	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 03.01.23
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2	
3	NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE
4	FULL LEGISLATURE MEETING
5	****
6	RICHARD NICOLELLO
7	PRESIDING OFFICER
8	*****
9	
10	STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS
11	COUNTY EXECUTIVE
12	BRUCE BLAKEMAN
13	*****
14	County Executive and Legislative Building
15	1550 Franklin Avenue
16	Mineola, New York
17	*****
18	Wednesday, March 1, 2023
19	7:03 p.m.
20	
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22	
23	
24	TAKEN BY: KAREN LORENZO, OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER
25	
	TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-35161

1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 03.01.23
1	NC FOLL LEGISLATORE 03.01.23
2	LEGISLATOR RICHARD J. NICOLELO
3	PRESIDING OFFICER
4	9TH Legislative District
5	***
6	LEGISLATOR HOWARD KOPEL
7	Deputy Presiding Officer
8	7th Legislative District
9	***
10	LEGISLATOR DENISE FORD
11	Alternate Presiding Officer
12	4th Legislative District
13	***
14	LEGISLATOR KEVAN ABRAHAMS
15	Minority Leader
16	1st Legislative District
17	***
18	LEGISLATOR SIELA BYNOE
19	
	2nd Legislative District ***
20	
21	LEGISLATOR CARRIE SOLAGES
22	3rd Legislative District
23	***
24	II

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NC FULL LEGISLATURE 03.01.23 1 2 LEGISLATOR DEBRA MULE 3 5th Legislative District \* \* \* 4 5 LEGISLATOR C. WILLIAM GAYLOR, III 6th Legislative District 6 7 \*\*\* 8 LEGISLATOR JOHN J. GIUFFRE 9 8th Legislative District \*\*\* 10 11 LEGISLATOR MAZI MELESA PILIP 12 10th Legislative District \*\*\* 13 LEGISLATOR DELIA DERIGGI-WHITTON 14 15 11th Legislative District \* \* \* 16 17 LEGISLATOR JAMES KENNEDY 18 12th Legislative District \*\*\* 19 20 LEGISLATOR THOMAS MCKEVITT 21 13th Legislative District 22 23 LEGISLATOR LAURA SCHAEFER 14th Legislative District 24 25

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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 03.01.23
1	
2	LEGISLATOR JOHN FERRETTI, JR.
3	15th Legislative District
4	***
5	LEGISLATOR ARNOLD W. DRUCKER
6	16th Legislative District
7	***
8	LEGISLATOR ROSE MARIE WALKER
9	17th Legislative District
10	***
11	LEGISLATOR JOSHUA LAFAZAN
12	18th Legislative District
13	***
14	
15	MICHAEL PULITZER
16	Clerk of the Legislature
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	of the state of th

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1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 03.01.23
2	PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Mike,
3	could you call the roll, please? We have
4	only a couple of minutes.
5	CLERK PULITZER: Thank you,
6	Presiding Officer. Deputy Presiding
7	Officer Howard Kopel?
8	LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Here.
9	CLERK PULITZER: Alternate Presiding
10	Officer Denise Ford?
11	LEGISLATOR FORD: Here.
12	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Siela
13	Bynoe?
14	LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Here.
15	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Carrie
16	A. Solages?
17	LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Here.
18	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Debra
19	Mule?
20	LEGISLATOR MULE: Here.
21	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator C.
22	William Gaylor, III?
23	LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Present.

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Legislator John Giuffre?

CLERK PULITZER: Thank you.

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1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 03.01.23
2	LEGISLATOR GIUFFRE: Here.
3	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Mazi
4	Pilip?
5	LEGISLATOR PILIP: Here.
6	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Delia
7	DeRiggi-Whitton?
8	LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: Here.
9	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator James
10	Kennedy?
11	LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Here.
12	CLERK PULITZER: Thank you.
13	Legislator Thomas McKevitt?
14	LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Here.
15	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Laura
16	Schaefer?
17	LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Here.
18	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator John
19	Ferretti?
20	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Here.
21	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Arnold
22	Drucker?
23	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Here.
24	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Rose

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Marie Walker?

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LEGISLATOR WALKER: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Joshua

Lafazan?

LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Minority Leader

Kevan Abrahams?

LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Thank you.

Presiding Officer Richard Nicolello?

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: We have a quorum,

sir.

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Again, welcome to the Legislative Chambers. The State of the County will be beginning momentarily. We go live at 7:02, so we have a couple of minutes.

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: If
everyone could please, if we haven't done
so already, put your phones on airplane
mode or turn off the sound.

