sure how that's 8 going to be refunded. We tell them the county 9 is going to refund it. Again, that takes 10 several months. 11 Other problems that we've had. 12 November we had a couple of issues with the 13 veterans exemptions that came up. Some of the 14 veterans were receiving too much of an 15 exemption. \$13 million had to be parlayed out 16 among the other residents of Nassau County. 17 We still don't have direction from the county 18 on how that's going to be corrected. 19 Of course we had the clergy, slash, 20 veterans issue where certain bills were not --21 the TPP wasn't applied in the correct way. We 22 had other issues with the taxpayer protection 23 plan not being part of the tax roll and we've 24 been sending out corrected bills for that. As 25 of today we've sent out 12,934 corrected

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 bills. It has cost our office \$27,800 in 3 materials and labor costs. This is no fault of the receivers. 4 5 I know there has been some effort on the part 6 of the county executive to blame the townships 7 but certainly we were handed a tax roll that 8 we had to deal with and when these errors were 9 coming up we were trying to deal with them. 10 Again, we're working on still getting the rest 11 of those bills out. 12 As of today, basically, what we 13 would like to see is some kind of 14 reimbursement for us because, again, all of 15 those costs are coming out of our budget. I 16 would ask you to consider what the effect of 17 the assessment has been on our residents. 18 Several weeks ago, I along with 19 Supervisor Don Clavin, met with residents in 20 Valley Stream. It was a family. They had 21 three children. They had recently done a 22 renovation of their home. Not a major 23 renovation but they did do the renovation. 24 They did not get the benefit of the TPP. Their taxes went up from \$9,700 to \$26,400. 25

Full - 4-12-21

1

2 Two weeks ago I did hear from the mom, the 3 mother, who was a nurse actually at a local hospital, a frontline worker throughout COVID, 4 5 she said I don't think we're going to be able 6 to pay this bill. She's just one of many. I 7 know I've worked with some of the legislators 8 on trying to rectify some of these problems. 9 What I am asking you is to allow 10 the residents of Nassau to advocate for

the residence of hassaa of advector for themselves. Just like they can them file grievances, just like they can file for exemptions, they should have the right to decide whether or not that county assessor is appointed or is somebody that is elected. Who I think would be more accountable and more reactive to the needs of the residents.

18 Again, I appreciate you giving me 19 the time today. I don't think that clock was 20 running so I do appreciate that too. I do 21 urge you though to really consider what the 22 residents want. I would think that 23 wholeheartedly they would want somebody that's 24 going to be more accountable to them. Someone 25 they can reach out to and actually get an

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 answer from. Thanks you very much. 3 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you 4 Jeanine. Legislator Ford. 5 LEGISLATOR FORD: Jeanine, thank 6 you very much for your statement, your 7 testimony. And I have to say when you talked 8 about like the residents over in Valley 9 Stream, as you know, we have the Marine Point 10 condos that were built over in Oceanside and 11 they also fell victim because it was new 12 construction and they found out that their 13 taxes were supposed to be a certain amount of 14 money. But then because of the assessment 15 something wasn't included. They're new 16 construction, whatever. So their tax bills 17 went up by a great amount of money. 18 I think that Legislator Drucker was 19 the one who I guess from your area was able to 20 reach out to state senators and it was 21 actually because the state interceded and they 22 made some changes so that these residents were 23 not going to be hit with such a large increase 24 in their taxes and it will be gradually 25 increased over a certain amount of years.

Full - 4-12-21 I would think that for me that maybe it would be better if we had an elected assessor who would have been -- that person would have been able to make that determination. Maybe they'd have caught it in time.

8 I keep going back to when we had 9 Harvey Levinson as our elected assessor and we 10 had an issue similar with condos and co-ops 11 down in the City of Long Beach and there was 12 an error in something. He came out. He faced 13 a group of very angry residents and listened 14 to their complaints and everything. And just 15 in a matter of weeks, we didn't have to go to anywhere else except but to his office and he 16 17 was the one who was able to correct it and to be able to help these people stay in their 18 19 condos and their co-ops.

I just even think about transparency. I have a resident who was not aware. She grieved her assessment and she thought that we were still using the ladder report, which she did, and she did all research first on that. She went for a

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 hearing and they told her no, we don't use the 3 ladder report anymore. They're just using the comp sales and whatever. We find out now that 4 5 there's different valuations that they're 6 using. So, residents who actually grieved 7 their assessments may have been at a 8 disadvantage because of this. Because the 9 information is not getting to them in a timely 10 manner. She doesn't know if she's going to 11 win or not. It really is a very frustrating 12 experience for so many people. But thank you 13 very much for highlighting this. 14 MS. DRISCOLL: It is verv 15 frustrating. We have just finished collection 16 a few weeks ago and so many people had come in 17 and we're really only open to the public during very limited hours now. People waiting 18 19 in the parking lot for us to come into the 20 office with their files. Unable to pay. And 21 again, it does go back to having nobody else 22 to go to. So they're coming to the receiver 23 of taxes.

