

An update on important news in our community



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5TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT
SUFFOLK COUNTY



Dear Neighbor,
The key to effective representation is communication. There are many things going on at the state level and within our community that can affect you and your family, and this newsletter is meant to make sure you receive the information you need. Issues covered in this newsletter include:

- How Common Core is affecting our schools
- The Yellow Dot program will save lives
- What is going on with Veterans Highway and when things will get back to normal
- The truth about the governor's LIPA overhaul

Updates from my office are also available via social media and email. Please contact me if you'd like to receive automatic updates in the future or to share feedback on this newsletter.

Sincerely,
Alfred C. Graf
Assemblyman Al Graf

Test Scores
Prove Need
For
Education
Reform

Assemblyman
Graf, Law
Enforcement
Introduce Yellow
Dot Program

Roadwork
Progressing
On
NY Route
454/
Veterans
Highway

Assemblyman
GRAF
FIGHTS to
Repeal Costly
LIPA
Overhaul

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Follow Assemblyman Al Graf on social media or sign up for email alerts for more news as it happens!

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TEST SCORES PROVE NEED FOR EDUCATION REFORM

Assemblyman Al Graf (R,C,I-Holbrook) pointed to recently-released data from the State Education Department showing plummeting standardized test scores for students on Long Island and across New York as yet another example of how badly the state needs education reform. Following the implementation of Common Core requirements, statewide proficiency for grades three through eight fell roughly 34 points in math and 24 in English from 2012 to 2013, with Long Island students seeing even larger drop-offs in certain grade levels and subject areas. Graf's petition to Fix New York Schools has received over 10,000 signatures from across the state, and he has also sponsored legislation to withdraw New York from the Common Core program.

"My question for the governor, legislature and those responsible for our state's education policy is simple: can you hear me now?" said Graf. "Forcing through rigorous, one-size-fits-all standardized testing hampers teachers and hurts students. While reports have surfaced indicating that both teachers and students are literally becoming ill due to test-related stress, these test scores prove that our children are being set up for failure. The more I talk to parents, teachers and students, the louder the calls for education reform become. It is time to abandon the failed policies that are shortchanging Long Island's children and fix New York schools."

Assemblyman Graf's petition can be found at: www.fixnyschools.com.

ASSEMBLYMAN GRAF, LAW ENFORCEMENT INTRODUCE YELLOW DOT PROGRAM

Assemblyman Al Graf (R,C,I-Holbrook) recently introduced the life-saving Yellow Dot program at a press conference with law enforcement officials, emergency response personnel and colleagues from the Assembly Minority conference. Graf has partnered with The New York State Sheriffs' Association to offer Yellow Dot, a free program that provides vital medical information to first responders. The cards contain vital information such as emergency contact numbers, doctor's name, medications and allergies.

"Medical emergencies are a race against the clock, and the Yellow Dot program enables emergency response personnel to perform life-saving measures as quickly and effectively as possible," said Graf. "This free program will ensure that an individual's medical history is factored into treatment in their time of need, and I thank Suffolk County Sheriff Vincent DeMarco for his work implementing this program here on Long Island. I encourage everyone to sign up as soon as possible in order to ensure their safety on the road."

To take part in the program, participants must complete the medical information card contained in their Yellow Dot kit, attach a recent photo, place it in the glove compartment of their vehicle, and place the Yellow Dot decal on the driver's side rear window. First responders arriving at the scene of an emergency will be alerted by the Yellow Dot decal to look for the medical information card in the glove compartment.

"This is a great program, and such a simple concept that can save a life during an emergency," said Graf. "I wish we had this program when I was a police officer. I could have used this information at the many accident scenes I responded to."

"Please pick up a Yellow Dot program packet for yourself or a loved one, friend, or neighbor at my office at 991 Main Street, Suite 202 in Holbrook. Sharing this program can save a life, and the life you save may be your own," he concluded.

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ROADWORK PROGRESSING ON NY ROUTE 454/VETERANS HIGHWAY

Assemblyman Al Graf (R,C,I-Holbrook) recently spoke with representatives from the New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) to discuss progress being made on NY Route 454/Veterans Highway. The \$4.4 million project includes constructing a recharge basin, making drainage improvements to eliminate flooding, and improving the quality of stormwater roadway runoff between Lincoln Avenue and Grundy Avenue.

"Veterans Highway is vital for residents traveling across our community; whether they're going to work, taking the kids to school, or simply running errands, countless commuters rely on it to get them where they're going," said Graf. "Fortunately, with these repairs, we can expect the roadway to be in better shape in the future and better equipped to handle the next potential natural disaster. As we learned during Superstorm Sandy, the upkeep of our roadways is vital to help relief arrive where it's needed most. While the work creates some inconvenience now, I believe this is a positive step in the long term for our community."

When completed, the old drainage system will be replaced with a system that will drain roadway runoff into the recharge basin. New paved shoulders with new curbs and sidewalks on the north/westbound side will also be constructed.

According to DOT officials, construction is ongoing near Coates Avenue on the north shoulder of NY Route 454 and in the median. A single travel lane in each direction is being closed as needed to accommodate construction. Residents should expect occasional closures of travel lanes to permit vehicles to enter and exit construction areas. Work on the eastbound side is complete. Work on the north/westbound side is more than halfway complete and is scheduled to be finished by the end of November 2013.



ASSEMBLYMAN GRAF FIGHTS TO REPEAL COSTLY LIPA OVERHAUL

Assemblyman Al Graf (R,C,I-Holbrook) is fighting to repeal the costly overhaul of the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) and prevent the factors that have led to a four percent increase in bills. The legislation would also forgive the authority's debt from unfunded state mandates that drive up rates and prevent the New York Power Authority (NYPA) from charging municipalities different prices for the delivery of electricity.

"Just a week after the governor signed his LIPA legislation into law, we received a four percent increase, which is exactly what I was trying to avoid when I fought tooth and nail against the costly overhaul he forced through," said Graf. "We must address the structural cost inefficiencies that lead to higher rates and higher bills for Long Island's taxpayers. Until we reduce the rates we pay per-kilowatt of electricity, our families and businesses will continue to be priced out of their homes."

To illustrate the cost of this four percent increase to local schools and municipalities, Graf totaled the cost of the increase for individual groups:

District/Municipality	Monthly increase	Annual increase
Sachem School District	\$9,600	\$115,200 <small>(the salary for two teachers and an aide)</small>
Town of Islip	\$13,200	\$158,400
Town of Brookhaven	\$18,040	\$216,480
Suffolk County	\$71,160	\$853,920

"The cost of electricity is bankrupting our schools and localities, driving up local taxes, and hurting our ability to provide essential programs and services to our families," said Graf. "Long Island's future is hanging in the balance, and I will continue to fight for the common sense solutions that will lead to lower rates and lower bills."