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Presiding Officer Howard J. Kopel
Minority Leader Delia DeRiggi-Whitton
Legislator Seila Bynoe
Legislator Carrie Solages
Legislator Patrick Mullaney
Legislator Seth Koslow
Legislator Debra Mule
Legislator John J. Giuffre
Legislator Scott Strauss
Legislator Scott Davis

Legislator Michael Giangregorio
Legislator Thomas McKeivitt
Legislator C. William Gaylor, III
Legislator John R. Ferretti
Legislator Arnold Drucker
Legislator Rose Marie Walker
Legislator Samantha Goetz
Legislator James F. Kennedy
Legislator Mazi Melesa Philip

RE: Red Light Camera Fees

Dear Nassau County Legislators:

The Bellmore Merrick Democratic Club (“BMDC”) opposes Nassau County’s imposition of unconstitutional administrative and other fees totaling \$100 tacked on top of its \$50 red-light camera fine.

When County Executive Edward Mangano and the Republican Majority Legislature imposed a \$30 administrative fee on top of the \$50 red-light camera fine, it was argued that a fee cannot be imposed beyond the cost of providing the service.

In 2020, Supreme Court Justice David T. Reilly ruled that Suffolk County’s smaller \$30 administration fee on top of the \$50 fine for a red-light camera violation was unconstitutional because the state precludes a county from charging more than the violation fine to offenders. In 2022, Suffolk County Legislators repealed its \$30 administration fee, stating it puts an unfair financial burden on county residents and increases accidents at some locations. So, what does Nassau do for its residents? Nothing.

Undeterred, in 2016 C.E. Mangano and the Republican Majority then raised the administrative fee to \$45 and imposed a public safety fee of \$55 so that Nassau residents pay \$100 on top of the \$50 fine for a red-light camera violation. Again, it was argued that Nassau officials were imposing taxes, not fees since the added \$100 was well above the costs of covering the program. Despite demanding that former County Executive Laura Curran repeal the Republican-imposed fees when she was in office – and campaigning that candidate Blakeman and the GOP legislators would repeal this and other fees they imposed, County Executive Blakeman and the Republican Majority are renewing the red-light camera program with the unconstitutional fees.

Like the Republicans in Congress hypocritically campaigning on repealing the SALT cap that they imposed while Donald Trump was president, the Republican legislators in Nassau County campaigned on repealing their own red-light camera fees that they imposed while Mangano was in office. And to this date, the Republican Legislators have not only failed to keep their campaign promise to repeal these exorbitant fees deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, but today they are proposing to renew them.

We, therefore, demand that the County Legislature request the Legislature's Independent Budget Review Office follow the money derived from these unconstitutional administration fees and, like Suffolk, vote to repeal them.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudia Borecky and Dave Denenberg
Bellmore Merrick Democratic Club