And I'm more than happy to talk to everybody. I know my counterpoint in Oyster

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 Bay is. And I appreciate and I know a lot of 3 county legislators have reached out. We work 4 together. Work together with a lot of the 5 assemblymen and women. 6 But I do that think it's almost like nobody really knows what's happening in 7 8 the Department of Assessment. They do have a 9 lot of roles and I'm cognizant of that. 10 Between exemptions, assessment, grievance 11 there's a lot going on there. I think at some 12 point maybe that needs to be broken up. 13 People have different roles to do different 14 I don't even have a name for someone things. 15 that I can call and say look, a resident 16 called me. We had a combat veteran call last 17 week and she messaged me on Facebook and was 18 in complete despair. She said I thought I was 19 getting this exemption. It was just a glitch 20 in the application. But she could not get 21 through to the assessor's office. So, she 22 came to me. We ended up getting it figured 23 out. But it shouldn't be that difficult for 24 people. People who are struggling right now. 25 That's why I really do think that

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

Full - 4-12-21

1

2 the residents should have the opportunity to say this is my representative. This is who I 3 4 voted for. This is who is going to represent 5 my interests. And listen to what these people 6 say when they're running. Listen to what's important to them. What's their background? 7 Do they struggle like 8 Do they live here? 9 Do they struggle like me? I do think it vou? 10 gives more of a personality to that office and I think it makes the residents feel that 11 12 someone is advocating on their behalf. 13 LEGISLATOR FORD: And somebody 14 who's like hearing about that. Because these 15 people who work in the assessment department they are dedicated employees. They respond. 16 17 They try to help as best as they can. But if 18 you don't have enough people and being 19 stretched to the limit at times you get a 20 little tired. We all know what it's like. Ι 21 think I agree with the presiding officer that

I think we need to hire more people. If we had that person in charge of that department then I think that we would have the number of people and that people would be able to get

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 through. I think we owe it to the employees 3 that are there already. They're dedicated. They're hardworking. Let's give them a break 4 5 as well. 6 MS. DRISCOLL: Thank you so 7 I totally agree with you. much. 8 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Presiding 9 Officer, may I make a comment? 10 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Sure. 11 Legislator Drucker. 12 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: I just 13 wanted to make a comment regarding what 14 Legislator Ford just said. I don't know if 15 the receiver of taxes is still here. 16 Just last week the New York State 17 Legislature passed an amendment to the Real 18 Property Tax Law amending Section 421F to now 19 include new construction and substantially 20 renovated homes giving them a \$750,000 21 exemption that didn't exist before. This was 22 a flaw in the existing law. An elected county 23 assessor or an appointed county assessor would have had no bearing on that law. It had to be 24 25 changed legislatively by the state.

1	Full - 4-12-21
2	Nassau County, the county
3	attorney's office, my office and some others,
4	we were very instrumental in getting that
5	legislation drafted, presenting it to our
6	counterparts at the state legislature to get
7	it passed up in Albany. Thank goodness it
8	did. That's going to fix this problem.
9	That's going to make things fairer for new
10	construction and they're going to be paying
11	taxes that they were expecting to pay. I
12	don't know if you're aware of that change in
13	the law.
14	MS. DRISCOLL: The problem is
15	that information should be sent out to the
16	residents so that they are aware of it.
17	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: It just
18	happened last week.
19	MS. DRISCOLL: There's a lot of
20	information that they don't know about that we
21	try to get out to them.
22	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: It was all
23	over Newsday last week.
24	MS. DRISCOLL: Excuse me?
25	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: That law was

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 in Newsday last week. 3 MS. DRISCOLL: I'm going back to 4 October, November when people were first 5 getting their bills and people with new 6 construction, I think everybody up here knows, 7 that the new construction has been a continuing issue. We had issues with condos 8 9 out east, and right now I think that a lot of 10 people are just seeing huge tax hikes. 11 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: That's because of the law. It didn't allow for new 12 13 construction to share in that exemption that 14 homeowners did. That regular homeowners did. 15 And to substantially renovated homes. We 16 aimed for more than a year to fix this law and 17 it took some time with having it get to be done up in Albany and we finally got it done 18 19 last week. 20 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: I think 21 Legislator Ferretti would like to comment. 22 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: This idea 23 that the new construction issue just arose 24 over the last week or even the last year, I

