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Summer 2013

# Assemblyman **Fred W. Thiele, Jr.** **2013 Legislative Summary**

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*Dear First Assembly District Resident:*

*The 2013 State Legislative Session has recently drawn to a close. This Session was full of many successes and some disappointments.*

*On the one hand, under the leadership of Governor Andrew Cuomo, the Session was marked by the State's third on-time State Budget. The \$135.1 billion fiscal plan limited spending to less than a 1% increase. The State Budget was also balanced without the need of any new taxes or borrowing. In fact, state income tax rates are at their lowest level in 60 years.*

*Working with State Senators Ken LaValle and Lee Zeldin, we also had a great deal of success on local projects and priorities, including the repair of Montauk Highway, coastal restoration after Superstorm Sandy, revitalization of the Southampton campus of Stony Brook University, and capital funding for our local libraries.*

*Still there were disappointments. I could not support the "reform" of the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA). Everyone agreed that LIPA needed to be revamped. However, the legislation was rushed through Albany with little public input and will do little to address issues such as accountability, high rates, and storm response. It was a missed opportunity to finally put Long Island on the path of a clean and affordable energy future.*

*Finally, the State Legislature has been rocked by scandal after scandal in recent times. While none of these scandals directly affected Long Island, it is clear that these incidents reflect badly on the whole state. That is why I fully supported Governor Cuomo's decision to create a Moreland Commission to fully investigate corruption in state government. This is long overdue and hopefully will lead to the same reforms we have seen in other areas of government like the budget process.*

*In this newsletter, I've tried to give some insight into how this Session affected Long Island.*

*Sincerely,*

*Fred W. Thiele, Jr.*

## **NYPIRG 2013 SESSION REPORT SHOWS THIELE EFFECTIVE AND INDEPENDENT**



Every year, the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) publishes its Session analysis. The 2013 report shows local Assemblyman Fred Thiele to be one of the most effective and independent representatives in Albany.

Thiele had more of his bills pass both houses of the State Legislature than any other Long Islander. On average, a member of the Assembly passed 4 bills through both houses of the State Legislature. Assemblyman Thiele passed 16 bills this Session including legislation (1) creating a state recognition procedure for the Montaukett Indians, (2) job protection for volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers, (3) legislation to promote economic development at Enterprise Park at Calverton Reuse and Revitalization (EPCAL), and (4) numerous bills for East End local governments including all 5 East End towns, Eastport Fire District, and the Village of Quogue. Thiele was 5th of 150 members in getting bills through both houses of the State Legislature.

Assemblyman Thiele (I-Sag Harbor) has a voting record demonstrating his independence. Thiele had a 100% voting record, voting on all 1089 bills considered by the Assembly in 2013. In terms of voting with the Assembly Majority, Thiele was 92nd out of 150, and 135th out of 150 in terms of voting with the Assembly Minority.

# CONSTRUCTION GRANTS AID FIRST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT LIBRARIES

The State Budget provides roughly \$14 million annually to assist libraries across the State with construction and improvement funds. This year \$724,655 of the \$14 million came to four libraries in the First Assembly District. The recipients included East Hampton Library (\$342,262) for the new Children's Wing, John Jermain Memorial Library in Sag Harbor (\$227,041) to restore and expand the existing library, Mastic-Moriches-Shirley Community Library (\$63,762) for an energy efficient boiler, and Shelter Island Public Library (\$91,590) to improve library energy efficiency, accessibility and safety.

At a time when libraries are experiencing record usage with limited local resources, these State grants go a long way towards filling the needs of local libraries.



## New York State Public Library Construction Grant

Assemblyman Thiele congratulates Catherine Creedon, Director of the John Jermain Memorial Library, and members of the John Jermain Memorial Library Board of Trustees on a recent \$227,041 New York State Public Library Construction Grant. This is the third consecutive year the Library has successfully obtained grant funds from this State program.

Pictured on the front steps of the Library (left to right): Michael Garabedian, Vice President; Jacqueline Brody, Secretary; Craig Rhodes, Trustee; Catherine Creedon, Library Director; and, New York State Assemblyman Fred W. Thiele, Jr.

## GOVERNOR SIGNS INCREASED PENALTIES FOR TEXTING WHILE DRIVING

The Governor has signed legislation supported by Assemblyman Thiele to improve highway safety by increasing penalties on young drivers who text while driving. We have seen too many tragic accidents where drivers are killed or kill others while attempting to read or write a text message. This legislation sends the message that texting while driving is a serious and dangerous offense.

By increasing penalties and raising public awareness, we can prevent accidents from happening. The new legislation increases penalties for texting or using a cell phone while driving on two different categories of permits and licenses, including: Probationary licenses- first offense is a 60-day license suspension; and second offense, if within six months of getting the license back, is a six-month license revocation. Junior permits or licenses- first offense is a 60-day license suspension; and second offense, if within six months of getting the permit or license back, is a 60-day permit or license revocation. This legislation builds on laws enacted earlier this year that increase fines for repeated violations of the cell phone and texting laws by all drivers, and that further restrict the use of cell

phones and personal electronic devices by commercial drivers. It also builds on Governor Cuomo's recent move directing the Department of Motor Vehicles to immediately start imposing five points on the driver's license of those guilty of texting or using cell phones while driving; this is an increase from three points for a first offense.



