



## Assemblyman **Fred W. Thiele, Jr.** **Reports to the People**



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### **Thiele Passes More Bills Than Any Other Long Island Assemblyman During The 2017 Session**

According to POLITICO NEW YORK, the State Assembly passed 998 bills in 2017, and of these, 609 bills passed both houses of the Legislature. Thus far, the Governor has signed 452 bills into law and vetoed 52. The Governor still has 105 bills to consider before the end of the year.

During the 2017 session, I passed 17 bills through both houses of the New York State Legislature, more than any other member of the Long Island delegation. Of these bills, 12 have already been signed by the Governor. My legislative record ranks 5th statewide.

Among the 17 bills I passed was legislation to (1) expand oversight over LIPA/PSEG-LI rates (2) provide greater financial assistance to the State's small businesses, (3) assist the commercial fishing

industry, (4) provide greater home rule control over the East Hampton Airport, and (5) enact home rule bills requested by East End local governments.

This demonstrates that it is possible to be both independent and effective in Albany. In the last five years, I have passed more than 80 bills that improve the quality of life on Long Island and New York State. Of the more than 200 laws I have passed during my tenure in the Assembly, the one I am most proud of is the Peconic Bay Region Community Preservation Fund, which has generated more than \$1.25 billion to protect community character on the East End since 1999.

### **Thiele Spearheads Fight for Fairness and Equity for Commercial Fishermen**

I am working with our local commercial fishermen to seek New York State's fair share of federal fish quotas. Governor Cuomo has also supported this effort.

On January 20 of this year, Senator LaValle and I introduced legislation directing the State Attorney-General to take legal action against federal and interstate agencies challenging fishing quotas that discriminate against New York State commercial fishermen.

In addition to the quotas, the state commercial licensing regulations also seriously harm the economic viability of the commercial fishing industry. This year, the State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) attempted to gain legislative passage of a bill that would have extended these unfair regulations for an additional three years. I successfully blocked the three-year extender. Instead, the regulations were extended only to the end of 2018. This will give the State Legislature time to reform the regulations to help our commercial fishermen. The DEC Commissioner also committed to meet with the commercial fishermen on Long Island to discuss issues of concern.

On October 4, I held a meeting with representatives of the commercial fishing industry to create an agenda for discussion with the DEC Commissioner, including quotas and licensing. The next day, the Governor sent a letter to the U.S. Commerce Secretary demanding immediate federal action to fix inequitable fluke quotas or New York State will commence litigation. We will continue to work with the DEC Commissioner on commercial licensing reform that will be beneficial to the commercial fishing industry.



*On November 9, 2017, Assemblyman Thiele hosted a meeting with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and commercial fishermen in his district to discuss key issues the commercial fishing industry needs the State to address, including quotas and licenses. Pictured L-R: Jim Gilmore, DEC Division of Marine Resources Division Director, NYS DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos, Assemblyman Fred Thiele, Senator Ken LaValle, and Southampton Town Councilwoman Julie Lofstad.*

### **Veterans School Tax Exemption Extended**

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo has signed legislation, which I supported in the State Assembly, extending the school property tax exemption law to veterans who qualify based upon "eligible funds." This new law would extend the veteran's school property tax exemption to include all qualified veterans. In 2013 and 2016, the alternative veteran's property tax exemption and Cold War property tax exemption were amended to give school districts the options of granting the tax exemption. With this legislation, all three categories of veteran's property tax exemptions (alternative exemption, Cold War, and eligible funds) would be consistent and apply to school taxes.

## Hurricane Relief Drive to Aid Puerto Rico Continues

I am partnering with Long Island Cares and New York State in holding a hurricane relief drive for Puerto Rico, following the devastating effects of Hurricane Maria. Governor Cuomo launched the Empire State Relief and Recovery Effort for Puerto Rico. Long Island Cares is one of the region's most comprehensive hunger assistance organizations, serving thousands of individuals and families in need.

You can help by donating non-perishable food items or supplies and placing them in the food drive box in my office located at 2302 Main Street, Suite A in Bridgehampton. Supplies needed include cleaning materials and personal care products, as well as flashlights, batteries and mosquito repellent.

I am also hosting an online drive through YouGiveGoods at <https://yougivegoods.com/thiele>. Click on the "Shop Now" button to purchase the most needed items to date. All donated goods are delivered to Long Island Cares where volunteers organize, pack and send everything to the Central Donation Center at the NYS Office Building in Hauppauge. The State ships the donations to Puerto Rico.



Assemblyman Thiele, together with Long Island Cares and New York State, has been holding a relief drive for Puerto Rico, following the devastating effects of Hurricane Maria that left millions of people without power, limited running water and finite access to fuel. He has been collecting canned goods and emergency supplies to aid in recovery and rebuilding. Pictured L-R: Paule Pachter CEO of Long Island Cares (LIC), Assemblyman Fred Thiele, and Michael Haynes, CGO LIC.

## Thank You Air National Guard

The United States has been battered by an unprecedented hurricane season, as storm after storm inflicted major damage in Texas, Florida, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. In the middle of all the rescue and recovery efforts was our own 106th Rescue Wing stationed at Gabreski Airport in Westhampton. Their motto is "That others may live." They practice those words every day. Thank you for your service, and may God bless you and your families.



On October 19, 2017, Assemblyman Thiele presented a proclamation on behalf of the New York State Assembly to historian Arlene Hinkemeyer, a member of the League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, to recognize and commend the 100th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage in New York State.

New York State Assembly, Albany, New York 12248



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## State \$2.5 Billion Water Quality Infrastructure Bond Aids Clean-Up of Contaminants on the East End

As part of the 2017 State Budget, the State Legislature approved \$2.5 billion over the next five years to address water quality issues across the State. Those dollars are being put to immediate use in the 1st Assembly District.

The State and County have identified contaminants known as per-fluorinated compounds (PFCs) in the water supply in three locations in my Assembly District. PFCs are a group of chemicals used to make fluoropolymer coatings and products that resist heat, oil, stains, grease, and water. Fluoropolymer coatings can be used in such varied products as clothing, furniture, adhesives, food packaging, heat-resistant non-stick cooking surfaces, and the insulation of electrical wire. Many chemicals in this group have been a concern because they do not break down in the environment. On Long Island, the chemicals are believed to be related to foam used in firefighter training.

PFCs have been found in Westhampton, near Gabreski Airport; in Hampton Bays, near the fire house; and in Wainscott, near the East Hampton Airport. Remedial action and testing is being undertaken in all of these locations. Actions include providing bottled water, extension of public water, filters for public water wells, and bio-testing of residents who have been exposed to chemicals.

For example, New York State will provide an estimated \$720,000 state grant for a \$1.2 million proposed project to provide wellhead protection from PFCs in the Hampton Bays Water District. PFCs can be removed from the water supply by a carbon filtration system at the wellhead. The Hampton Bays Water District has proposed to install such filtration at all 11 of its wells.

The availability of substantial state capital funds will be critical to help local government as we continue to insure the quality of our water supply.