25 mean, this was a flaw in the county

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 executive's proposal from the beginning. 3 Beginning when she first proposed it new construction was left out. It was brought out 4 5 as an issue with her proposed phase-in and we 6 worked, we being the Majority, worked with the 7 New York State assembly members to propose a 8 bill that would have made the phase-in more 9 fair. 10 But similar to today, the Minority 11 and the county executive played it off as, 12 quote, playing politics. Trying to fix 13 obvious errors in the system from day one 14 isn't playing politics. It's good 15 government. 16 And you know what? It's wonderful 17 that the state is now, after people have laid 18 out all this money erroneously, now 19 everybody's awake because it's an election 20 year and they want to try to fix things. You 21 know what? We tried from the beginning. Now 22 people are out tens of thousands of dollars 23 because of a flawed phase-in, a flawed 24 reassessment. It's unacceptable. And quite 25 frankly, it's too little too late. The for

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 sale signs are out. 3 So, again, let's stop making these Let's do right by the residents. 4 mistakes. 5 Let's override this ridiculous veto and give 6 Thank you. the residents a voice. 7 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thanks. 8 We have Mr. Jeff Pravato from the Town of 9 Ovster Bay here as well. Let's have him come 10 up to hear his comments. 11 MR. PRAVATO: I concur with 12 everything receiver Driscoll has said in her 13 statement. 14 Good afternoon Presiding Officer 15 Nicolello, Minority Leader Abrahams and 16 members of the Nassau County Legislature. 17 Thank you for allowing me to address you today 18 with this important information prior to your 19 vote on having the elected assessor. 20 As the elected receiver of taxes in 21 the Town of Oyster Bay it's my job not only to 22 collect the payments from the residents and 23 the commercial property owners but also to 24 protect their wallets. As an elected official 25 the buck stops with me and the taxpayers have

47

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 someone to hold accountable for the process of 3 their tax bills and the payments. While I collect taxes on behalf of 4 5 schools, local governments, special districts, 6 I do not determine the amount of taxes 7 individuals pay nor do I assess the value of 8 their property. I want to repeat that. While 9 I collect taxes on behalf of schools and local 10 governments and special districts, I, my 11 office, does not determine the amount of taxes 12 individuals pay nor do I assess the value of 13 their property. That is the job of the 14 Department of Assessment, which falls under 15 the jurisdiction of the county executive. 16 Unfortunately, this Department of 17 Assessment continues to fail taxpayers by 18 distributing error-ridden data and no one has 19 been held accountable for the costly 20 mistakes. The Nassau County Department of 21 Assessment lacks any accountability as it 22 continually attempts to pass the buck rather 23 than own up to their errors. I have not and 24 will never tolerate this incompetence and 25 neither should you when it comes to this

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

Full - 4-12-21

2 department.

1

25

3 In January and the months that followed I received thousands of calls from 4 5 outraged residents who were unable to get 6 answers at the Department of Assessment. Τn 7 fact, they couldn't even get someone to answer 8 the phone at the Department of Assessment. 9 Those that did were redirected from the 10 Department of Assessment to my office. As of 11 Friday, we were still getting calls after 12 being told the assessor's staff was told not 13 to. In fact, when Legislator Ferretti was 14 holding hearings here, the deputy assessor 15 said we've taken care of it and the receiver 16 was happy. And I texted Mr. Ferretti, 17 Legislator Ferretti, as we speak we're still 18 getting calls. So we're still getting calls. 19 I notified the county government, 20 specifically the county assessor and the 21 deputy county assessor, on multiple occasions 22 they have provided the town with late and 23 incorrect information on thousands of property 24 tax bills.

This is emails, just emails of the

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 communication that's gone back and forth 3 between our office, the county assessor's office, not including telephone calls. 4 Also 5 requested that they address residents' 6 concerns rather than shuffle them off to my 7 Which has no jurisdiction over these office. errors and assessment shifts that could cause 8 9 sticker shock for homeowners. 10 As you know, Nassau Department of 11 Assessment errors resulted in many property 12 tax owners being forced to overpay their 13 property taxes. In fact, this legislative 14 body approved legislation to fix these 15 errors. Sadly, in the midst of an economic 16 crisis brought on by the pandemic, many 17 property owners are still forced to overpay and now await refunds. 18 Which, as you know, 19 can take up to a year. These costly mistakes 20 by the Department of Assessment only add to 21 the burden already placed on 65 percent of the 22 homeowners whose property taxes increased 23 under County Executive Curran's reassessment 24 plan and tax hike.

