	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 04.15.2024
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3	NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE
4	FULL LEGISLATURE MEETING
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6	*****
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8	HOWARD J. KOPEL, PRESIDING OFFICER
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10	*****
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12	*****
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14	County Executive and Legislative Building
15	1550 Franklin Avenue
16	Mineola, New York
17	*****
18	Monday, April 15, 2024
19	1:12 p.m.
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23	TAKEN BY: KAREN LORENZO, OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER
24	
25	
	TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-35161

	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 04.15.2024
1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 04.13.2024
2	LEGISLATOR HOWARD KOPEL
3	Presiding Officer
4	7th Legislative District
5	***
6	LEGISLATOR THOMAS MCKEVITT
7	Alternate Presiding Officer
8	13th Legislative District
9	***
10	LEGISLATOR JOHN FERRETTI, JR. (EXCUSED)
11	Alternate Deputy Presiding Officer
12	15th Legislative District
13	
14	***
15	LEGISLATOR SCOTT DAVIS
16	1st Legislative District
17	***
18	LEGISLATOR SIELA BYNOE
19	2nd Legislative District
20	***
21	LEGISLATOR CARRIE SOLAGES
22	3rd Legislative District
23	***
24	LEGISLATOR PATRICK MULLANEY
25	4th Legislative District

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NC FULL LEGISLATURE 04.15.2024

1	
2	LEGISLATOR SETH KASLOW
3	5th Legislative District
4	***
5	LEGISLATOR DEBRA MULE
6	6th Legislative District
7	***
8	LEGISLATOR JOHN J. GIUFFRE
9	8th Legislative District
10	***
11	LEGISLATOR SCOTT STRAUSS
12	9th Legislative District
13	***
14	LEGISLATOR MAZI MELESA PILIP
15	10th Legislative District
16	***
17	LEGISLATOR MICHAEL GIANGREGORIO
18	12th Legislative District
19	***
20	LEGISLATOR C. WILLIAM GAYLOR, III
21	14th Legislative District
22	***
23	LEGISLATOR ARNOLD W. DRUCKER
24	16th Legislative District
25	***

______TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-3516 _____3 __

	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 04.15.2024
1	
2	LEGISLATOR ROSE MARIE WALKER
3	17th Legislative District
4	***
5	LEGISLATOR SAMANTHA GOETZ (Recused Item 6)
6	18th Legislative District
7	***
8	LEGISLATOR JAMES KENNEDY
9	19th Legislative District
10	***
11	MICHAEL PULITZER
12	Clerk of the Legislature
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14	JAMES DARCY, ESQ.
15	Attorney for Clerk of the Legislature
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___TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-3516 _____4 __

NC	TIIIT.	LEGISLATURE	0.4	15	2024

1	
2	TOP COPS:
3	POLICE OFFICERS:
4	Kristopher Hayes, Dong Zhao, Paul Soroco
5	Christopher McGraw
6	
7	POLICE MEDICS:
8	Matthew Pressler, Kasara Brandman
9	
10	
11	POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE:
12	Jayda Levine
13	
14	PUBLIC COMMENT:
15	Elizabeth Boylan
16	Maureen McCormick
17	Karen Riordan
18	Joe Adipietro
19	Lynn Krug
20	Susan Blauner
21	Jody Finkel
22	Sabrina Margolis
23	Nina Gordon
24	Ronald Brinn
25	Jimmy Dougherty

_____TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-3516 ______5 __

	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 04.15.2024
1	
2	PUBLIC COMMENT (CONTINUED):
3	
4	Kim Keiserman
5	Patricia Pastor
6	Richard Clolery
7	Pearl Jacobs
8	Ariel Silberman
9	Meta J. Mereday
10	Emily Raphael
11	Jeremy Joseph
12	Tina Sheford
13	C. Borecky
14	Doris Sharpe
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PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: As always, we're going to start with the Pledge of Allegiance, and I'll ask all to rise and join Legislator Mazi Pilip.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of

Allegiance is said by all.)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.

We start with our monthly Top Cop's

presentation. And first we're going to

have the PBA. And I'd ask you to come

forward.

OFFICER SHANAHAN: Hi. Good afternoon, everybody. So on January 14th, 2024, Officers Hayes, Zhao, Sorocco and McGraw, along with Police Medics Pressler and Brandman from the Third Precinct, received a 911 call from a mother who stated that her 33-year-old-daughter was unconscious and not breathing. Responding officers arrived on the scene, observed the mother, who was hysterically crying for help as her daughter was not breathing. Officers began chest compression rescue breathing. Police

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Medics administered Narcan.

Officers began to question the mother about what the daughter was doing and who she was with prior to collapsing in the living room. It was determined that the daughter's boyfriend was possibly in the shower. Officers heard the water running with no response from the boyfriend. Officer McGraw was able to wedge the door open and Officer Sorocco entered the bathroom and observed the male slumped over in the shower, unresponsive and not breathing. Officer McGraw and Officer Sorocco dragged the male out of the shower. Officer McGraw administered Narcan with negative results. Officers began CPR and rescue breathing. Police Medic Brandman administered another dose of Narcan to the male, while Officers Zhao and Hayes, along with Police Medic Pressler, continue with CPR and rescue breathing on the female. Multiple doses of Narcan were administered to both victims. The female

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began to breathe on her own and regained consciousness and was transported to NUMC. The male victim, while in transport to the medical center, began to breathe on his own.

These two individuals were a few minutes away from Narcan not being able to reverse the effects of fentanyl. Because of these officers and the police medics quick response reaction in medical training and awareness to look for more victims, these two individuals are alive today.

The PBA is proud to honor Officers Hayes, Zhao, Sorocco and McGraw, along with medics Pressler and Brandman as Legislative Top Cops for April of 2024.

(Whereupon, applause.)

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SMITH: afternoon, everyone. So every time I attend a Top Cop session, I'm struck with the sense of pride and thankfulness that I am a member of this Department. We're not just crime fighters, not traffic

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enforcement officers or peacekeepers. We are often called upon to do so much, much more. I think you know that.

In this instance, four officers and two police medics were called to a scene. A person not breathing is a tense call. They quickly diagnosed the problem and they took action. But beyond that, we sometimes get kickback when we start asking those probing questions about what had occurred prior to. Well, that's our job. And fortunately, in this instance, the questions were answered and they led to another victim, as stated before, in a different room, who was also close to death. Life saving techniques were applied, as stated, in the name of CPR and rescue breathing, multiple applications of Narcan, which saved two people's lives.

I'm honored to be in the presence of Police Medics, Pressler and Brandon, and Officers Hayes, Zhao, Sorocco and McGraw.

I thank you for recognizing their

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relentless efforts to preserve life under these very stressful conditions. Thanks for giving me the time to show my appreciation as well. And I just want to thank them individually. Thank you.

Would one of the officers care to speak?

OFFICER SOROCCO: Good afternoon.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Okay.

It's a great honor to be here. We really appreciate it. We want to thank the Legislature, the Police Commissioner, the PBA.

Our training kicked in. We do what we do on an everyday basis and as a result, two lives were saved. There were additional officers actually there. Officer Dolan here to my left (indicating), who is hiding behind the camera, he was there and played a big role in it. And he put us all up for the award and left himself out. So can we have a round of applause for Officer Dolan.

(Whereupon, applause.)

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OFFICER SOROCCO: He's mad at me now.

Yes, this is a nice honor to have. Especially in the light of everything going on. You always see the negative things about police. We just lost Detective Diller in the City and the two officers up in Syracuse. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

Thank you for this award.

Also, Officer Zhoa can't be here today because he's overseas serving our country. So that's why he's not in attendance.

(Whereupon, applause.)

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Thank you, Presiding Officer.

Good afternoon. I just want to take an opportunity to thank the medics and the police officers who are involved in saving the lives of these two individuals. Listen, you walk into scenarios and you don't know what you're going to face and your training kicks in.

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But honestly, it's the fabric of who you are that makes the difference in these calls, because you were persistent and you were committed to making sure that you could save the lives of those two people because Narcan didn't kick in immediately.

So I thank you. I thank you for all that you do day in and day out. And on the behalf of the good people of Legislative District 2, I just want to say congratulations and may God bless you and keep you. Thank you.

LEGISLATOR GIUFFRE: Legislator Bynoe and I, we share the Third Precinct. And so I wanted to just again congratulate you. Thank you for the job that you do. I've witnessed firsthand how the Third Precinct responds in my own village in Stewart Manor. And I can tell you, you've been nothing but professional for the 32 years that I've lived there. Your training is second to none. And we we do thank you. Two people are alive

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because of your quick thinking and implementing what you were taught. So God

Thank you.

bless you.

(Whereupon, applause.)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Okay, so stick around. We'll do a photo right after the Superior Officers. Thanks.

Superior Officers?

MR. FRASSETTI: Good afternoon. I am Ricky Frassetti, president of the Nassau County Police Department Superior Officers Association. And again, thank you for having us and allowing us to highlight some of the great work of the members of the Nassau County Police Department.

I stand here before you to tell you of the heroic actions of Lieutenant Richard Mosback. Rich is a 16-year-veteran with five years as a supervisor, rising through the ranks very quickly because he's already lieutenant.

Less than two weeks ago, on April

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3rd, at approximately 1:50 p.m., Rich,

who was off duty and at home with his

baby son, Carter, and his mother, Jean.

Richard's mother had just put her

grandson Carter down for a nap when Rich

just happened to look out the window and

noticed white smoke coming from down the

block. And just to be noted, Rich was

having a lot of work done in this house

and hasn't been in his house for a while.

He just happened to be back in the house

about a week, and also just happened to

clean out his garage that day, so he knew

where things were in the garage. So that

will come into play in a second.

So he realized the smoke was pretty close and ran outside to investigate. He noticed that the smoke was pouring out of the house approximately five houses from from his. Rich yelled to his mom to call 911 and ran over to the neighbor's house. As he was running down a block, he noticed a home improvement van and also

yelled to that worker, "call 911, the

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house is on fire!"