# FIRST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT SEES SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL AID INCREASES

SCHOOL DISTRICT	\$ 2012	\$ GOVERNOR	\$ FINAL BUDGET	%
William Floyd	106,981,887	107,210,733	107,422,901	+0.41
Center Moriches	10,030,106	10,159,690	10,333,020	+3.02
East Moriches	5,493,635	5,615,113	5,773,943	+5.10
East Hampton	2,513,174	2,436,031	2,622,016	+4.33
Amagansett	305,751	274,699	334,228	+9.31
Springs	1,088,045	1,246,087	1,259,587	+15.77
Sag Harbor	1,427,081	1,308,882	1,548,247	+8.49
Montauk	733,969	655,174	807,168	+9.97
Riverhead	17,605,289	18,751,826	20,451,658	+16.17
Shelter Island	450,981	405,473	521,730	+15.69
Remsenberg/Speonk	463,500	369,018	518,289	+11.82
Westhampton Beach	1,642,036	1,526,637	1,786,736	+8.81
Quogue	246,771	218,911	280,051	+13.49
Hampton Bays	4,108,869	4,169,253	4,299,603	+4.64
Southampton	2,301,515	2,259,125	2,444,862	+6.23
Bridgehampton	563,875	517,572	606,295	+7.52
Eastport/S-Manor	29,418,919	32,310,084	32,615,197	+10.86
Tuckahoe	828,241	740,845	953,227	+15.09
East Quogue	899,982	897,543	1,056,036	+17.34

## THIELE SPEARHEADS EFFORT TO REPAVE MONTAUK HIGHWAY

In February of this year, Assemblyman Fred W. Thiele, Jr., spearheaded an effort with 10 other elected South Fork officials to petition the Governor to advance a capital project to repave Montauk Highway from Southampton to Montauk. The Governor responded quickly and favorably to that request by agreeing to amend the State Transportation Improvement Plan to include repaving of a 10-mile stretch of Montauk Highway from County Road 39 in Southampton to Stephen Hands Path in East Hampton. The proposed construction will cost approximately \$12.53 million. The State has already completed the 2.3 mile stretch of the highway from Stephen Hands Path to State Route 114 in East Hampton this past spring. The remainder

of the 10 miles will be bid this fall. The project is funded with Federal and State funds. The funding to repave the remaining section between East Hampton and Montauk is also in the works.

This highway is the most highly trafficked road on eastern Long Island. There is no alternate route. It is essential for both local residents and the substantial second home industry. It is important for businesses and local fire, ambulance, and emergency service workers. In the case of an emergency or disaster, this road is the only evacuation route for the region. This project will mean not only construction jobs but will also foster the entire economy of the region.

# PECONIC BAY COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUND REVENUES SOAR IN 1ST HALF OF 2013

15 years ago, Assemblyman Thiele authored and passed the Peconic Bay Community Preservation Fund legislation in Albany. It authorized the Towns of East Hampton, Riverhead, Shelter Island, Southampton, and Southold to create land preservation banks, funded by a 2% real estate transfer tax. Approved by more than 2/3rds of the region's voters, the fund has now generated more than \$833 million in revenue to buy land for open space, farmland, parks, and historic preservation. Nearly 10,000 acres have been preserved.

After the recession hit in 2008, the level of funding declined and has only begun to fully recover in the last year. In the first 6 months of 2013, the Community Preservation Fund has generated \$43.87 million in revenue. It is on pace to be the best year since 2007 when \$96 million was generated.



## Assemblyman Thiele congratulates high school musicians

Assemblyman Fred W. Thiele Jr. pictured with local high school students who performed with the Suffolk County Music Educators' Association (SCMEA) All-County Instrumental and Vocal Jazz Ensembles on Tuesday, March 5th on the South Concourse of the Empire State Plaza in Albany in celebration of the 41st annual "Music In Our School Month" sponsored by the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA).

## THIELE APPOINTED TASK FORCE CHAIR

Assemblyman Thiele has been appointed Chair of the New York State Assembly Task Force on University-Industry Cooperation. The Task Force on University-Industry Cooperation has been in existence since the 1980's. The role of the Task Force is to promote existing research and development initiatives as well as generate new ideas and goals for academic and high-tech university-industry partnerships. In recent years, the Task Force has focused on the development

and use of alternative, sustainable energy technologies, leveraging federal funds for high-tech research and development, and expanding partnerships between universities and their communities.

Given the role of Stony Brook University in Long Island's economy and the renewal of the Southampton campus, the new appointment will assist in integrating SUNY with the local economy.