For those dealing with the problems

25

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 the customer service provided by the department deserves a grade F for failure to 3 4 respond to taxpayers. And fiasco when it 5 comes to producing correct and legal 6 sufficient data and tax warrants. 7 It started with the beginning of 8 this year when we received tax warrants on 9 which the county assessor improperly notarized 10 his own signature. And then it continued with 11 my office reporting thousands of errors 12 related to missing veterans exemptions, clergy 13 exemptions, absent class one phase-in 14 exemptions and the overbilling of homeowners 15 due to unsettled SCAR petitions. 16 In an effort to help property 17 owners, we were able to issue new tax bills to 18 many residents but that came at heavy 19 administrative costs. 3,500 employee work 20 hours. Nearly \$140,000 in additional costs 21 and processing costs, which I know receiver 22 Driscoll is going to dig deeper. I'm a 23 numbers quy. I dug deep into everything. Ι 24 have everything right here on the sheet. 25 Nearly 6800 hours, actually 6,793

1

to be exact, have been identified within the Town of Oyster Bay alone and these county produced errors have cost taxpayers \$8.1 million in overpayments. Last year guess how many errors we had? 90. 90 adjustments only.

8 Next year this \$8.1 million will be 9 thrown on the backs of already overburden 10 homeowners as refunds are paid out. The 11 general tax -- and the general tax go up 12 beyond what they did this year under the 13 reassessment. Meaning the \$8.1 million that 14 guys are all refunding this year is going to 15 get thrown on the back of the homeowners that are being taxed now. Whatever assessment 16 17 raised up it's going to go up even more. 18 With all that said, I ask that 19 restore accountability to the Department of 20 Assessment. The county executive will not 21 take responsibility and provide proper 22 oversight. It is incumbent on you to do so. 23 Let taxpayers hold an elected assessor 24 accountable. Let that official be responsible 25 for fixing the department that has gone

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 completely off the rails due to the competence 3 and mismanagement. Thank you. 4 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you 5 Jeff. Legislator Walker I know had a 6 comment. 7 LEGISLATOR WALKER: I just really 8 wanted to -- I know we thanked receiver 9 Driscoll and I want to thank receiver 10 Pravato. I know we have spoken back and forth 11 many, many times. I felt so terrible when 12 your office was receiving phone calls, 13 especially when people were being told to call 14 your office and basically it being supposedly 15 your fault, something happened in the Town of 16 Oyster Bay or something happened in the Town 17 of Hempstead that caused them to have a wrong 18 bill. 19 I also think it's very important 20 for everyone to realize that an elected 21 assessor would live in Nassau County. He 22 would feel the same pain that our residents 23 are feeling. He would understand that pain. 24 The present assessor lives in Queens. This 25 really doesn't affect him at all.

1	Full - 4-12-21
2	Again, I apologize for the phone
3	calls you had to receive. And for us as
4	legislators, that goes for both sides of the
5	table, but when people were possible able to
6	reach upstairs they were told, and I
7	understand that constituent services doesn't
8	really have an answer, but they were told to
9	call their legislator who they know we don't
10	really have that answer either.
11	Again, I thank you for being here
12	this morning and sharing that information with
13	us, and I hope everybody thinks strongly
14	before they take the vote and supports having
15	an elected assessor as a referendum.
16	MR. PRAVATO: Thank you
17	Legislator Walker. As Legislator Drucker said
18	before, getting that legislation done up in
19	the state to have the eight year phase-in, an
20	elected assessor could have been even more of
21	a voice to have that than an appointed
22	assessor. Thank you.
23	LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Any other
24	legislators? Legislator Rhoads.
25	LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 receiver Pravato and I too want to echo my 3 thanks to you and to receiver Driscoll for all 4 the hard work that you've done. It's not just 5 the \$8.1 million that you've identified 6 collectively between the Town of Hempstead and 7 the Town of Oyster Bay. That's just Oyster 8 MR. PRAVATO: 9 Bav. That's times two. 10 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I said 11 collectively. I was about to say collectively 12 between the Town of Hempstead and the Town of 13 Oyster Bay I think you have identified close 14 to \$30 million in errors after the bills had 15 went out. We're not even talking about errors 16 that were identified before. These are after 17 the bills have gone out. Every single county 18 taxpayer is going to have to reach in their 19 pocket and pay because we couldn't get this 20 right. I want to thank you for identifying 21 that. 22 I also want to thank you for taking 23 on the additional burden, which you shouldn't 24 have to take, of trying to clean up the county

25 assessor's mess and this administration's

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 The fact that our administration, mess. 3 whether it's the county executive's office or the assessor's office, would ever say to call 4 5 the receiver of taxes for an explanation as to 6 why their assessment is incorrect, or a 7 legislator for that matter, as to why their 8 assessment is incorrect is inconceivable to 9 me.