Ladies and gentlemen, it's my privilege to introduce to you the County Executive, Bruce Blakeman.

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(Whereupon, applause.)

(Whereupon, County Executive
Bruce Blakeman enters and
greets the Legislature and then
proceeds to podium.)

COUNTY EXECUTIVE: Thank you. Thank you. Let's get down to business.

So it's been one year. First, I want to thank God Hashem, for giving me the strength to be County Executive. I pray that God gives me the wisdom, courage and compassion to serve the residents of this great county to the best of my ability.

Thank you, Presiding Officer Rich
Nicolello, Minority Leader Abrahams, and
all the members of the Legislature,
Comptroller Elaine Phillips, District
Attorney Anne Donnelly, our Clerk,
Maureen O'Connell, and all the other
elected officials who are here tonight.
Members of the union, members of my
staff, thank you for your hard work and
the great workers in Nassau County.

I especially want to thank our

county workers for the outstanding job
they did this past year coming out of the
COVID pandemic. I want to thank all of
our first responders, our volunteer
firefighters, our EMTs and our great
veterans and all of our employees,
whether they be corrections officers,
deputy sheriffs clerks, whether they work
in social services, thank you to each and
every one of you for all you do for the
citizens and residents of Nassau County.

Over the past year, my
administration has tackled issues head on
that have been swept under the rug for
far too long by previous administrations.
By making the tough decisions, we were
able to make the County more affordable
and safer.

As inflation reached 8% nationally, we were still able to submit a no tax increase budget. And as a result of our sound fiscal practices, we received a bond upgrade from the Wall Street rating agencies who have endorsed our record of

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economic performance (applause).

I also worked with the Legislature to approve a comprehensive capital plan that will help to upgrade Nassau's critical infrastructure, protect our environment, resurface our roadways, give law enforcements the resources they need, and improve our parks and recreation areas, all without raising taxes (applause).

To keep costs low, especially for our seniors, veterans and young people, my administration is focused on expanding the tax base, driving local economic activity, and bringing some of the biggest and most prestigious companies in the world right here to Nassau County.

There is an interesting proposal to development the area around the coliseum known as the Hub. Las Vegas Sands has proposed an entertainment center, luxury hotel and casino for the Coliseum site. This resort would have local and celebrity residents, a luxury hotel and

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spa, an entertainment venue, and other top notch high class amenities. We are considering this proposal, and I have consistently stated that we would keep an open mind. However, there are three requirements necessary to move this proposal forward:

First, it must be world class with a luxury hotel and entertainment component;

Second, it must bring significant revenue to the County and surrounding areas, including construction and permanent jobs;

And third, it must have the support of the community.

We will continue to explore this possibility and will keep county residents informed throughout the process.

One of the first things I did upon taking office was asking that our great comptroller, Elaine Phillips, conduct a comprehensive review of the Department of Assessment. The Comptroller uncovered

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that the previous administration had

improperly tampered with home values

against the advice of their own

professional consultants, causing

disparities in values and assessments.

She also found that the quality control

was lacking. Because of the volatile

housing market caused by nationwide

inflation, rising interest rates, and the

phase-in negotiated by my predecessor,

which does not expire for another year, I

felt it would be unreasonable to burden

our taxpayers with a reassessment of the

whole county again.

transparent (applause).

Prior to the comptroller's report, the Department of Assessment already had made significant changes in staff training and oversight, along with implementing best practices that will make the system more fair, accurate and

On the economic front, I am committed to moving forward with economic development initiatives which create new

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jobs and economic prosperity for all of our residents. Our administration increased the Boost Nassau Main Street Grants program by an additional \$10 million to support small businesses and keep family owned businesses in Nassau County (applause).

We have begun meeting with professionals and entrepreneurs from every community to begin work on expanding opportunities for all people so that every community and every person black, white, Asian, Hispanic and Latino share in our county's prosperity.

Nassau County is bigger than ten states by population, and our GDP is larger than 145 nations in the United Nations. My administration is committed to doing big things. Attracting people to Nassau County is a major priority. We have world class healthcare, restaurants, shopping and beaches. Our housing stock is diverse and dynamic. We must market Nassau County as the vibrant and exciting

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community it is (applause).

Over the summer, we held our Nassau Back concert series at the Lakeside Theater at Eisenhower Park, headlined by Nassau's own Hall of Famer, Joan Jett. To enjoy great music and honor the heroic work of our first responders who stepped up to the plate during the COVID pandemic (applause). A record breaking crowd of over 25,000 people attended this event. The concerts also served to drive economic activity for our local residents, stores, hotels and other small businesses who struggled during the COVID pandemic. I am working on a star studded lineup for this summer, as well as hosting other major entertainment and sports events.