Rich knows the house and noticed that there was a car in the driveway and the front door happened to be open with just the screen glass door closed, and in his mind that indicated to him that somebody was home. Rich opened the front door and began yelling to see if anyone's home. Rich stepped inside a few feet into the house, but was quickly overcome by the heat and the smoke. Rich continued to yell out, but unfortunately there was no response.

Rich then ran outside the house and surveyed the house, looking up at one of the windows on the second floor, and saw a teenage boy looking out the window and leaning outside the window on a cell phone with smoke pouring around them. Rich's quick action, sprinted back to his house and retrieved the ladder. Like I said before, happened to know where it was because he just cleaned out his garage that day. He grabbed his ladder

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and ran back, about 500ft in each direction. And my modest lieutenant here does triathlons, so that actually helps, and he's still training right now.

Rich sprinted back to the house with the ladder and yelled for that same worker that was in the van to come help him hold the ladder as Rich climbed up the ladder to speak to the individual in the house with now smoke and fire pouring out of this house. Rich put the ladder up to the window, climbed up the ladder and was yelling at this teenager to get his attention. Something's going on with the teenager, we're still not sure, but it seemed that he was probably in shock.

So this teenager was on his telephone, and Rich had to scream at this teenager to knock him out of his shock. Rich finally convinced the kid to give him the the cell phone, and then to start climbing out the window. Rich grabbed him and guided him down the ladder. Rich then quided him away from the house and made

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sure no one else was home.

About 30 to 45 seconds later, Rich heard a large explosion, and noticed that the front door blew out with glass exploding all over, and one by one, each window in the house exploded due to the extreme heat and fire. At this time, the on duty police officer arrived along with the Fire Department and EMS who treated the teenager.

Rich made his way back to his home, took a shower to clean up but began coughing up soot and his throat was irritated. He then went to the hospital to be treated for smoke inhalation and his throat being irritated. Thank God, as you can see, he's doing well and so is that teenager.

This is the great example of the work the men and women of the Superior Officer's Association, along with the men and women of the Nassau County Police Department, do every day, either on duty or off duty. Rich left his child at home

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and risked his life for his neighbor next door. Lieutenant Rich Mosback is a true hero, and that's why it's my honor as president of the Nassau County SOA to present Lieutenant Mosback as Superior Officer of the month.

Thank you very much.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SMITH: Deputy Police Commissioner Kevin Smith.

So aside from everything else that might be on his resume in bold print, it should say, "the best neighbor ever".

Police officers become conditioned to be observant. Lieutenant Mosback's observational skills were in overdrive that day. While on his own time at home, looking out the window, kind of probably keeping an eye on the neighborhood, he observed smoke at a house. And while running to the house, makes assessments that turn out to be true, based on: Car in the driveway, front door open. Nobody around that can tell him otherwise, he tries to make that entry and then he's

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forced back out by the smoke. Intense smoke. Unable to enter, he sees someone on the second floor, it was just described. He runs home to get the ladder, helps an 18 year old exit a burning structure. Moments after they get to safety, the windows blow out, as Rick just described, raining glass and debris all over the area. Luckily, they had moved a safe way away.

Lieutenant suffered some smoke inhalation, as stated during this event, but now he is back to work. Look at him, he is a specimen, this guy. Truly one of Nassau's finest. And again "one great neighbor".

Thank you.

(Whereupon, applause.)

LIEUTENANT MOSBACK: Hello, I'm Lieutenant Richard Mosback. I'd just like to thank the Legislature, the Commissioner, County Executive and everyone for being here. It's truly an honor.

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I think this is, if we saw the PBA members that were here earlier, it's just something that we do as police officers, and it's something that we want to do: To help people.

I'm honored to be receiving this, but I think that it could have been any one of us, any one of the members of the, the Union, the SOA, the PBA, any one of us because it's what we do. It's what we trained to do and it's what we enjoy doing, just being able to help people. So I'm just honored that that's being recognized.

It was just the right time, right place. So I'm just very thankful that we were able to get the teenager out and that I was okay, and that everything worked out. Thank you very much for recognizing that.

(Whereupon, applause.)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you, Lieutenant. I'm glad you are at the right time and the right place.

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LEGISLATOR PILIP: Thank you, Presiding Officer.

This is really a moment that we, the Nassau County residents, we should be very, very proud to know that we have heroes like you watching over us. This is incredible. And you, so selfless, to put your own son and to take a risk and to walk into things you don't really understand what's happening inside. It means a lot. And we, the Nassau County residents, we thank each one of you. You are the true heroes and God bless you. Thank you.

LEGISLATOR WALKER: I just want to thank you, too. And certainly thank our officers and medics before.

But as our Deputy Commissioner stated, should say: "Great neighbor". And today, I think oftentimes as neighbors, we sort of have drifted apart and don't always focus and care about each other. And I think it's reinforcing that also not just your work as a police officer.

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All that you did to save this young man and make sure that he was okay in spite of hurting yourself at the same time. But to remember that we do all live next to neighbors and to be that neighborly person. And I thank you for being that also. And certainly God bless you and your family, and certainly to our other officers. God bless them and their families. And to all our Police Department, stay safe and keep doing what you do.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: All right. We'll invite first the PBA and then the Superior Officers for a quick photo (Whereupon, citations and photos taken.)

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PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: We now have some points of personal privilege. First is Legislators Giangregorio and Legislator Koslow. I think you have one together, right? Go for it.

LEGISLATOR GIANGREGORIO: Thank you, Presiding Officer.

Today is my distinct honor and privilege to recognize and celebrate the outstanding achievements of one of our brightest stars, Jayda Levine. As a junior at John F. Kennedy High School, Jayda has not only excelled academically, but has also demonstrated a remarkable leadership and compassion through a civic project called ASD on Ice.

ASD on ice is more than just a project. It is a testament of Jayda's unwavering commitment to inclusivity and her dedication to making a positive impact on our community. By providing children on the autism spectrum with the opportunity to skate in a safe and controlled environment, Jayda has created

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moments of joy, friendships and empowerment that will be cherished for a lifetime by the students and their families.

But Jayda's impact didn't stop there. Through her tireless efforts, ASD was also a fundraising event, and an incredible \$3,000 was raised and donated to the Eaton programs, a not for profit organization that provides services to individual on the autism spectrum across the lifespan. This generous contribution will undoubtedly make a significant difference in those lives of the individuals they serve, furthering the cause of understanding and support for individuals with autism.

Jayda's accomplishments extend way beyond her civic project. Through her years at Kennedy, she has consistently achieved honors of all statuses, demonstrating her academic excellence and commitment to learning, and will soon be inducted into the National Honor Society.

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As we are gathered here today to honor Jayda, let us not only celebrate her remarkable achievements, but also recognize the impact that she has done on our school, our community, and beyond. She's a shining example of what it means to be a leader, a scholar, and a

compassionate human being.

As the father of a young man with autism, you bring me hope because it's individuals like you that will allow my son and those like him to be accepted and welcomed in their community for days beyond. So I cannot thank you more. Your service and dedication, your passion for inclusivity, and your unwavering commitment to making a difference as an inspiration. Congratulations and may you continue to shine brightly, and thank you for being a beacon of hope and inspiration for all of us.

LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: Jayda, I'm going to echo a lot of what Legislator Giangregorio said, but I'm not going to

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go through your background. He obviously articulated that very succinctly.

As a father of young children in the Merrick Bellmore school district, and knowing that my children are going to go to JFK, one of the things that concerns me as a father is making sure my children are safe, they're surrounded by good people, and when they're not home, they're doing the right things. And hearing your story and what you do gives me that confidence, that pride and the safety of knowing that there are good people out there in our district that are working with children, working with other individuals that need assistance, and there are people who are going to follow in your footsteps, because my kids won't be there when you are, because you'll be gone by then. You'll be in college or somewhere else at that point. But knowing that people like you are in this district gives me so much hope and excitement and pride as a parent that I can't thank you

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enough for that. My family can't thank you enough for that because it gives us that future that everyone can live for and be happy about. So thank you for everything you've done. Congratulations. And you absolutely deserve this honor.

LEGISLATOR GIANGREGORIO: Jayda, would you like to come to the podium and say a few words? Your family and invited guests, please join.

MS. LEVINE: Hi, I'm Jayda Levine. Thank you so much for all having me today. And especially thank you, Mr. Giangregorio, for having me. This is such a great honor. I'm so thankful that what I've been doing has been seen by everyone. I think that coming from a school district that's predominantly just white students, it's very important to be inclusive to all and to anyone on any spectrum. And I feel like having the opportunity to be in my school and community leadership program that is under our social studies department,

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which my great social chairperson, Miss Donaldson, and my teacher, Mr. Bradley Steedman, it's been such an opportunity for me to put my two passions together ice skating, which I've been doing since I was very young, and bringing activism towards important topics such as autism. And I'm very happy that I was able to donate money and raise it to give, Eaton Programs opportunity to take their kids on school field trips. And I'm very excited to hopefully do more events in the future.

(Whereupon, applause.)

LEGISLATOR GIANGREGORIO: Thank you so much.

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PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Next, I believe, Legislator Koslow, you have another one.

LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: Thank you, Presiding Officer. Thank you for your assistance in making this happen on the fly.

When I first met this individual, it was when I was campaigning for this position and I met her as a resident of Freeport to discuss with her concerns about the community, what she was looking for from her elected officials and what is important to her. And it was readily apparent to me that she is a fierce advocate for her community, for her colleagues, for her family, for children. She's been on the school board. She's been a trustee. She's very active in the community, and she cares greatly. And as a result of that, she received an award from Hofstra University last week called the Unispan Award, which recognizes people who give back to their

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communities. And I think it's fitting seeing that she is on our minority legal team, that we as a body recognize all the good work she does outside of the legislature for her community, her family, and her environment that she lives in. And for that reason, I am here congratulating and recognizing Gabriela

(Whereupon, applause.)

Castillo.