10 So I want to thank you for taking 11 on that responsibility because it's not your 12 job. Just like it's not the state's job to 13 try and fix the mess that was created by this 14 administration. And I'm happy that they have 15 taken that up.

16 By the way, when we talk about new 17 construction, this Majority sent a letter to 18 the state senate, to the state assembly, to 19 the governor notifying them what we told the 20 county executive back in March of last year 21 that new exemptions were going to be 22 disproportionately impacted, including Super 23 Storm Sandy homes, were going to be 24 disproportionately impacted as a result of the 25 exclusion of new construction from the

Full - 4-12-21

2 phase-in.

1

3 I had a gentleman call my office from Wantagh whom I've mentioned before. 4 His 5 taxes went from \$10,000 to \$31,500 as a result 6 of not being included in that phase-in. While 7 I'm happy that it seems to be getting fixed 8 now, that's money that they've already had to 9 pull out of their pocket and pay this year 10 that they're not going to get back in all likelihood because I don't think that phase-in 11 12 is retroactive. I could be wrong. Hopefully 13 it is. 14 But the bottom line is we're 15 causing a lot of people a lot of pain because

16 we didn't think things through and act 17 proactively. And that's solely, the blame for that in my opinion, lies solely at the foot of 18 19 the county executive and her handpicked 20 assessor. I just wanted to thank you for your 21 efforts and for all the hard work that you and 22 your staff have done along with receiver 23 Driscoll and her staff.

24 MR. PRAVATO: Thank you25 Legislator Rhoads. Just keeping stats on

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 everything. 24,000 calls since we've taken 3 the first warrant and 6,000 related to the 4 problems of the reassessment. We figured 15 5 minutes per call and that was 43,500 in cost 6 right there. Then we've had to work some 7 weekends because the phones just keep ringing 8 and you're trying to do the regular work and 9 it can't be done, so there's overtime costs. 10 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank 11 goodness somebody's answering the phones at 12 least. 13 MR. PRAVATO: We give the 14 You have to call this number. The number. 15 craziest thing was we called the hotline, no 16 one picked up the hotline that was 17 established. Then they call us back. We 18 can't get an answer. We try to help them the 19 best we can. Unfortunately, sometimes we 20 can't do everything for them but we try to 21 walk them through everything. 22 Again, Presiding Officer Nicolello, 23 Minority Leader Abrahams, thank you and the 24 county legislature, thank you for your time. 25 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Something

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1 Full - 4-12-21 2 tells me if there was an elected assessor 3 those phones would have been answered and you 4 wouldn't be getting those calls. 5 MR. PRAVATO: I quarantee you. 6 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you 7 Anyone else on the legislature have any Jeff. 8 Is there any other member of the comments? 9 public who would like to speak? Hearing none, 10 then I'm going to call for a vote on this 11 resolution. An aye vote is a vote to 12 override. Nay would be not to override and we 13 need 13 votes to override the county 14 executive's veto. 15 All in favor signify by saying 16 Those opposed? So the vote fails by a ave. 17 vote of 11 votes to override and eight votes against overriding. Since we didn't get the 18 19 13 votes the override is unsuccessful. 20 Motion to adjourn by Legislator 21 Walker. Seconded by Legislator Schaefer. All 22 in favor of adjourning the legislature signify 23 by saying aye. Those opposed? Carries 24 unanimously. The legislature is adjourned and 25 we'll go right into the Rules Committee.

Regal Reporting Service 516-747-7353

1	Full - 4-12-21
2	Thank you receivers Driscoll and Pravato.
3	Appreciate you being here.
4	(Meeting was adjourned at 2:08
5	p.m.)
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	

1	
2	CERTIFICATION
3	
4	I, FRANK GRAY, a Notary
5	Public in and for the State of New
6	York, do hereby certify:
7	THAT the foregoing is a true and
8	accurate transcript of my stenographic
9	notes.
10	IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have
11	hereunto set my hand this 13th day of
12	April 2021
13	
14	
15	
16	FRANK GRAY
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	