In partnership with Island Harvest and Long Island Cares Harry Chapin Food Bank. We had a Thanksgiving Eve food drive and collected more than 10,000 pounds of food (applause) with the help of our own Jericho native, singer

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songwriter and mega star, Madison Beer.

We held the county's first Feliz Navidad concert and toy distribution in collaboration with Toys for Tots for over 6000 people (applause).

We also held parades to celebrate our state champion sports teams. Little League World Series participants and UFC champion.

For Presidents Week, we began a comprehensive marketing campaign to highlight our county parks and museums while children were off from school. Rather than spend thousands of dollars on a vacation because of inflation and high gas prices, we urged residents to stay right here in Nassau County and enjoy everything we had to offer.

Now, this is the good part. I am proud to say we almost doubled visitation during that weekend at our county parks, ice rinks and museums, providing low cost and fun ways for families to spend time together. We need to market Nassau County

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and all we have to offer (applause).

This year, as Nassau County will be hosting the Korean American National Sports Festival, which will draw thousands of athletes from around the world to Mitchell Field. I will always be the greatest and biggest cheerleader for our communities and fight to protect our suburban way of life.

Unfortunately, in Albany, some folks have proposed legislation that threatens the suburban experience of Nassau County residents. Legislation is being proposed in this year's budget that demands a 3% growth in housing stock. For Long Island, the target would mean 38,000 new housing units in the next three years. This would add approximately 100,000 new residents to Nassau County in just three years. In order to meet this goal, suburban areas of Nassau County, like Lakeview, Massapequa and Port Washington, would have to add multi-story apartment buildings and multifamily homes. While

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these goals may be attainable in other

parts of the state where they have

sufficient land, I do not believe this

one size fits all approach takes into

account the suburban character of Nassau

County, and the fact that we are

surrounded by water and already the most

densely populated suburban county in the

United States. The water aquifers would

be stretched to dangerous levels. Our

environment would suffer and traffic

would be unbearable. Our schools would be

overcrowded. It's a dangerous idea that

will destroy the quality of life that we

enjoy. This is why I will stand against

that state plan, but I stand willing to

negotiate with our leaders in Albany on a

common sense approach to housing that

takes into account the necessities that

we have here in Nassau County (applause).

There's another issue that has

arisen up in Albany, which I think would

be very deleterious to Nassau County. I

will stand against the plan in Albany to

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move local elections to even years.

Moving local elections to even years will drown out local issues that our residents care about like roads, taxes, government services and benefits, where the media will only focus on national or major state issues. Local issues will be drowned out. We can't let that happen. We need to protect our local home rule and our local elections and our local elected officials and not get drowned out by a policy that would put us in a situation we haven't seen since the birth of this county.

I will also strongly oppose the State's proposal to raise the payroll tax from \$0.34 to \$0.50 for every \$100 of payroll. Nassau County residents should not have to bail out the bloated and ineffective bureaucracy known as the MTA. Residents cannot afford another tax, and certainly not to subsidize the MTA, which is using now train cars from the 1980s and delays continue in service. And as

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we've seen with the rollout of the Grand Central Station, there are problems there. It's not upon our residents to bail out the MTA, and I will oppose that tax (applause).

Our Police Department, led by Commissioner Ryder, does a great job. Our cops are the most highly trained and dedicated in the nation. For example, after seeing countywide rise in thefts of catalytic converters, officers seized thousands of stolen catalytic converters and more than \$7 million from an organized crime ring, putting a significant dent in their operation. Thank you, Commissioner Ryder, and the dedicated police officers of Nassau County. I especially want to thank Senator Chuck Schumer for asking the Department of Justice to help us and send a special response team to Long Island to help crack down on these thefts (applause).

This year's budget included the

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hiring of 86 new law enforcement professionals, including 36 new Nassau County Police Department officers. I was proud to work with PBA President Tommy Shevlin to approve a new contract for the PBA that adequately compensates police officers for their service while protecting taxpayers wallets (applause). Together, with all of our unions, we resolved years of litigation and uncertainty regarding longevity (applause).

Our great men and women of the Nassau County Police Department solve the crimes and make the arrests. But Albany's woke progressive policies like cashless bail raised the age and other crazy laws are making us all less safe. We must repeal these laws which are designed to give criminals more rights than the victims. It must not continue (applause).

President Biden's border policies are also affecting us, more than just New York City. Just over a month ago, four

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migrants were bussed to New York City at

taxpayer expense from Texas. And we

arrested them for stealing thousands of

dollars in merchandise from Macy's just

down the street from here at the

Roosevelt Field Mall. A majority of the

residential burglaries in Nassau County

are now committed by organized crime

groups from places like Chile and El

Salvador. I am asking President Biden to

work with our great Customs and Border

Patrol agents to secure our borders, stop

the flow of criminals into our

communities, and keep out drugs like

heroin and fentanyl that are killing our

kids.

(Whereupon, standing

ovation.)

COUNTY EXECUTIVE: Thank you. I have

met with far too many parents who have

lost loved ones to the disease of

addiction. It has to stop. And that

starts with securing our border

(applause).

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While we work to find fixes to the

criminal justice system, my

administration is putting substantial

resources into helping to end the heroin

and opioid abuse epidemic that has

ravaged our communities. Our county

earmarked \$15 Million per year for the

next four years to combat opioid

addiction through treatment and helping

local hospitals, clinics and other

community organizations so that our

county can focus on prevention, education

and treatment.

Working together, all of us in

Nassau County, we reduced overdoses by

30%. But it's not enough; it's not

enough. UCLA came out with a report today

that 30% of the fentanyl comes in through

the border. It must stop (applause).

Recently, Governor Hochul announced

to government and business leaders her

initiatives to spur economic development

by investing in education, technology and

science. The first of these initiatives

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will begin right here in Nassau County at Long Island University C.W. Post Campus. We look forward to working with the governor on more projects to create jobs and for prosperity for our residents.

We must also work in a bipartisan manner to provide more help to those with special needs, especially our children. We have seen a rise in autism throughout the United States, and we must be responsive to the needs of those parents and those children.

While we still have many challenges, such as making sure we have a safe and reliable water supply, by working together Republicans, Democrats and independents, we can meet every challenge that comes before us (applause).

Nassau County is one of the best places to live in America, but it is not a time right now to rest on our laurels. I will continue to fight to keep Nassau safe, affordable, and on a path to prosperity. And with the help of my

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2	colleagues, especially the honorable
3	members of this legislature. The best is
4	yet to come.
5	Thank you. God bless Nassau County
6	and God bless the United States of
7	America. Thank you all.
8	(Whereupon, applause.)
9	PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:
10	Motion to adjourn. So moved by everyone.
11	All in favor?
12	(Whereupon, all members of
13	the Nassau County Legislature
14	respond in favor.)
15	PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those
16	opposed?
17	(Whereupon, no verbal
18	response.)
19	PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: We're
20	adjourned.
21	(Whereupon, the meeting
22	concludes, 7:24 p.m.)
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	II

	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 03.01.23
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2	CERTIFICATE
3	
4	STATE OF NEW YORK )
5	: SS.:
6	COUNTY OF NASSAU )
7	
8	I, KAREN 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 1st day of March, 2023.
15	
16	<u>Karen Lorenzo</u>
17	Karen Lorenzo
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\_\_\_\_TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-3516 \_\_\_\_\_25 \_\_

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\$	4	16:24	16:24
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<b>\$10</b> <sub>[1]</sub> - 13:5		<b>ADDRESS</b> [1] - 1:10	10:2, 10:11,
\$100 <sub>[1]</sub> - 18:18	<b>5th</b> <sub>[1]</sub> - 3:3	adequately [1] -	12:22, 13:8, 14:2,
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<b>12th</b> <sub>[1]</sub> - 3:18	<b>7:03</b> [1] - 1:19	- 9:16	approve <sub>[2]</sub> - 10:4,
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<b>145</b> [1] - 13:18	<b>7th</b> [1] - 2:8	affecting [1] - 20:24	aquifers [1] - 17:10
<b>14th</b> [1] - 3:24	8	afford <sub>[1]</sub> - 18:22	area[1] - 10:20
<b>1550</b> [1] - 1:15	•	affordable [2] -	areas [3] - 10:10,
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<b>17th</b> [1] - 4:9	<b>8th</b> <sub>[1]</sub> - 3:9	agencies [1] - 9:25	<b>ARNOLD</b> [1] - 4:5
<b>18th</b> <sub>[1]</sub> - 4:12	9	agents <sub>[1]</sub> - 21:13	<b>Arnold</b> [1] - 6:21
<b>1980s</b> [1] - 18:24	<b>J</b>	<b>ago</b> [1] - 20:25	arrested [1] - 21:4
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2	Α	<b>Albany</b> [4] - 16:11,	<b>Asian</b> [1] - 13:14
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