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1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 04.13.2024
2	(Whereupon, recess 1:43
3	p.m1:50 p.m.)
	p.m. 1.00 p.m.)
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5	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: We now
6	move on to the Full Legislature. Mr.
7	Pulitzer, would you please call that
8	Calendar now, please?
9	CLERK PULITZER: Thank you,
10	Presiding Officer.
11	Deputy Presiding Officer Thomas
12	McKevitt?
13	LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Here.
14	CLERK PULITZER: Alternate Deputy
15	Presiding Officer John Ferretti?
16	(Whereupon, no response.)
17	CLERK PULITZER: Alternate Deputy
18	Minority Leader Siela Bynoe.
19	LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Here.
20	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Carrie
21	A. Solages?
22	LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Here.
23	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Debra
24	Mule?
25	LEGISLATOR MULE: Here.

_____TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-3516 _____32 ___

1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 04.15.2024
1	
2	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator C.
3	William Gaylor, III?
4	LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Present.
5	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator John
6	Giuffre?
7	LEGISLATOR GIUFFRE: Here.
8	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Mazi
9	Pilip?
10	LEGISLATOR PILIP: Here.
11	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Scott
12	Davis?
13	LEGISLATOR DAVIS: Present.
14	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator James
15	Kennedy?
16	LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Here.
17	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Patrick
18	Mullaney?
19	LEGISLATOR MULLANEY: Here.
20	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Seth
21	Koslow?
22	LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: Present.
23	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Scott
24	Strauss?
25	LEGISLATOR STRAUSS: Here.
	II

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1	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 04.15.2024
2	CLERK PULITZER: Deputy Minority
3	Leader Arnold Drucker?
4	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Here.
5	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Rose
6	Marie Walker?
7	LEGISLATOR WALKER: Here.
8	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Samantha
9	Goetz?
10	LEGISLATOR GOETZ: Here.
11	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Michael
12	Giangregorio?
13	LEGISLATOR GIANGREGORIO: Here.
14	CLERK PULITZER: Minority Leader
15	Delia DeRiggi-Whitton?
16	LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: Here.
17	CLERK PULITZER: Presiding Officer
18	Howard Kopel?
19	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Here.
20	CLERK PULITZER: We have a quorum,
21	sir.
22	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Now we
	18

move on to a period of public comment. And as always, I will explain the rules here. A public comment is where we have

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members of the public express their views on various subjects, whatever you want, essentially. Public comment for each speaker is limited to three minutes, strictly limited, and we will be keeping time. And we ask that you confine your comments to the three minutes because we do this for one hour. After that hour, we move on to the Full Calendar. If there are any other speakers that have not yet had a chance, they will be heard after the Full Calendar has been disposed of. So if you run over your three minutes, then you're just taking time from someone else.

It is now 5 to 2:00. Elizabeth Boylan. How are you, Liz?

MS. BOYLAN: Good afternoon. I'm Elizabeth Boylan of the Rockville Centre Coalition for Youth. I'm here to ask your support.

In January, our coalition attended the annual Anti-Drug Coalition's of America Conference. We were tasked to

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come back here and present to you and give to you the information to share regarding community awareness on substance abuse, prevention, and education. The resources, the information, the data are all in the handouts that you received, and I believe that our coordinator also e-mailed them to you. We want you to take this information and use it to fight substance abuse and misuse here in Nassau County.

The list that is in that document, with all the information, includes the dangers of fake pills and fentanyl - what everyone should know; the drug overdose crisis; emerging challenges for drug policy and prevention; marijuana in 2024 - the current data after legalization; potency, pitfalls, and policy; addressing the latest emerging substance use trends such as Xylazine, Nitaine, tianeptine, hallucinogens and others; the summary of the dangerous driving bill; trends, harms, and solutions for underage

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drinking; campaigns for education, including flyers and billboards and the resources. There are free resources provided by the Drug Enforcement Agency

that are available to anyone and everyone

to use it. And we're encouraging you to

embark on a very aggressive public

campaign to do so.

The reason why we're here is since 1999, there have been 1.2 million deaths due to overdoses. In 2022, 22 teens a week died. That's equivalent to losing one high school class a week; one high school class.

The best way to stop addiction is to not start. We want you to continue to promote and continue aggressively. The Narcan training. Town of Hempstead is doing that now and we ask that Nassau County also pursue that. We can have better lives turning away from substance use rather than towards it. We must have the message heard. Stop stealing the futures of our children. Children should

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learn from their mistakes, they don't need to die from them.

So I encourage you, please include a public education campaign that will start in this county starting in kindergarten. Thank you very much.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you. Maureen McCormick.

MS. MCORMICK: Good afternoon. My name is Maureen McCormick, and I've got three minutes to tell you what you already know; that your roadways are extremely dangerous, and they're getting more so, both by people who drive just crazy, but also those on drugs.

I gave to you handouts that included a terrible incident in Nassau County involving the Huntley family, because it is the poster child for this issue. This poor family was out getting ice cream on Sunrise Highway 7 o'clock on a Sunday night, when they were slammed into from behind by a driver who is alleged, because the case is pending, to be high

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on both fentanyl and cocaine -- more than

100 miles an hour. You can see that

Patrice Huntley, his

13-year-old-daughter, ten-year-old-son

Jeremiah, lost their lives in a split

second and the

six-year-old-granddaughter, Chantel.

So maybe what you don't know, though, is that had that driver been stopped a block before this horrible crash, unless the police were able to name what the driver was on and that those substances were on the public health law list, that case could not have proceeded. Imagine telling that to a victim's family. That we're not stopping people before they crash and kill, because we have to be able to name the substance, and it has to be on a list. This is archaic. New York is one of only four states that still tie drug to

Our officers are trained to recognize impaired is impaired and

driving to a list.

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dangerous is dangerous. If I were to come home from an office Christmas party and I was drinking heavily and a cop stopped me and said, will you submit to a test? And I said, no, go scratch. I'm not taking anything. I'm still getting arrested on the observations of impairment. The same should be true for drugs, but it's not. Unless the officers can name the drug, which means that they have to be able to get a tox test if the driver doesn't willingly say what they're on, that case cannot proceed. We're not stopping people, and we need to.

I provided to you a summary of the bill. I provided to you a list of the coalition members, some 50 strong, including the 12,000 members of the New York Chapter of the American College of Physicians, the New York State Public Health Association, and most recently, Dr. Jeffrey Reynolds, a drug treatment provider here in this county, he had an op ed that was published in the Albany

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Times Union that said they support this bill. Because if we don't catch people before they kill, we're not treating them, we're not giving them a chance to not repeat that offense. Our roads are dangerous. Please contact whomever you know in the State Legislature and get

this fixed.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you. Karen Riordan.

MS. RIORDAN: Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I'm here to express how truly alarmed I am by the County Executive's desire to create a local militia, one which would be granted police powers. The county militia would be under the direction of one person, Bruce Blakeman. It appears he would have sole discretion to determine how, when, where this militia is needed, making this legislative body obsolete.

But you're not obsolete. Whether you're a Republican or a Democrat, this Body has a responsibility and the

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authority to demand that the County Executive answer to your constituents. I want to know from you, is this necessary? Are you concerned that the Nassau County Police and our National Guard are not up to the task of maintaining order? Is there evidence to support this action? Where are the checks and balances?

Not everyone with a gun license should be authorized to use deadly force in an emergency. Specifically, what kind of training are these armed citizens getting? What is it that they're actually preparing for? Will they be assisting the guard or are they doing any combat training? Combat training is not part of emergency preparedness. There is a difference.

Are there mental health checkups included in this training? What is the liability for the taxpayer?

Number three, will they be bound by a military code of conduct?

Number four, the timing of this is

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interesting is its creation to support the next round of election deniers. Would the county militia have access to ballot boxes if called up?

Hypothetically, if the National Guard is under the authority of the Governor and the militia is under the authority of the County Executive, would there ever be a situation where their interests would clash or diverge? What is the reporting structure to avoid such a conflict?

I trust that you are asking and seeking answers to these questions. Bottom line, it sounds like we know very little about this militia and that's worrisome. I want answers.

Finally, a program like this will require significant oversight to make sure it is not being weaponized for a single person's political purpose. As a Legislative Body, I would like to know, what are your plans for oversight or legislation to remove the sole authority

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from the position of our County Executive? Hiring armed civilians is a bad idea, and this Body should ensure that the program is stopped now. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Joe Adipietro.

MR. ADIPIETRO: Good afternoon and thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak today. My name is Joe Adipietro. I'm the program director for the Rockville Centre Coalition for Youth. I'm also a New York State Oasis provider of DWI evaluation and treatment services.

As a lifelong resident of Nassau County treatment provider and father, I am very concerned at what I see on our roads every day. Dangerous driving along with driving under the influence of marijuana, our roads are the worst I have seen in my 37 years of being a driver and 30 years of providing DWI evaluations, educational and treatment services.

I urge you to support the deadly

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driving bill. Thank you for your continued support and keeping our children, families, citizens and roads safe. Have a good day. Thank you.

> PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you. Lynn Krug.

MS. KRUG: Good afternoon. Thank you for letting me speak. Unfortunately, and once again, I'm asking you to intervene because real problems and challenges to our county are going unaddressed. While our County Executive proposes solutions to problems that we don't have, Mr. Blakeman's ill-conceived plan to create an armed militia not only doesn't solve any problems, past or present, it threatens to create more problems. He used Hurricane Sandy as an example of the kind of emergency that might require activating the militia. I remember Hurricane Sandy very well. I worked for Con Ed. I was on storm duty. I had no power at my home for two weeks, and I don't recall at all we needed more people

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with guns to help in the recovery. We really needed more people with boats, more people with food and water and housing, more people with water pumps and bucket trucks to restore power. Why, then, does Mr. Blakeman's proposal center on more people with weapons? Could it be that this is just another shot fired in the culture war that Mr. Blakeman seemed so comfortable fighting? I'd like to quote Kim Keiserman, who is a candidate for the New York State Senate, who said this about the militia proposal: think he's really out of step with the culture of Nassau County, and that's why the legislators haven't heard any positive feedback about this idea. It's really out there. It's out of step. It's not governing, governing it's performance. The proposed militia is unnecessary and dangerous. Deputizing gun owning citizens for undefined situations that Blakeman deems as emergencies, frankly, scares the hell out of me. I

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would like to know what his real intentions are since there is no legitimate need for a militia".

P.S., Rex Heuermann, the Gilgo Killer, had an arsenal. He also was licensed to have pistols and guns, so imagine he could have applied for this if he wasn't sitting in the Suffolk County Jail right now.

We have an excellent police force, and I applaud all the work that the Nassau County Police does. They're amazing. We have other village and local police departments to handle these emergencies. What about the New York National Guard? I have friends who are in the Army and they serve on the New York National Guard. So we have people there. So where is this dire need for General Blakeman's army? Meanwhile, he has failed to deal with the many issues that he has promised to do.

And I'm asking you again, New York State law, Article 4, Section 154,

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Paragraph D, provides for the removal of the county executive for failure to perform his duties in an honorable, competent and reasonably efficient manner.

Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Susan Blauner.

MS. BLAUNER: Susan Blauner. I'm the director of the Saving Lives Five Towns Drug and Alcohol Coalition, under the auspices of the Marion and Aaron JCC.

Our purpose today is to enlist your support in public campaigns to raise awareness against substance use and educate the community that "legal" does not mean "safe" regarding alcohol, marijuana, and any other drugs that are too new to be listed on the DEA list of scheduled drugs.

The Saving Lives Five Towns Drug and Alcohol Coalition and the Rockville Center Coalition for Youth work together to expand outreach of vital initiatives

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to provide prevention and awareness. We have put out many initiatives, campaigns, flyers for all the different holidays that come throughout the year; Saint Patrick's Day -- that's within your packet. You can see many of the flyers that we have -- New Year's, our latest pre prom. And we have now a billboard: "One pill can kill", which you can see right here which is also in your packet.

An aggressive campaign regarding impaired driving involving drugs is imperative. According to the data from the Institute of Traffic Safety Management and Research shows that fatal crashes involving drugs have been on the rise on Long Island and across New York State. Impaired is impaired; Dangerous is dangerous. We need you to act to stop this carnage.

Regarding fake pills laced with fentanyl, I want to tell you that aside from the paper and the information that I have written here, think of yourselves as

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a parent. We are the ones in the

coalitions who deal with the parents, and

we know firsthand when a parent is

sitting there crying because they have

lost a child to fentanyl, or they have

lost a child to an accident that is taken

on the road because someone has been

impaired. And we know when we are sitting

there and we see the pain in these

parents eyes. And I am a mother of five

and I have 13 grandchildren. I can tell

you this: I worry on a daily basis that

someone that's out on that road could put

my children, or my grandchildren, or any

of your children, or our Long Island

children at risk. This is something that

we cannot ignore, and this is something

that we need to move ahead on. And we

thank you for always supporting our

coalitions on behalf of Saving Lives and

the Rockville Center for Youth.

Thank you very much.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Judy Kass

Finkel.

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MS. KASS FINKEL: Good afternoon.

Hello, I'm Jody Kass Finkel. I wear many hats. I am a Nassau resident, a taxpayer, a voter, and I've lived in Great Neck for over 35 years. I spent about four decades in the trenches in Albany and in Washington, working for elected officials and running non-profits.

In 1999, I served in Governor Pataki's Super Fund Working Group. Another hat, I'm the interim board chair of the Great Neck Democrats. I came out of retirement in 2023, when newly elected Representative George Santos was revealed to be a fraudster, and probably a criminal. I created and continue to lead the Good Government Group Concerned Citizens of New York 03. Concerned Citizens of New York 03 is a good government group that supports candidates and policies that strengthen democracy and reflect integrity, transparency, accountability, and effectiveness. I am here today as the founder and

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coordinator of that organization to talk about County Executive Blakeman's personal militia, which goes against everything that concerned citizen stands for.

It is clear that County Executive Blakeman does not have the authority to create a militia of armed private citizens. The legislative history of the 1965 law that Bruce Blakeman points to as giving him authority, deserves a very close inspection. According to that history, the pool of candidates for the position of Emergency Special Deputy was, and is intended to be in the form of mutual aid from active, trained law enforcement officers from other municipalities not want to be cops who own guns.

Further, the legislative history talks about the importance of being able to draw aid from and deputize law enforcement officers from neighboring municipalities and state police

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resources. So essentially, if we had a problem that our police force couldn't manage here in Nassau, we could then easily ask Suffolk folks to help us out.

Nowhere in the statute or the underlying statute or the legislative history does it mention deputizing untrained citizen gun owners, even assuming that the County Executive could deputize armed citizens upon his determination that some emergency exists, which he cannot, the County Executive does not have authority to unilaterally fix compensation for emergency special deputies.

Only you, the County Legislature, can authorize their compensation. So why has he said that he's going to pay \$150 a day, if the legislature decides not to provide additional authorization the emergency special deputies can only be paid a maximum of \$3 an hour, pursuant to the express language of the statute. You are not powerless in the Blakeman's

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overreach. We need you to hold a hearing. We deserve answers.

Presiding Officer Howard Kopel, we ask you to immediately hold a public hearing. It's time to bring back to Nassau County integrity, transparency and accountability.

Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Sabrina Margolis.

MS. MARGOLIS: Good afternoon, County Legislators. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you. And I think one of the things of having sat here quite a long time and listening to everybody speak, one thing we know: are community. You care about community. The people here are all care about community. And that is why I, like several others before me, are going to talk to you about the militia.

So after hearing the alarming news about the Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman's plan to form a personal

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militia and many conversations with concerned neighbors and friends, I created this petition less than two weeks ago, as a vehicle for Nassau County residents to express their opposition to this dangerous plan.

So let me quickly read to you what Nassau County residents have signed:

"As a Nassau County resident, we are deeply disturbed by County Executive Bruce Blakeman's proposed formation of a Nassau County militia. This proposed militia is unnecessary and dangerous ---like many people before me have spoken -- deputizing gun owning private citizens for undefined situations Blakeman deems as emergencies could result in vigilantism, friendly fire police deaths -- we're very concerned we back the police -- from untrained, uncoordinated squads and pits neighbor against neighbor. That's not what we're about. Blakeman's militia formation process is highly problematic as well in that it has

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no transparency no accountability, nor public input, and that is what we're asking for.

With over 27,000 gun permit holders in Nassau County, there are enormous unanswered questions pertaining to the selection process, the training of the deputy sheriffs, the weapons and other equipment they will be provided by the County. The size of the militia, which could conceivably -- I mean, this is, hypothetically speaking -- outnumber Nassau County police 11 to 1.

And whether deputized militia sheriffs in our neighborhoods are to become a new permanent fixture, it also raises important questions about how much the militia will cost taxpayers up front and on an ongoing basis, and what the funding source is.

And to close the petition, we are demanding Bruce Blakeman to do the following immediately cease and desist creation of the unnecessary and dangerous

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militia. Stop the nonsense and start doing his job, such as protecting Long Island's precious natural resources, revitalizing our downtowns, fixing the county's broken assessment system, finding a solution for the Nassau University Medical Center's financial problems, and lowering our taxes, just to name a few. A long list that he is really supposed to be doing.

So in closing, I present to you over 2000 signatures that we've collected in less than (buzzer) oh, my time's up. With that, I like to hand up my petition (handing).

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Hand it to the clerk, please. It will be entered into the record.

Nina K. Gordon.

MS. GORDON: Good afternoon. I'm a longtime resident of Nassau County, Great Neck, and I volunteer in my community. I have a son who has been a volunteer firefighter for 20 years. He's also a gun

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owner. I wouldn't want him to volunteer for this. He volunteers in Nassau County. When the war in Israel broke out, he volunteered to go to Israel for two weeks. Volunteering does not necessarily mean being armed. Nassau County already has something called the Community Emergency Response Team. Any resident over 18 can volunteer to be helpful in

times of emergency.

I don't want more guns on the streets. I think the majority of my neighbors agree with me. One of my neighbors is a New York City police detective. A lot of my neighbors had never even heard of this. This is one of the big problems with this. This seems to have been done in the dark. It wasn't publicized. There was no public input. But when I mentioned this to my neighbor, who's a New York City detective, he said, this is absurd. We don't even have enough training for our current officers. We need training and retraining.

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And if I recall correctly, the

Legislature voted against adding

additional police officers last year. So

why would you want to add armed

civilians? It makes no sense. This whole

thing is frightening to the people. It

sounds like it's the Supervisor's

personal militia, not something that will

serve the community.

All of my neighbors that I've spoken

to, my local police in the Sixth

Precinct, and I have a good relationship

with them, they're not supportive of

this. So I urge you all to examine this

closely and to vote against it. There

should be a vote. It shouldn't be just

the County Executive saying, I'm going to

do this. This is something that's

supposed to help the people, so involve

the people and take a vote. Have a

hearing, have a public hearing.

Something that's done under cover of

darkness and is a surprise to the

majority of the community is not wise.

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Thank you for your time.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Ronald Brinn.

MR. BRINN: Ronald Brinn, Great Neck. Thank you for the opportunity to speak briefly on this crisis situation that has been created by our County Executive.

People are afraid. People are scared. People don't know where this is coming from. They don't know where it's going. They do know that there's a nasty political edge. It's connecting the worst part of human nature to our political process. It's destructive to our democracy when we should be spending all of our time strengthening it, broadening it, deepening it. If you are with this project, if you're silently condoning an armed badged militia in Nassau County, then you are declaring war on people who can least protect themselves in communities of color, in areas of poverty, in people who spend more time on

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the street because they can't be safe in their homes. You're going the wrong way.

I was human rights director for the State of New York, Long Island regional office for eight years. Our team looked into and investigated over 5000 cases of alleged discrimination. It's infinite the number of ways that people can be disrespected. We need dignity. We need a better, stronger democracy. You're in charge. It's your responsibility to make that happen.

I was on the board of directors of the Nassau University Medical Center at the height of the HIV Aids crisis. I was screaming for a larger unit to treat people with HIV and Aids when they were dying, and the drugs weren't there for them. I'm standing up today because the militia, it's a nightmare you're creating. And you're going along with a fascist program at the very, very top. And 46 -- 45 or 46 states have militias in there arming, and they're gearing up.

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Why? Don't create a crisis or an emergency. Don't fabricate some reason to hurt people. We deserve good governance. More than a hearing, we need change. You're the majority party. There's no getting around it. You're in charge. When you establish a badged armed army/militia to bypass the rule of law, then you're voting for the law of rule.

Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Jimmy Dougherty.

MR. DOUGHERTY: I too am here to speak against County Executive's armed militia -- proposed armed militia.

As if to support my stance, we heard some stories from law enforcement earlier heroes' quick action, in their words: Training. Training. Before men or women are on the job, they have to go to the academy where they are trained and vetted. And once they get out into the street, they are monitored. They are still trained. They are coached. And they

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get a lot of experience. And even with this, all this, there are situations that that's not enough. So can we expect somebody untrained, unvetted, uncultured, unmonitored to perform as well as trained people do? I think it's a mistake. Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Keiserman.

MS. KEISERMAN: Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to speak here today. My name is Kim Keiserman and I've lived in Nassau County for over 20 years. I'm here today, like many others, to speak out against County Executive Blakeman's irresponsible attempt to build an armed militia of untrained vigilantes. Let me say that, to me, standing here today is about standing with our law enforcement. Creating a safer and more secure Nassau County is a critical priority, one that requires the ability to tackle several issues at the same time, but empowering untrained, unvetted

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citizens to use their personal firearms in the event of an emergency does absolutely nothing to make our community safer. In fact, it will only put the lives of our uniformed officers, our children, and our families at greater risk by adding more guns onto our streets in a volatile emergency situation. doesn't take much imagination to understand how incredibly dangerous this proposal is.

The Nassau County Police Department is already one of the best police departments in the country. The last thing our officers need in a crisis situation is a group of untrained, unvetted, unsupervised citizens roaming the streets with their personal weapons. This would only create more chaos and present an increased likelihood of friendly fire incidents. If the County Executive was serious about public safety, he'd focus on getting the experienced Nassau County Police

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Department the tools they need to handle any situation, not put their lives at risk by giving untrained armed citizens the authority to use deadly weapons.

I'm proud to stand with so many concerned citizens of Nassau County and our opposition to this divisive and counterproductive effort. Nassau County has real problems that need fixing. While the County Executive spends his time stoking fear and inventing ill-fitting priorities from far out of right field, our communities are being left behind.

The message is simple: Get the job done for the people you represent. Stop the distractions and focus on revitalizing our main streets, fixing the assessment system, and making Nassau County more affordable, and delivering real solutions to enhance public safety.

Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Patricia Pastor.

MS. PASTOR: Good afternoon. My name

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is Patricia Pastor. I am the executive vice president in New York State for the National Organization for Women. I am also the president in Nassau County for the National Organization for Women. So I'm here to speak on behalf of the women of Nassau County and New York State.

There is a gun violence problem in this country. We have this problem here, we have it throughout the state and we have it throughout the country. The last thing we need. Is an armed civilian militia helping our police officers. I worked in law enforcement for ten years in New York City, and I can tell you that no savvy police officer, no police officer that I've ever met, would want an armed civilian militia to help them.

I don't know if you recall back in the day, there were various of these types of vigilante helpers. Some of them weren't even armed. The police constantly complained about the problems that came up in their day-to-day work dealing with

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these people. This is completely

irresponsible on the part of Mr.

Blakeman. It seems very performative to

most of us who are objecting to it.

told him that this is needed?

what we're asking. He's not telling

anybody where this came from. Who says we

need help? Who says our police officers

need help? What's this emergency he's

talking about? There are lots of

emergencies that we have faced already in

this county. We handle our emergencies.

We have the National Guard. If we need

someone to come in and give us extra

support, we have the National Guard for

vaccines. We can have them for a serious

safety emergency. So this is just a

nonsensical, performative, whatever it

is, on the part of Blakeman.

What we need is for every single one

of you who represent us, the people, to

stand up and speak out against this. We

have had Mr. Solages, we have had

Legislator Bynoe, we have had Legislator

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DeRiggi-Whitton speak out against this, show up in public and speak on behalf of the people. We do not need an armed militia. And this is a serious, serious threat to safety and democracy in our communities. So please do not just let this go after today's session. We want you to speak for us and make sure that we really are safe. And for that, we need we do not need an armed civilian militia.

Thank you very much.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Dana Epifan.

(Whereupon, no verbal response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.

Ariel Silberman.

MS. SILBERMAN: Good afternoon. Thank you for letting me speak. My name is Ariel, and I'm a sophomore at Nassau Community College.

I'm coming to you today to inform you about a college that is in a state of turmoil. This hurts me deeply as a student who has been changed by the

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educators who have invested in me. Nassau

is under attack by a cynical

administration that favors a policy of

death by a thousand cuts, the most

pressing of which I have spoken to you

about previously. The 22 student minimum

will deal a death blow to our college.

Two of my classes got canceled with three

weeks to go before the semester started.

Majority of our students register late

for classes. If they are canceled so

early, that hurts retention and

graduation. It will destroy programs like

the Honors Program, known for their small

class sizes. It will destroy the theater

department, who can count Billy Crystal

amongst their alumni.

Achilles, the program I am a part of for neurodivergent students, will also be heavily impacted by this cruel measure. Where does this stop? What is the point of having this minimum of classes, besides a cost cutting measure that

completely devalues the student

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experience? Our opinions matter too, and the Administration does not have a care for our concerns.

The other policy that is causing a problem is this past Saturday, our student body was notified through an e-mail that our college would no longer provide food services on campus. This means the eatery, the market, and Starbucks will be shut down. This was told to us without an explanation. This puts students like me who have blood sugar control issues in distinct danger. We cannot have access to food, which can lead to medical crises. It's also a class issue. People with less resources who depend on our food services on campus will no longer have access to these crucial services. This is a needless cost cutting measure done by a cynical administration that does not see the benefit in giving the students the best possible experience.

I am a better student for being at

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Nassau. When I first came to Nassau, I had no confidence in my abilities to do higher education, and Nassau has

fundamentally changed me as a person. You

might ask why I'm doing this on the

precipice of graduation. It's because I

care about the people who come after me.

The students that come after me deserve a

better experience. They deserve the

experience I've had that our current

chief acting officer has had. Do you care

about our future? Because if you do, you

need to tell the admin that they need to

restore our services. Our college will

cease to exist if we continue this

cynical measure of cutting, cutting,

cutting. I guarantee you it will not stop

at the eatery and classes.

Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL:

Jacobs.

MS. JACOBS: Pearl Jacobs.

So, County Executive's bad idea to

create a militia here in Nassau County

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was met with strong resistance at last Monday's rally here, right at the Nassau County Legislative Building. And I thank the Democratic legislative members who spoke strongly against this this horrific idea.

It has taken years of hard work among our Nassau County police in all communities of color to attain strong community relations. In my opinion, a militia would strain these positive community relations.

And our Nassau County Police. They do an excellent job of serving and protecting all residents; all residents. And kudos to how they come out to our communities of color and how they interact with our communities. It's so positive and we really appreciate it. And they serve all residents of Nassau County. We do not want to go backwards here in Nassau County. We need less guns and more governance.

I'm going to move on to the issue of

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addiction. A few people here today spoke about addiction. You know, we have alcohol addiction, drug addiction, tobacco addiction and now we are moving forward fast speed ahead with gambling addictions. I was reading last night on some texts that were going back and forth between my Casino Civic Association, and something popped out at me where it is estimated that 2.5 million American adults meet the criteria for a severe gambling problem each year. You do the math. Multiply that over ten years. How many Americans will succumb to the horrific and the debilitating disease of gambling addiction? So put the brakes on

don't want one here at the Hub. I see Jake's 58 is expanding. Okay, we have aqueduct, you know, less than ten miles

casino projects here in Nassau County. We

from here. So we do not want to be

saturated with casinos. As elected

officials, please try to mitigate these

casinos in Nassau County.

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about traffic accidents. Here in Long Island and in Nassau County traffic accidents are surging. Currently, there's an average 83 fatal injury causing vehicle accidents per day on Long Island, Long Island traffic deaths were a total of 243 in 2022, 29% more than in 2019, averaging nearly five deaths per week. On the way here, there was an accident on

Washington Avenue/Stewart Avenue. We need

technology, vision zero, strong laws for

influence of drug user technology and

usual laws to mitigate these toxic act of

toxic traffic accidents and save lives.

driving intoxicated or under the

Thank you.

Traffic accidents. Someone spoke

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Richard Clolery.

MR. CLOLERY: To the members of the Legislature, once again, I come before you to encourage you to increase funding for the buses. Right now in Long Island, where everything is going up, food

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prices, which my customers complain about, rent, gas. And now people are gathered here to deliver a petition to stop Blakeman's militia, which we do not need. This is not a video game. This is freaking life. Okay, fine; I play video games. So what? Moving on.

At the last TAC meeting NICE keep on boasting about NICE meet bus service. Which is like public version of Uber. Anyway, for the longest time, only certain areas and not areas that no longer have access to public transportation. The reason is that the mini budget is tied to the bus line budget contribution from Nassau County. It's not enough. I know that I've been complaining about this for the longest time, but right now everything is getting more expensive. People are leaving Nassau County for greener pastures or less expensive pastures.

Please, members of the Legislature, we need affordable housing and increased

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funding for the buses. Thank you.

Have a good day. One other tiny thing. To the members of the public. I'm not interested in taking away your cars, you guys. As long as you follow the rules of the road, you guys are free to drive. But wouldn't you like an option? A less expensive option to get around Long Island? Then please help me help you.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Emily Raphael.

Bye, bye.

MS. RAPHAEL: Hi, I'm Emily Raphael. I'm a resident of Plainview and I've lived in Nassau County for 60 years, something like that. I don't like to advertise the exact amount of time.

At any rate, I also want you to address the issue of this militia and the lack of transparency about the training process and the vetting process for who's hired.

One of the things that struck me as the gentleman over here pointed out was

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when the Nassau County police officers mentioned how much their training kicked in in a surprise situation. The other thing that struck me and how important that training is, and I have many, many questions about how the training is going to be accomplished, how much time is going to be spent on the training, and what aspects of police training are going to be covered? Because the other thing that I noticed as we were listening was there was a young woman who was doing a project on autism in her school district, which was wonderful. As it happens, I'm the mother of someone who has an autism spectrum disorder. And one thing I'm very aware of is that it is often not a happy encounter when they interact with the police. That requires specialized training. And that's something that maybe has only become more common in the last few years. In an emergency situation, which is supposedly with this militia would be for, conditions are more

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unpredictable than they would be in a typical situation. So to me, it seems really inconsistent to throw people with whatever kind of training they're going to get in situations that would require, if anything, more training than is typically needed.

Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Jeremy Joseph.

MR. JOSEPH: I'm Jeremy Joseph. I'm a resident of Hicksville and a member of Long Island United To Transform Policing and Community Safety.

Recently, the County Executive has made public his intent and interest in deputizing armed civilians to be provisional deputy sheriffs during declared emergencies. As advocates for police reform, we are constant witness to a Police Department that operates without oversight and accountability. Now we have our County Executive openly making plans around creating more police.

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In 2020, this Body, with the help of advocates, crafted a plan for police reform. We didn't get much, but we were promised bi-annual reports with arrest demographics and traffic stop data, as well as regular public safety meetings to monitor this progress.

Now, what have we gotten? Data has been consistently late and insufficient. Meetings have been postponed and not scheduled. In the meantime, we have data showing that black and brown people are up to five times more likely to be arrested and endure traffic stops than white people with no evidence of a higher rate of crime. If vulnerable populations are already being targeted by our own police, what would happen with this new group?

Bruce Blakeman, in his public capacity, has already targeted transgender people and immigrant communities. How can we trust these untrained, armed men to not be biased

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against vulnerable populations during

emergency declarations? Further, the

Nassau County the Police Department

investigates itself as a method of

oversight, which is absurd on its face,

and they are currently resisting court

orders from both New York Civil New York

Civic Civil Liberties Union as well as

Newsday to turn over misconduct records.

If the established law enforcement agency

is barely accountable and not a

transparent at all, how is this new group

going to function? Are you going to

implement a mechanism for residents to

file complaints against deputy sheriffs?

Finally, what constitutes an

emergency? Will we see some manufactured crisis come November during election time? We want guarantees that deputy

sheriffs will not be posted at polling

places on election dates. This

Legislature has the responsibility to

curb this reach of power by the County

Executive. If you care about public

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safety as much as you'd like to talk about it, then you'll make sure that this militia doesn't happen and instead direct that energy towards a police department that is already not serving all of Nassau residents.

Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Shuford.

MS. SHUFORD: Good afternoon, Legislator. How are you doing? Tina Shuford, I'm president of 100 Terrace Avenue in Hempstead, CEO of All the Way, 100% Incorporated. And I'm here to address our safety and security in our community in reference to deputizing for policing and stuff like that.

Hempstead has their own police department. Where's the help from Nassau County? You only come to 100 Terrace Avenue with the Crime Scene. We don't need that. Give us some kind of help and support. We don't need police sleeping in the cars in Hempstead and being on the

news. Why don't you come to 100 Terrace

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Avenue? You're scared to come down on your terrace and move because it's a minority area, drug infested, crime infested. Well, help us. Give us the help we need. Train the right people that you already got in office and use the money wisely. And like I said, we need the

help. Come to 100 Terrace Avenue and come

That's what you need to do.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Claudia Borecky.

to Hempstead. Train Hempstead police.

MS. BORECKY: Claudia Borecky, President of the Bellmore-Merrick Democratic Club.

The Bellmore-Merrick Democratic Club is concerned about the implementation of programs that undermine the security of Nassau County residents. The County's law enforcement officers are professional and boast an unparalleled, exceptionally well trained police force. So then why would County Executive Blakeman form a militia

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that will likely find itself in scenarios where untrained, trigger-happy residents are called upon to deal with dangerous situations for which they are ill prepared? The chances of incidents escalating and resulting in deaths seem more likely than not.

The Bellmore-Merrick Democratic Club questions what emergency Blakeman imagines would necessitate armed residents. Could it be that if there are threats of violence on election Day, Blakeman will assign two armed "Oath Keepers" to polling places to intimidate voters? Or could it be that if there are rumors of trouble at a Black Lives Matter march, Blakeman sends "Proud Boys" with guns to intervene with protesters. It doesn't take much imagination to foresee the carnage that may follow.

What data and what data leads Blakeman to believe this program is necessary? Who will be held liable for the inevitable mishaps? Who would these

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vigilantes report to? What constitutes an emergency? Who oversees the militia? Is this just an ill-conceived plan to keep Nassau residents in fear of some imaginary emergency that would necessitate guns?

Further, how much will it cost taxpayers? This program leaves residents with more questions than answers. People need to be protected from an administration that calls out far wing qun enthusiasts to act at its beck and call, at the peril of its constituency.

Therefore, the Bellmore-Merrick Democratic Club request the Nassau County legislator legislature demand County Executive Blakeman abandon his plan for a citizen militia and that the Legislature hold hearings to address our concerns.

Further, we request the Nassau County Legislature's Independent Budget Review Office to examine the projected cost of this proposed militia, its liability, and how it impacts Nassau

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County taxpayers.

Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Meta Mereday.

MS. MEREDAY: Meta J. Mereday.

Many have already spoken. I'm glad that I'm not the only echo in the room. And I'm just hoping that more people come on a regular basis.

With regard to the militia, the fact that the County Executive had the audacity to put it out there, and very few, the 12 here -- Well, nobody. There was one quote that, hey, maybe it could be all right, we'll go with it or whatever. I support those who stood up at the rally last week. Unfortunately, they say that expression about insanity is doing the same thing and expecting different results. Unfortunately, we live in some insane times, and rallies are well and good. But if the voices of the people who have stood here, including those who have gone on, like Scottie

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Coates and others who stood here and railed against a segregated map here in New York State, where lawsuits are going against the map that are based upon precedent that was established in the state of Alabama speaks volumes.

There are those who stood here and had issues with regard to resources, the lack of saying going to the medical center that could help our veterans. But many of you, again, this side of the room and we try to be bipartisan, but let's be real. This county is partisan, nepotistic, cronyism, racist at some point, sexist in other points. And it speaks to the body that we pay the second highest property taxes in the country. But now we're known as the county outside of New York, where the County Executive wants to hire militia. But two weeks before that, we were touting that Nassau County is one of the safest counties here. Where is it? Where is the logic?

Where's the funding for the medical

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center? When we talk about, you know, I know Covid is over. So now you can run to those parades and those pancake breakfasts to claim that you support veterans who are now dying at 40 a day between suicides and other acts of violence. The two bodies that would be recruited for this militia, you're talking about retired veterans and retired police officers. What's happening in Suffolk County with the police department, high rates of potential suicide, mental health, drug and alcohol dependence. We used to have an outstanding Nassau County Department of Drug and alcohol addiction. Where is that? Oh, I'm sorry. They have a few flyers in a suitcase somewhere tucked in the building of social services.

You want to build a casino here. You can't even finish building the family and matrimonial court. How are you going to build a casino? You've got people who are now coming from Nassau Community College.

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Who's saying that the administration there says they can't eat on campus?

What are we doing here? What are we doing here? We're doing the wrong thing once again. You're spending ARP funds on tourism. When healthcare and mental wellness is considered an infrastructure issue out of the White House. Do a better job or we'll get somebody else to do it.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Doris Sharpe.

Thank you.

MS. MARTIN: Hello, my name is Angela Martin. I apologize, Doris had to leave. I'm speaking on her behalf and mine.

The County Executive Blakeman's feelings were hurt by the words the minority leader said using the term: "Brownshirts", and he is calling for a resignation. Well, we, the community of black and brown, LIAFPA, Long Island Advocare for Police Accountability, are hurt by Blake's actions that he wants to

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put in motion by forming a militia. We feel that he should resign. This is the greatest country on earth. We have more than enough National Guard to support us. And in the state of an emergency, they will be here just like they were in New York.

Blakeman is stoking fear and creating dangerous situations. He is creating more of a division of us against them. And actually, we know that Blakeman is performing for "Number 45", hoping to align himself up in the MAGA group. Legislature, please support and hold a public hearing to support us. Thank you.

2 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: That 3 concludes our public comment. We're going to move on to our Calendar. I'll 5 take a motion to suspend the Rules.

> Motion made by Legislator Walker and seconded by Legislator Strauss.

> All those in favor of suspending the Rules, please say, "Aye".

> > (Whereupon, all members of the Rules Committee respond in favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Any opposed?

> (Whereupon, no verbal response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: The Rules are suspended.

Now we have a number of consent items. These are items that have already gone through Committees, and the Majority and Minority have agreed that no further debate or discussion is required on these particular items. Those items are:

Number 2, ordinance 16; Number 3,

1 ordinance 17; Number 4; Resolution 44; 2 3 Number 7, Resolution 47; Number 8, Resolution 48; Number 9, Resolution 49; 5 Number 10, Resolution 50; and 12, Resolution 52. 6 Motion is made by Legislator Bynoe 8 and seconded by Legislator Giangregorio. All those in favor, please say, 10 "Aye". 11 (Whereupon, all members of 12 the Rules Committee respond in 13 favor with, "Aye".) 14 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: 15 opposed? 16 (Whereupon, no verbal 17 response.) 18 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Those 19 items are unanimous. 20 Item 1, Ordinance 15, which is 21 supplemental to the annual appropriation 22 ordinance transferring appropriations, 23 heretofore made. 2.4 Motion by Legislator Pilip, seconded 25 by Legislator Davis.

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MR. PERSICH: Good afternoon. Andy Persich, Office of Management and Budget.

Item 78 is the annual closing of the County's books.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: I think we have an amendment to this as well, so why don't we do the amendment first.

We have an amendment in the nature of a substitution, which adds transfers within the legislative budget, salaries, equipment and general expense lines of budget lines.

Motion by Legislator Solages and seconded by Legislator Goetz.

All those in favor of the amendment, please say, "Aye".

> (Whereupon, all members of the Rules Committee respond in favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Any opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal

response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Go ahead,

=NC FULL LEGISLATURE 04.15.2024 =1 2 please. 3 MR. PERSICH: Good afternoon. This is the annual closing of the 5 books for the County. The County finished 6 with approximately a \$240 million surplus this year, of which we're transferring 8 about \$225 million to a bunch of different reserves. It's consistent with 10 what we've been doing in the past, 11 identifying where we see risks and 12 putting money away for future obligations 13 and liabilities that we may have. 14 I'm here to take any questions about 15 it, if need be. 16 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Do we have 17 any? 18 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Thank you. 19 Hi, Andy. How are you? 20 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Good afternoon, 21 Legislator. 22 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: What was the 23 number, \$240 million? 2.4 MR. PERSICH: Yes. 25 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: And we're putting

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things away for items where we think there is risk?

MR. PERSICH: If you want me to, I'll give you the list of where I think the intended purpose of the money's going.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Particularly, I see it's going to Early Intervention.

MR. PERSICH: No. Not this. No. A lot of the money is going into what I would say is reserves, for suits and damages, longevity --

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: You can stop. I'll save you some time on that. misspoke.

So your money is coming out of Early Intervention. It's going into the General Fund?

MR. PERSICH: Yes. Wherever there was surpluses or places where we need to move money. It's a formality of how they do the process within the Comptroller's Office.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: My question then

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is since we have a \$240 million surplus, and we know that one of our areas at risk is Early Intervention, specifically, from what I'm told, the nearly 200 young people who are on a waiting list to receive services, particularly because we, Nassau County, pay the least amount for those services to our practitioners, and we are hailing at the bottom of the 62 counties -- 61 counties that are ahead of us in paying practitioners. So it's

lost on me why we can't do better than

than this.

We know that there is risk. We know that for every \$1 we spend now, we save \$7 later. We know that young people who have developmental delays, who then enter our school districts and get IEPs, then tend to, in many cases, drop out of school for barely make it out of high school, and then they are incarcerated in in record numbers. So we talk about trying to turn the corner on creating safe communities. And we know, because

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data tells us this, that this is an area of risk. But yet and still we can't find a way to fund this area of risk. And I find it disingenuous -- I'll use a word that was did characterize me at some point on this very topic -- that our County Executive would not put this money in the right place, would not fund these

services, but yet we want a militia. We

these young people's ability to be able

school, do well, excel and get beyond

their delays. And so tell me, Andy; is

there a plan?

want to fund a militia, but we won't fund

to compete with their colleagues, stay in

MR. PERSICH: I can tell you that we're reviewing the numbers for increases in rates for certain parts of the Early Intervention Program where we are at the lowest. We're viewing it right now to see where we should land with that number. And I would imagine something may be forthcoming soon, when that is, I don't know. But we have done a study of what

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the actual cost would be to the County, and we are reviewing that right now.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Do you have a fiscal impact analysis?

MR. PERSICH: We do depending upon where the rates land, yes. I'll give you an example: If we go from 40 to 45, it will be approximately 600,000; if we go from 40 to 50, it'll be about 1.1 million. So it will be competitive. That's for like the speech and occupational therapist one, the ones that we had an outcry were I think from some of the service providers. So we're reviewing that right now to see where we should land with that. I would say stay tuned is what I can tell you.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: I would say those who came were in large numbers, speech pathologists and the like and occupational therapists. But we also know that physical therapy is also a real large component of assisting these individuals with the developmental

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delays. So I would suggest that what the exercise that we undertake would include looking at all of those services and looking at how we bear against other counties.

I would tell you that going from 40 to 45, we don't get to saying that because it doesn't come before the Legislature. You'll make the adjustment outside of the Legislature. But if it would have come here in a budget, I would say that for me, that wouldn't fly. 40 to 45 does nothing; 40 to 50, I argue, does nothing.

Just so you know, at the \$40 that we're paying where we're at 66% of the average rate across the counties. So if we're going to make an adjustment, let's do it right. Let's do it with the idea that we want to attract people to come and provide the service and be able to work through this waiting list that exists. So this is a high area of risk, and I'm going to stay tuned. But I want

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to hear something that is promising for these young people's future.

Thank you.

MR. PERSICH: Understood.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you. Hi, Andy.

MR. PERSICH: Good afternoon.

LEGISLATOR MULE: When you come back to us with that fiscal analysis, here's my question: Is that going to factor in the reimbursement that we get from the State?

MR. PERSICH: The numbers I just gave you a net of what the state will reimburse us. Different programs have different reimbursement. But for argument's sake, I will say that Early Intervention is state reimbursable at 56%, or thereabouts.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you. And you said stay tuned; when should we expect to hear?

MR. PERSICH: I will get back and talk to my principals to see what we're

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doing with it.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Andy, the number is 59.1, isn't it?

MR. PERSICH: The varying different programs I'm using, on average, I would say that some of the different reimbursement rates are a little different than Early Intervention. But I for some reason, I have 56 in my head. I could be off. It could be 59. So I apologize if I misspoke.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: And that's at whatever number we decide to pay?

MR. PERSICH: It's a 60/40 split for round numbers, but that's what it would come out to be.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Thank you.

LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Thank you. Hey, Andy.

MR. PERSICH: Good afternoon.

You're estimating you're putting in almost \$80 million in the Tax Cert Fund. And in '23 it was 65; is that what I'm reading?

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MR. PERSICH: We're adding 65 million.

LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: That it's quite a jump from 12.9. Do we know how much we paid out in tax certs last year?

MR. PERSICH: As a good news story for this Body and everybody involved, our liability in the tax cert with the LIPA and everything else was roughly around 700 million. We're down to almost \$200 million or 270, somewhere in that range. We're making headway. We're making good progress. I think we're in the right direction as far as eliminating that backlog and getting rid of all the interest payments that were hindering us because the clock was ticking on the interest component of that. And we are feverishly making headway. We have the resources now. We're looking at some other resources to finally mitigate and get that liability cleaned up, as well as our regular judgments and claims too.

LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: So the

additional 65 million you think is adequate?

MR. PERSICH: Yes, because we have the DAF out there to which we has a resource and we have operating funds of about 30 million.

LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: We used to receive annual reports, I don't think we've gotten in the past couple --

MR. PERSICH: I will look into that and see if I can get you some type of data on that.

LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: That's important that we stay on top of that and get a gauge on the direction that you say we're moving in.

MR. PERSICH: Keep in mind the liability number always gets valued at this time of year for the previous year. With ARC and the Comptroller's Office, we go through this process of dissecting the number to make sure what the liability number is.

LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: All right.

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Thank you, Andy.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Andy, one other thing. I don't think it's enough just to increase the funding to the practitioners. I think that we also need to embark on upon an awareness campaign. I believe that first, a lot of people don't even know these services are available. And second, I believe that young mothers, first time mothers, don't even know how to identify if there's a delay. And what I've seen in other counties is that they typically will make sure that they are spreading awareness about their services. And they also make sure that young parents kind of have an idea that if your child should be crawling at this age or it should be, you know, they kind of walk them through a process. And I think that Nassau County does not do enough around that issue. And I had been working with the prior administration to embark on an awareness campaign. Unfortunately, you know, things

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things died down. But I do think we need to embark upon that.

MR. PERSICH: I know Dr. Gelman, who's the head of the Health Department, is very active in this arena. So I will ask her what endeavors she's made to get some notifications out to different school districts and stuff like. But I know she meets with the Superintendents Associations.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: This is before the young person comes to school. This is from 0 to 3 years old, so the school districts aren't typically involved. I've been hearing these public service announcements on radio stations and specifically it's addressing this same program, but in New York City. And so we here in Nassau County have not embarked on any type of awareness campaign so that first time mothers, young mothers, whoever, they could know that the services are available. So I think that we need to be looking at that.

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2	MR. PERSICH: I will take that back
3	and see if there's a campaign or
4	something that the Administration and the
5	Health Department want to do with that.
6	LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Thank you.
7	MR. PERSICH: Thank you.
8	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: All those
9	in favor of Ordinance 15 as amended,
10	please say, "Aye".
11	(Whereupon, all members of
12	the Rules Committee respond in
13	favor with, "Aye".)
14	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Any
15	opposed?
16	(Whereupon, no verbal
17	response.)
18	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: That is
19	unanimous.
20	Thank you.
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2 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Resolution 3 46. I will note that Legislator Goetz is leaving the chamber. She's recusing 5 herself and will not participate in any debate or discussion. 6

> (Whereupon, Legislator Goetz exits the Chambers.)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: This item is a resolution authorizing the County Attorney to compromise an action called Langona versus County of Nassau and Andino versus the County of Nassau.

Motion on this is made by Legislator Mule and seconded by Legislator Giangregorio. This went through Committees, we're pretty good on this.

All those in favor of this item, please say, "Aye".

> (Whereupon, all members of the Rules Committee respond in favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal

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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 04.15.2024
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2	response.)
3	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: That item
4	is unanimous.
5	You can invite Legislator Goetz
6	back, please.
7	(Whereupon, Legislator Goetz
8	returns to Chambers.)
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PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Number 11,
Resolution 51 is a resolution to
authorize a transfer of appropriations,
which is a budget transfer within the
Opioid Litigation Fund.

Motion on that is made by Legislator Gaylor, seconded by a Legislator Solages.

Andy, is that yours?

MR. PERSICH: This item is transferring approximately \$1.1 million from the Human Services to the Health Department for water testing for opioids and equipment in the Medical Examiner's Office to react and have better equipment in case there's different toxicology issues that come up. We're finding this a better resources for these funds, and we will continue to develop a plan that we're going to spend the rest of the money with. But right now, this is an immediate need that we find will be a good fit, especially the water testing at the sewage treatment plants to detect if there is opioids in the outflow pipes of

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the sewer district, and we'll give us more time to react to it.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: Thank you.

