

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Steven Bellone
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

December 2016

Dear Parents:

I am writing to you not only as Suffolk County Executive, but also as a Town of Babylon resident and a parent of three young children to discuss an issue of the utmost importance, protecting our kids and families from sex offenders.

During my time as Babylon Town Supervisor, we took a leadership position on the sex offender issue. We sued to end the terrible practice of housing more than a dozen unsupervised sex offenders at the former Brook Motel in North Babylon. We created the first GIS mapping system in New York State to track sex offenders living in the Town of Babylon. We also became the first municipality to utilize town code enforcement officers to verify whether sex offenders were living where they reported on the Megan's Law Sex Offender Registry. In advancing these protective measures, we worked closely with one of the leading advocacy organizations in our state and nation on this issue, Parents for Megan's Law and its longtime director Laura Ahearn.

When I took office as Suffolk County Executive in 2012, I took all of my experiences in Babylon and all the lessons learned and worked with Suffolk County Police Department and Parents for Megan's Law to develop the Community Protection Act (CPA), the toughest sex offender enforcement, monitoring and verification program in the nation. Adopted in 2013, the CPA created a public-private partnership with Parents for Megan's Law, who utilize retired law enforcement officers to ensure the sex offender registry is up to date by verifying home address registration information for sex offenders living in Suffolk County and enforce laws to prevent sex offenders from preying on our children online.

Since passing the Community Protection Act:

- Nearly 300 social media accounts belonging to sex offenders (over 200 of them Suffolk County registrants) have been removed by Facebook;
- Over 10,000 in-person home verification visits for Level 1, 2 and 3 registrants have been executed;
- Nearly 95% of Level 2 and Level 3 offenders were brought into compliance through home address registration; and
- Recidivism has been reduced by 81% for Suffolk County eligible sex offender registrants against Suffolk County residents;

The Community Protection Act is working!

That's why I'm so alarmed that the Community Protection Act is currently under assault by sex offenders unhappy with the level of monitoring that we do in Suffolk County. Multiple lawsuits have been filed by sex offenders and organizations supporting them in an effort to strike down the Community Protection Act.

We need New York State to enact legislation that will give the authority back to Suffolk County to enact reasonable residency restriction laws, prevent certain dangerous registrants from dropping off the registry, and protect critical sex offender management programs such as the Community Protection Act to allow Suffolk County to continue our work protecting kids and families from sex offenders.

Please go to: www.facebook.com/SteveBellone to sign our online petition urging New York State to protect the Community Protection Act, and close the sex offender loophole by prioritizing passage of sex offender legislation in the next legislative session.

We want to arm our state representatives with the grassroots support they need to fight for this important legislation in Albany.

Under the Community Protection Act, Suffolk County funds the coordination of educational presentations offered by Parents for Megan's Law in schools across our county in an effort to arm parents with the tools and knowledge they need to help protect their families and children, and awareness they need to help prevent victimization. We strongly support the delivery of these programs to help protect our most vulnerable. To learn more about this important work, please go to www.parentsformeganslaw.org.

We owe it to our children to do everything we can under the law to keep them safe. **Please join me in calling for the strengthening of our sex offender laws in New York State by signing our online petition at www.facebook.com/SteveBellone. If you are interested in collecting signatures for our petition, please contact my office at [631-853-5027](tel:631-853-5027).**

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



STEVEN BELLONE
Suffolk County Executive