

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATOR KARA HAHN



FIFTH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

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FIREFIGHTER TRAINING MAY SOON BE A MOUSE CLICK AWAY *Legislator Hahn's online firefighter training program bill passes*

RIVERHEAD, NY –Suffolk County's volunteer firefighters may soon be able to go online to complete some continuing education and training courses thanks to a bill sponsored by Legislator Kara Hahn. Earlier today the Legislature adopted [Introductory Resolution 1877-2012](#), which will establish an online firefighter training program intended to augment the in-person preparation provided to volunteer firefighters while also expanding their knowledge base and expertise. The move is expected to make training easier for volunteer firefighters to participate in and less expensive for the County to offer.

“The goal of this bill is to make as much training as possible and appropriate as convenient and as accommodating as possible for our volunteer firefighters,” said Legislator Hahn. “Volunteers offer so much of themselves and their schedules in order to safeguard our communities. Providing more convenient training options for them could help to lessen the imposition on their personal and family obligations of their volunteerism.”

In addition to offering more flexibility for firefighters to stay up-to-date on their training, the proposal is also seen as being a more cost-effective way to supplement and refresh volunteers' skills than traditional courses offered in person, since fewer personnel will be

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present for the classroom style coursework. Hahn is hoping that the savings can be used to increase the frequency of the hands-on training that is offered at the County's Fire Academy.

"This new policy will greatly benefit volunteer firefighters whose schedules may not always allow their participation in scheduled classes," said Chief Richard Stockinger of the Suffolk County Fire Academy. "Additionally, by going on-line there is a cost savings associated with not having to have an instructor on hand for each course given here at the academy. This will be a benefit for firefighters, the fire departments and residents."

According to Paul Degen, Fire Commissioner of the Stony Brook Fire District, "Anything that brings our training a little further into the 21st century will be well accepted. Online training really helps our volunteers, who have busy schedules with work and family obligations. It allows the Fire Fighter the ability to complete courses before or after hours, at their convenience. This new online training combined with classroom and field training at the Fire Academy will be a welcomed addition. It's so nice to have continued support to the Fire Service from our Legislator Kara Hahn, thank you Kara."

The legislation now goes to County Executive Steve Bellone who has fifteen days to either sign or veto the resolution. If approved, Suffolk County's Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services and Department of Information Technology will collaborate to create the online course portal.

"Throughout history we have employed technological advancements to make life easier to manage," Legislator Hahn continued. "It only makes sense to use technology to offer our volunteer firefighters a little more control over their busy schedules."

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