



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



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**STATE APPROVES \$168.3 BILLION FOR 2018-2019**

The adoption of the State Budget is one of the most important actions of the State Legislature. This year, we approved a balanced \$168.3 billion spending plan, which complied with the state’s self-imposed 2% cap on state spending, as well as the April 1 deadline. Among some of its most important provisions, this year’s State Budget will blunt the impact of the federal tax plan, which increases taxes on many middle-class families by restricting state and local tax deductibility, by decoupling the state tax code from the federal tax code and saving \$1.5 billion.

While imposing a fiscally responsible budget plan for New York, this year’s State Budget also insures that our important priorities, such as education and the environment, are fully addressed. The State Budget provides \$26.6 billion to the more than 700 school districts across New York State, an increase of 3.6% or

about \$914 million. In the area of higher education, the 2018-19 budget plan allocates \$118 million to support the approximately 27,000 students in the Excelsior Scholarship program, which makes SUNY and CUNY schools tuition-free for New Yorkers who earn less than \$110,000 this year.

In addition to providing \$300 million for the Environmental Protection Fund, the State Budget also included record funding for one of my top priorities: clean water. \$2.5 billion will be provided for water infrastructure across New York State, including \$15 million for upgrades and replacements of septic systems and cesspools. This funding will provide \$10 million in state funds to match local efforts on septic waste being undertaken by Suffolk County, as well as the East End towns through their Community Preservation Funds.

**LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS:**

My advocacy for local priorities paid off during the 2018 State Budget process. The projects and programs included in the State Budget were:

**Stony Brook University Center for Clean Water Technology**— \$3 million was included to address nitrogen loading from septic waste.

**Long Island Central Pine Barrens Commission**— \$2 million in state funds were included to support conservation efforts.

**Southern Pine Beetle Management**—\$6,050,000 to eradicate invasive species, including the southern pine beetle.

**Peconic Estuary Program**— \$200,000 to improve the health of the Peconic Bay.

**South Fork School Based Mental Health Initiative**— \$175,000 to provide school-based mental health services for middle and high school students.

**Community Voices for Youth and Families of Long Island**— \$1.5 million to support agencies that provide services to children, youth and families across Long Island, including Bridgehampton Child Care Center and Colonial Youth and Family Services.

**Brookhaven School Districts Aid**— Securing adequate funding for all of the schools in my district is one of my top priorities during each Legislative Session. In the 2018-19 Budget process, I successfully advocated for increases in state aid for all of the school districts within our Assembly District. Notably, the school districts within the town of Brookhaven that rely heavily on state funding, saw these significant increases:

School District	Increase in State Aid (\$)	% Change
William Floyd	+ 3,684,077	+ 2.99%
Center Moriches	+ 553,487	+ 4.51%
East Moriches	+ 269,671	+ 4.05%
Eastport/S.Manor*	+ 760,63	+ 2.08%

**\*The Eastport-South Manor School District was also awarded \$100,000 of Bullet Aid funding.**

**SOUTH FORK COMMUTER CONNECTION SERVICE TO LAUNCH**

After years of advocacy, I am pleased to report the LIRR will provide a new commuter service to the South Fork in March 2019. The service will run between Speonk and Montauk each weekday, year round. There will be 2 eastbound trains in the morning between 6am and 9:30 am and 2 return westbound trains between 3 pm and 6 pm.



In addition, the 2018 State Budget contains \$500,000 for the Towns of Southampton and East Hampton to support this rail service. Specifically, these funds will be utilized to provide “last mile” transportation to the workplace in the morning and return service to the train station in the afternoon. The Towns will issue a request for proposals in the fall for this connecting service. Shuttle buses, ride sharing services, taxis and other options will be considered.

The Towns will also institute an informational campaign to educate the public about the new service over the fall and winter. Finally, the state is also providing \$125,000 in capital funding to provide additional parking for the new service in Hampton Bays.

This commuter service is the first phase of a plan to increase public transit for the South Fork. The plan will ease traffic congestion on CR 39 and Montauk Highway by providing a faster and less stressful commute each morning. For example, the commute from Hampton Bays to Southampton often takes 50-60 minutes in the summer. On the LIRR, it will be a 10 minute ride.

