

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATOR KARA HAHN



FIFTH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

January 9, 2012

CONTACT: [Seth Squicciarino](#)

[Thomas Ryan](#)

631-854-1650

HAHN'S FIRST PIECE OF LEGISLATION AIMS TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

HAUPPAUGE, NY – At the Suffolk County Legislature’s first meeting of the year, Freshman Legislator Kara Hahn (D-Setauket) introduced a bill that aims to increase transparency and government accessibility by requiring the posting of audio recorded during legislative sessions in a timely fashion. If adopted, Procedural Motion 1-2012 will require the Clerk of the Legislature to upload the recordings of general meetings and committee meetings within two hours of their completion. Currently, it can take up to a month for verbatim minutes of hearings to be transcribed and posted online.

This is all part of an effort by Legislator Hahn to make the actions of county government more transparent and accessible to its residents. Increasing government transparency was a core pledge that the freshman Legislator made to constituents last fall, and has begun to be fulfilled on day one of her administration.

The ultimate goal of this new law is to empower citizens to review and examine the workings of County Government. “The cornerstone of democracy is an informed citizenry, and the more the public can learn about the process, the better off we will be as a County,” said Legislator Hahn. “It is my aim to bring the County to the people, and not exclude those who may not be able to go to Legislative meeting. This will ensure that government

[MORE]

operations are conducted in an open and transparent fashion in order to restore the public's trust in a system that too many believe is broken.”

The bill will be in the Legislature's Ways and Means Committee during the week of January 30th. If adopted by committee, the full Legislature will vote on the measure at its first general meeting of 2012 on February 7th.

-30-

*306 Main Street
Port Jefferson, New York 11777*

kara.hahn@suffolkcountyny.gov

*Telephone: (631) 854-1650
Fax: (631) 854-1653*

**PROCEDURAL MOTION NO. 1-2012, IMPROVING
LEGISLATIVE MEETING TRANSPARENCY AND OPENNESS
BY REQUIRING MEETING AUDIO TAPES TO BE POSTED
IMMEDIATELY ONLINE**

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of government to ensure that its operations are conducted in an open and transparent fashion; and

WHEREAS, providing convenient access to government's actions is one way to restore the public's trust in the system and expose ethically questionable behavior; and

WHEREAS, Suffolk County residents are increasingly active on the World Wide Web and expect to find information on-line; and

WHEREAS, implementing a policy of immediate access to records of Legislative activities would allow Suffolk County residents the opportunity to review and examine the workings of County government; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature's Clerk already records audio of legislative meetings and additional resources will not be required to make these recordings available online; and

WHEREAS, it currently takes as long as a month for verbatim minutes to be made available online on the Legislature's website; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of this Legislature to continually improve public access to its activities; now, therefore be it

1st RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Legislature is hereby authorized, empowered and directed to upload audio recordings of General Meetings within two (2) hours of their completion and Legislative Committees within two (2) hours of the completion of the last committee on each committee day; and be it further

2nd RESOLVED, that General Meeting recordings should include public hearings separate from the rest of the agenda; and be it further

3rd RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Legislature shall remove these recordings from the Internet once the verbatim minutes are made available online.

DATED:

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY PURSUANT TO §A2-15(A) OF THE SUFFOLK COUNTY
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE