

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Steve Stern

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATOR
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Dear Neighbors,

In a continuing effort to keep you informed about important issues in our community, I am writing to share with you that Governor Andrew Cuomo has unilaterally determined that our community is planned to be the location of a 9,000 square foot Welcome Center for Long Island's East End wineries. The Governor has determined that the rest stop located at Exit 52 on the LIE should be expanded to include the Welcome Center and over 200 additional parking spaces for cars and tour buses. This is in direct contradiction to the earlier decision to place the Welcome Center in Yaphank, in conjunction with improvements to the Suffolk County Farm.

Upon learning of this proposal, I contacted state elected officials in Albany and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and demanded that clearing for the project be halted immediately. As a result of strong opposition and a united effort from myself, Senator John Flanagan, Assemblyman Andrew Raia, Supervisor Frank Petrone and Councilwoman Susan Berland, clearing for the project has been stopped. Our discussions with the Governor's office and state DOT officials continue.

As you know, I have joined with our community and other local leaders over the years to defeat past attempts to place a rest stop facility at this location. This decision is particularly egregious not only because of the impact that it will have on our community, but because absolutely no notice was given to local elected officials or community members prior to commencement of work at this location. No environmental studies or traffic studies were done and no determination of the impact of additional traffic on air quality, noise and light pollution or water quality was undertaken. This is outrageous and absolutely unacceptable.

Attached is my letter sent to the Governor expressing my strong opposition to this project and calling upon him to return to the original plan and place the Welcome Center in Yaphank. I ask that you contact the Governor's office at (518) 474-8390 and voice your strong opposition, as well.

If you wish to receive updates regarding this important issue, please e-mail my office at steve.stern@suffolkcountyny.gov so that I can keep you informed of all developments. If you have any questions or if I can be of further assistance to you, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Steve Stern