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## SEEKING FAIR REGULATIONS FOR COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRY

I have continued to advocate for a sustainable commercial fishing industry on Long Island. Senator LaValle and I brought the issue into focus last year when, in the State Legislature, we blocked the DEC from continuing the current archaic commercial fishing licensing scheme for another three years. As a compromise, the licensing scheme was limited to one (1) year and DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos agreed to come to Long Island last fall to meet with members of commercial fishing industry. At that meeting, the industry unanimously supported two demands: 1) Challenge the federal quotas; and 2) Reform the commercial fishing licensing system to improve access and transferability of licenses. The Commissioner promised action and subsequently the DEC organized a series of public information sessions over this past summer to gather feedback and ideas for how to improve the state's commercial fishing licensing system. The solutions to licensing reform will cost money to develop and implement, and renewable energy company Deepwater Wind has agreed to provide \$2 million for this program as part of the community benefits package connected to its offshore wind project.

Relatedly, the Senator and I also helped coordinate the transfer of a portion of Suffolk County parkland, colloquially referred to as the Shinnecock Commercial Fishing Dock, to the Town of Southampton by introducing a bill authorizing the transfer of ownership. Because the facility is on parkland, state legislation was required to allow the county to transfer the property to the town. Suffolk County Legislator Bridget Fleming helped push legislation through the County Legislature supporting the state bill. The dock, home to the town's commercial fishing fleet, is in poor shape and costly to maintain. The transfer will allow the town to make dock improvements that will better serve the thriving fishing industry.

## FIGHT CONTINUES OVER EASTPORT'S MONSTER POLES

The battle to remove the LIPA/PSEG-LI monster utility poles which have despoiled the community character of Eastport and East Moriches along a 7-mile stretch of CR 51 and CR 55 on the Southampton-Brookhaven border is far from over. Last year LIPA and PSEG-LI constructed this project without proper notice and environmental review.

The Town of Brookhaven brought a lawsuit charging a violation of the State Environmental Quality Review Act. The case is currently before the Appellate Division of the State Supreme Court. We are hopeful the Court will agree with the Town and the local community.

We continue to press the utility companies for a negotiated solution to bury the lines that would protect the environment, but thus far, LIPA and PSEG-LI have refused to even discuss the matter.

Finally, Senator Ken LaValle and I passed legislation during the 2018 session to provide detailed public notice for all future above ground utility transmission projects. The public notice would be provided by first class mail to: (a) each municipality in which any portion of such facility is to be located, (b) each member of the legislature through whose district the facility or any alternate would pass; and (c) each utility customer located within 500 feet of a proposed utility transmission facility.

Please contact the Governor urging him to sign this legislation. The bill numbers are A.8609-a and S.6861-a.

## MOBILE MAMMOGRAPHY VAN

Stony Brook Southampton Hospital will be parking a mobile mammography van on **Saturday, October 13** outside Assemblyman Thiele's district office at **2302 Main Street, Bridgehampton**, from **9:00AM to 5:00PM**. The custom-designed 40-foot van will offer state-of-the-art 3D digital mammograms to women over 40, with or without insurance. Screenings will be performed by NYS registered radiologic technologists with advanced training in mammography. Clinical breast exams will be performed by registered nurses who specialize in breast health. To schedule an appointment, please call 631-369-2778. **Space is limited.**

New York State Assembly, Albany, New York 12248



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## SOUTHAMPTON HOSPITAL LAND LEASE IS APPROVED

In 2017, Southampton Hospital and Stony Brook University Hospital entered into an affiliation agreement that made Southampton Hospital part of the Stony Brook University Health Care System. The final agreement was the product of years of work and negotiation. The agreement is bringing improved health care to the East End. An integral part of that agreement was the provision of land at the Southampton campus of Stony Brook University for the construction of a new state-of-the-art hospital. Special state legislation was needed to authorize the land lease.

Working with State Senator Ken LaValle and our partners at Southampton and Stony Brook, we are pleased to report that the New York State Legislature gave final passage for the lease by overwhelming margins in both houses. In the final days of the sessions, we worked

with all the stakeholders to achieve this legislative victory.

We hope for quick approval for the legislation from the Governor so that fundraising for this \$250 million hospital can begin. While the state is providing the land, the construction of the new facility will be paid for with private dollars raised in the community.

The new hospital will not only provide modern health care facilities and construction jobs, it will also be another catalyst for the resurgence of the educational mission on the campus as a graduate school center. The campus has seen growth in its programs for marine science and fine arts. The addition of health sciences programs at the campus has increased enrollment to over 600 students. The construction of the hospital will lead the way for an expanded and enhanced health science related curriculum at the campus.