

Press Release

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



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LINDSAY III AND ANKER GIVE VOTERS A CHOICE TO CONSOLIDATE FINANCIAL DUTIES

November Referendum to consolidate the Suffolk County Treasurer's Office and the Suffolk County Comptroller's Office Approved 12-6

(Holbrook-NY) Legislation cosponsored by Suffolk County Legislators Bill Lindsay III and Sarah Anker to give voters a choice this November to consolidate the Treasurer's Office and the Comptroller's Office was approved by the Legislature on June 17th by a 12-6 vote. A referendum will now be placed onto the November 4th ballot to allow Suffolk County voters to decide if two financial management offices are necessary. If approved, the consolidation, which will not take effect until January 1, 2018, is estimated to save \$1.29 million and would streamline processes and increase efficiencies within Suffolk County's government.

"Giving the voters the opportunity to decide how they want their county government run is not a partisan issue," said Lindsay III. "That's why I am glad that my legislation was approved with a bi-partisan majority. This consolidation will provide long term tax savings to our Suffolk County residents by increasing government efficiency and reducing duplicative roles."

Currently Suffolk County is the only county out of 62 in New York State to have both an elected Comptroller and an elected Treasurer, which some say causes duplication of roles and more redundancies of work.

“I applaud the bipartisan majority of the Suffolk County Legislature for voting to give the people the opportunity to consolidate government and save taxpayer dollars,” said County Executive Steve Bellone. “This referendum will save taxpayer dollars by merging offices, improving efficiency and eliminating unnecessary political patronage jobs.”

The passage of the November 4th referendum will:

- Allow for the new Comptroller (elected this November) to absorb the functions of the Treasurer and the office’s civil service employees, resulting in one office, consisting of roughly 100 employees, based on current staffing levels. For context, some Suffolk County Commissioners with the same leadership structure are in charge of departments with several hundred and in some cases more than 1,000 employees.
- Allow the current Treasurer, Angie Carpenter, to finish out her last and final term as the Suffolk County Treasurer, as voted on in last year’s election.
- Give Treasurer Carpenter the opportunity to be a part of the process with the future Comptroller, as consolidation of the two financial management functions takes effect.
- Increase oversight of Suffolk County’s cash-flow, create more accurate and timelier cash-flow analysis and will consolidate and eliminate duplicative financial management functions.
- Save \$1.29 million by 2019 through the elimination of the Treasurer, the Chief Deputy Treasurer, and the Deputy Treasurer according to the Suffolk County Legislature’s non-partisan Budget Review Office

Ernst & Young and Capital Markets Advisors have stated that this type of merger can increase the County’s credit rating and believes that the County needs to leave no stone unturned as it attempts to stabilize its operations and produce a structurally balanced budget. Consolidation of two county offices into one resulting in annual savings that are well into six figures may very well be an idea whose time has come.

“I am so pleased that the residents of Suffolk County will have the opportunity make the final decision on the consolidation of these two financial management offices,”

said Legislator Anker. “I have the utmost confidence that the residents will make an informed decision to save money, increase efficiency, and open up the lines of communication and collaboration between departments.”

“Time and time again our voters have made the right decision for Suffolk County, and I trust that they will do the same this November,” said Lindsay III.

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