Andy, I wasn't aware of what it was going to. I knew it was going to the Health Department, but I didn't know what type of equipment you were discussing.

MR. PERSICH: I know that the the Medical Examiner's Office was affected by the opioid crisis. They need some better equipment to do some diagnostic testing and everything else. So that's why they need this equipment. If they have to do any analysis post mortem, this these equipment will help them do toxicology analysis and stuff like that.

Specifically what they're buying, I don't know. I'm sure it's some, you know, centrifuge things and all the stuff that they do over there.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: Is that even -- I'm trying to think what how

that's even qualifying under the settlement. It's coming from the opioid settlement money?

MR. PERSICH: Yes.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:
What part of the opioid settlement
classification would that fit it?

MR. PERSICH: It's compliant with what the rules and restrictions within the opioid funding.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: In what category, training?

MR. PERSICH: Well, training and analysis for the Medical Examiner's Office is a key component in this though. The number of deaths that have occurred and everything else. It takes a while, and I think some of the lab stuff has to be sent out.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Anyone else?

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Thank you. Thank you, Andy.

Can you please further explain that

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to trace of any elements of drugs in the waterways. Can you explain?

MR. PERSICH: Yes.

This is Dr. Gelman. She's a big proponent of this. We're contracting with Stony Brook to take water samples out of the Sewer District and, don't quote me on this because I'm not the technocrat, but what we're going to do is we're going to take that, and it will be able to test if there's any traces of opioids in there. It's a common practice that occurs in other places. So she finds this as a valuable tool for us to track and find out if there's opioids in the water. This way there's some, I want to say, demographics that we can figure out what's in there and what types of opioids are out there.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Help me explain the process, how we've gotten here. I mean, how much altogether has been allocated from all of the different settlements to date? Please.

MR. PERSICH: I can tell you we've appropriated \$15 million. I want to say 85 we've received in. That's what the settlement data is. And we get money in every year as a result of that.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Are we on schedule? Are we behind in terms of having this money out the door and released? I mean, where are we in this process, sir?

MR. PERSICH: I think we're in the process of making good, sound fiscal decisions and dispersing the money. We know there's a crisis and we're aware of it, but we're being prudent about how we allocate the funds.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: So then what

part of your plan will help to, you know,

get the resources on the ground to

reflect or address some of the things

that we heard earlier during the, for

example, Top Cop portion of this hearing

where we learned that it took several

applications of Narcan to help these

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individuals who suffered an overdose.

Can you please explain where are we in

the process of getting more resources on

the ground? I mean, it's important to

detect and do investigation and to

provide proper equipment to the Medical

Examiner's Office, but if you could

describe where we are in the overall

process?

MR. PERSICH: We're still developing a more defined plan, but we've allocated some resources to some of the hospital systems which are frontlines. Some agencies have gotten some money, and we're still developing a further plan that we're looking to target certain areas. It's upcoming. I'm sure there'll

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Thank you.

be more coming down the pipe within the

MR. PERSICH: You got it.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:

Thanks, Howard.

next few months.

Just according to, I believe it was

the door.

number. I have 1.510.

this morning, the NFS has only 1.25 out

MR. PERSICH: I have a different

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:

MR. PERSICH: The problem is the

we're talking out of a \$92 million.

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to do with this. So I mean we've

spend in some of the things that we have

allocated the appropriate resources. And

I just say it's a timing issue is what I

payments out. We can't do it without,

will say to get these contracts and

for a lack of a better thing, to provide

documentation for us for the payment.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: So let me ask you a question. I know on September '22, we had a press conference where those various groups, which we already have contracts with, were each allocated a certain amount of money was going to be \$15 million per year. Do you remember that, for four years? And the reason we chose those groups was because

we already had contracts with them, and, therefore, we were able to basically just increase the contract with just the funding. That was why we chose those groups, and that was why we were going to start with that, because it would be quick to get the money out and here we are over two years later, just from that money, and I don't know if any of them have seen any money, and I know a lot of them haven't.

MR. PERSICH: I don't have the breakdown of who's gotten what. I can get that for you. But I know we've encumbered money. It's not that we haven't allocated resources. There is a process here of getting funds out the door.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:

There shouldn't be any. Let's just take

one: Family and Children, they have a

contract with the County. It's all set.

It's valid. It's it's active. If we want

to increase their funding by \$15 million

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a year, we could do that, correct?

MR. PERSICH: If the Body chose to and the Administration --

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: did.

MR. PERSICH: Yes. I'm not going to say no. It's the policy that's set between the Legislature and the County Executive. So yes.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: That was done. And that's when we had that press conference. And that was why it was done, because we didn't have to go through procurement or anything. And here we are, you know, two years later. And this isn't even a lot of money. Each one of them should have had, you know what other they promised, I forget like 60,000 each or something. That was a minimal amount. I mean, so they should have had that money. They should have two years worth already coming up on the third year and they haven't received it. I just know because I get the calls all the time.

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It's horrifying to tell them that we don't have it. We've been to so many different breakfasts, both sides went to those breakfasts where they can't use the money because they don't have it, even though it was promised to them, and they're turning people away for treatment. And meanwhile, you know, the opioid crisis is as strong as ever. I know that we received interest on this funding. It's not being put into this line. We checked again this morning. I believe there was \$7 million collected on the \$92 million last year. And I don't know where that money went, the 7 million that was collected.

MR. PERSICH: I have to look into that because I'm pretty sure it stays within the fund. But I will get back to you, I don't know.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: We just looked at it this morning. Thank God we have that where that's available.

Because it's hard to hear 13 million

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even. It's just not accurate when we can look and see how much was actually given 011t.

All right. So basically all that we have right now as of this morning, 1.25 has been sent out; is that correct?

MR. PERSICH: I have a little bit of different number.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: 1.5, I'll give you your number. So 1.5 out of --

MR. PERSICH: Again, it's a process here. If the bills were submitted and how we get the money out, they don't.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: doesn't have to be that way.

MR. PERSICH: I think there is.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:

No, no, no. There is no reimbursement.

We know it's not correct, I'm sorry to say that, but it's just not correct. They don't have to spend the money and get reimbursed. No, it's money that can be

given to these agencies to help them.

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There's nothing that they have to spend

on first. It is not a reimbursement

program. And I believe me, I wish that

you would know this because this is such

an important subject for all families,

you know, some that are affected, some

that know people that are affected. I

would really hope that you would just

educate yourself on this a little bit

better just because we rely on you.

MR. PERSICH: Okay.

if you could, number one, make sure that that all of these agencies that we have contracts with, all we have to do is put the money in, because that's the way it

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:

was just it was explained to me by

someone who knows this area.

Number two, if you could just find out what happened to the \$7 million in interest, because it's it's gone.

And number three, I don't even think the hospital got it yet. I don't know if you want to give it to the hospital. I

don't know what's happening with the hospital, but maybe we should just see what's happening with Catholic Health and NUMC because they were also promised this a while ago.

I need you to get scholared on this because kids are dying. We just had another one in my area. I don't know what could be more important. And I feel like every time I come up here, it's always the same spin on it, which is, oh yeah, we allocated 13, 15, whatever it is, which is still not a lot at a 92. And Suffolk County is doing a lot more and we're not we've only allocated 1.5 million.

Andy, also we're supposed to be getting another settlement from CVS. I think it's around 30 million. Maybe we could just follow up with that, because knowing us, if we're not on top of this and we don't follow up with it, we could lose it.

MR. PERSICH: I do know that we work

with Napoli Bern, who was the lead law firm in the litigation with us. And their attorney does send e-mails about money, incoming money. There was something that just came in last week. I don't know what it was for, I don't know whether it was one of the distributors or one of the big pharma companies that was sending us money.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: I think there's a big one coming, like a \$30 million.

MR. PERSICH: I will check into that.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: I always ask for this and I never get it, but if you could send us an -mail with all the updates. It's not just you. We never get information. Very rarely do we ever get information. But this is something, you know, how do we face our constituents not knowing how this works and having it not work.

MR. PERSICH: Understood.

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	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 04.15.2024
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2	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL:
3	All those in favor of this item,
4	please say, "Aye".
5	(Whereupon, all members of
6	the Rules Committee respond in
7	favor with, "Aye".)
8	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Any
9	opposed?
10	(Whereupon, no verbal
11	response.)
12	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: It is
13	unanimous.
14	Legislator Strauss moves to adjourn,
15	Legislator Giuffre seconds that motion.
16	All those in favor of adjourning,
17	please say, "Aye".
18	(Whereupon, all members of
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	the Rules Committee respond in
20	favor with, "Aye".)
21	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Any
22	opposed?
23	(Whereupon, no verbal
24	response.)
25	PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL. We are

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NC FULL LEGISLATURE 04.15.2024 adjourned. (Whereupon, the Full Legislature meeting is adjourned, 3:22 p.m.) ***** ____TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516) 414-3516 _____123 ___

	NC FULL LEGISLATURE 04.15.2024
1	
2	CERTIFICATE
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4	STATE OF NEW YORK)
5	: SS.:
6	County of Nassau)
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8	I, KAREN LORENZO, a Notary Public
9	for and within the State of New York, do
10	hereby certify:
11	That the above is a correct
12	transcription of my stenographic notes.
13	IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto
14	set my hand this 15th day of April, 2024.
15	
16	<u>Karen Lorenzo</u>
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\$15 _[3] - 112:3,	81:13, 81:21,	1:12 [1] - 1:19	7:19
114:23, 115:25	82:2, 82:10	1:43 [1] - 32:2	35 _[1] - 51:6
\$150 _[1] - 53:19	100% _[1] - 81:15	1:50 _[1] - 15:2	37 _[1] - 44:22
\$200 _[1] - 101:11	10th _[1] - 3:15	1st _[1] - 2:16	3:22 _[1] - 123:7
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