



### **Calarco Joins Schumer to Call on National Park Service to "Close That Breach" on Fire Island**

***Patchogue, November 19, 2012:*** Legislator Rob Calarco joined U.S. Senator Charles Schumer, County Executive Steve Belone, Brookhaven Town Interim Supervisor Kathleen Walsh and Patchogue Deputy Mayor Jack Krieger to call on the National Park Service to drop environmental objections and allow the Army Corps of Engineers to close the western-most breach of Fire Island recently torn open by Hurricane Sandy.

Currently the Army Corps is closing two other breaches opened by Sandy on Fire Island (at Smith Point and Cupsogue county parks). The third breach, however, occurred on national parkland, requiring the NPS to sign off on the closure. Thus far, the NPS has refused to allow the closure because of long-standing beliefs in allowing the environment to "heal itself."

The problem, however, is that allowing the breach to remain puts the entire South Shore Community at grave risk, as it would allow for even greater coastal flooding in a future storm event. Furthermore, the Army Corps has its machinery in place to do the job now. Postponing the work, besides putting public safety at risk, will increase costs.

"By not fixing the breach, the park service puts properties and the ecological health of our bay and shellfish at risk. There is no guarantee that the breach will ever naturally fill in. This will cause increased flooding, putting people's lives at serious risk," said Leg. Calarco.