



# Rockland County Legislator Lon Hofstein

District 5 - Clarkstown And Pomona

Fall 2015

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## ***Saving your tax dollars...***

### **The Brega Bus Issue**

The Brega Transportation Corporation has the contract to provide bus service to the County of Rockland for a period of five years. Last year, a bus operated by the Brega Transportation Corp. caught fire. It was the vendor's contention that washing the buses daily would reduce the occurrence of such fires. In August 2014 the members of the Rockland County Legislature voted to amend the contract to provide additional funds to wash these buses. Their decision would have cost the taxpayers of Rockland County approximately \$4 Million during the time period covered by the contract.

I stated there was **no documentation supporting the claim** that washing the exterior of a bus would prevent the occurrence of a fire.

**I challenged the concept of amending** a contract already valid and in place. If a vendor feels additional procedures are required in order to fulfill the contractual commitment, the additional cost should not become the responsibility of the taxpayers.

To renegotiate contracts in order to meet their (outside vendors) needs is not in the best interest of the citizens of Rockland County. I supported County Executive Ed Day that we cannot afford to renegotiate contracts to subsidize vendors' operating costs.

I used social media to lead the fight to stop the members of the Legislature from overriding the veto on this amendment to the contract.

Furthermore, I met several times with the Acting Commissioner of Planning to have the maintenance contracts on county vehicles put out to bid. This will hopefully end the \$835 oil change costs that the present vendor is charging for the County's buses.

## ***What's been happening since I took office...***

### **New Plan for Reverse 911 System for Indian Point Emergency Alerts**

I'm proud to have introduced a resolution that was **passed** by the Rockland County Legislature, which would require Entergy Corp., the owners and operators of the Indian Point Nuclear Facility, to implement a reverse 911 system. This new system would send you a text or voice message when there is an emergency at their power plant. This reverse 911 system would inform our residents, through a voluntary alert system, whenever there is an emergency condition at the facility. Currently, we depend on a siren for notification. This new system will give Rockland residents the opportunity to sign up for an automated message.

## *I asked the tough questions....*

### **What is going on with the Rockland County Sewer District???**

1) During a meeting of the Legislature it was revealed that a court ruled against this Sewer District for millions of dollars in a case involving the repossession of property under the ruling of eminent domain. During this period the chairman of the Sewer District retired.

2) It was brought to my attention that it was the opinion of the County Attorney that elected officials serving on the Sewer District Commission were incorrectly receiving remuneration for serving on this commission.

3) During a Legislative session which took place in June 2015, a \$2.5 million bond was approved, the proceeds of which were to be used towards the construction of a storage facility. However, there were conflicting reports as to what was going to be stored in this structure. I stated that before we voted on this bond, a forensic audit should be performed on the operations of this Sewer District. Unfortunately, my suggestion was ignored, the majority ruled, and the bond was approved despite all the questions that I and others raised.



Meeting with Charles "Skip" Vezzetti to discuss a new location for the Rockland County Department of Highways.

## **Supporting The Oversight of the East Ramapo School District**



On the steps of the New York State Capital with other elected officials including County Executive Ed Day.

In May, I joined other elected officials to meet with members of the NYS Assembly and Senate in Albany. The meetings were to stress the importance of passing legislation to implement an independent fiscal monitor for the East Ramapo School District.

The children are looking to us for help and we should do everything possible to see they have an equal opportunity for a quality education. I also sponsored a Legislative resolution supporting the appointment of a fiscal monitor in the East Ramapo School District.

I believe a state appointed fiscal monitor would be best suited to address both sides of the argument while providing ALL children in the district with the best chance at the quality education they deserve right now.

An impartial monitor will be able to make unbiased decisions, based on facts, to represent the best interests of ALL the children. Unfortunately, while a monitor has been appointed, the monitor's authority is limited. This will not solve the problem that exists.

## Abandoned Property Relief: 70 Old Route 304

I have had meetings with Clarkstown Supervisor Alex Gromack and the owner of the abandoned property on Old Route 304. The meetings were to discuss the unsightly condition of this property. As a result, new fencing has been installed and the property has been cleaned up. I will continue to monitor this situation to ensure that the responsible parties are held accountable.

## Drainage Project



Legislator Lon Hofstein with Town Supervisor Gromack, Clarkstown Deputy Director of Environmental Control Dennis Letson and Rockland County Executive Director of Drainage Agency Vincent Altieri to discuss the Cranford Drive /Demarest Kill Stream Project.

I have met with officials of the Rockland County Drainage Agency, Alex Gromack and Clarkstown Engineers about the Demarest Kill/Cranford Drive flood drainage project.

Many local residents living in northern New City have experienced flooding because of this stream overflowing. The Town has been pushing for State and Federal approvals to be able to begin a project to get this drainage work underway. I have co-sponsored a bill to increase the capital projects budget by \$400,000 to be used to help support this project.

## Term Limits for Public Officials & The Two-Hat Rule

# "Term limits will bring diversity of people and fresh ideas"

Term limits date back to the American Revolution. America's first president, George Washington, started the tradition of informal presidential term limits by refusing to run for a third term. I believe that there should be term limits for all elected officials.

I have had discussions with my legislative colleagues in the hopes of persuading them to support term limits. I believe it will reduce the perception of "politics as usual."

In addition, I am a proponent that no elected official should hold more than one job on the taxpayer's dime. This is known as the "two-hat rule."

I am a member of the Clarkstown Parks and Recreation Commission. After I was elected to the legislature, I was asked to stay on the Commission. I accepted. However, as long as I'm an elected official, I have notified Clarkstown officials that I **will not accept a stipend for serving on the commission.**

# "Politics was never meant to be a career"

## Community



I had an opportunity to stop by and contribute scrap metal to help the New City Troop 97 Boy Scouts Fundraiser.



I had the privilege to visit two elementary schools - one in East Ramapo and one in Clarkstown - to meet with young children and read to their classes as part of Rockland's "Read-In Day." I enjoyed my time reading to the children and look forward to visiting with them again.

You elected me to be **Your Voice** in The Rockland County legislature. Thank you for your confidence in me to make sure your concerns are heard. I will continue to fight to:

- reduce property taxes and make Rockland County more affordable.
- enforce strong zoning laws to protect our quality of life.
- make County Government more efficient and eliminate wasteful spending.
- enact mandatory term limits for those holding public office.
- promote local business and encourage effective economic government.

I thank you for reading this newsletter. Instead of sending two newsletters out a year as allowed by the Rules of the County Legislature, I have chosen to send only one in an effort to save taxpayer dollars. Please contact me if you have any local concerns or issues.

To stay informed, 'LIKE' me on Facebook.  
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**Please send me your email address so I can contact you personally.**

Thank you for your support!

*Lon Hofstein*

**Your County Legislator**



**It continues to be a rewarding experience to serve as your Rockland County Legislator. Thank you for your trust and confidence as we work to make Rockland a better place. If you would like more information on these or any other issues, or need assistance: Feel free to call my office at (845) 638-5100, or e-mail me at [HofsteiL@co.rockland.ny.us](mailto:HofsteiL@co.rockland.ny.us)**

**LON HOFSTEIN**  
County Legislator