

WILLMOTT & WHY NOTS

DAVID J. WILLMOTT SR., EDITOR

Sign The Bill, Governor!

State legislation that could save Suffolk County taxpayers more than \$600 million is stalled in Albany because Governor George Pataki has not yet signed the bill.

If Pataki does not sign the bill soon, the opportunity to achieve those savings will vanish.

The state legislation is based on a proposal put forth by Suffolk Legislative Presiding Officer Joseph Rizzo to have the county finance the tax certiorari settlement included in LIPA's proposed partial takeover of LILCO.

The county proposes to fund the \$625 million reduced Shoreham settlement with lower cost bonding than is available to LIPA and through the implementation of a quarter-percent sales tax that would be used to repay those bonds.

While the imposition of sales taxes is never popular, in this case, it has the benefit of visitors and outsiders helping provide the funds to resolve a local problem, easing the impact on local residents.

Rizzo's proposal was approved in the county legislature, but required state legislation to authorize the county to impose the tax. The corresponding state legislation was passed by both the New York State Assembly and Senate. All it needs now is for the governor to sign the bill, and for county legislators to approve the actual imposition of the tax.

The county approval was scheduled to be voted on over a week ago, but Pataki's failure to sign the bill prevented that vote.

A similar authorization bill for the Town of East Hampton was recently vetoed by Pataki. East Hampton officials had sought a 2% tax on the sale of vacant land selling for more than \$100,000 and developed property sold for more than \$250,000. Town officials proposed to use the funds raised for the purchase of lands threatened by development and to preserve open space.

Pataki vetoed the proposal, which called for a public referendum on the plan, because of a couple of "technical problems" in the legislation, and because he said every East End town should have the same opportunity. Of course, if other towns had wanted to do the same thing, they could have filed similar legislation. They didn't.

The lack of such action should not prevent East Hampton residents from electing to embrace the proposal if they choose to do so. Assemblyman Fred Thiele has rewritten the legislation to overcome the governor's objections. Thiele, in reacting to Pataki's veto, said

the governor was "trolling for campaign donations" from real estate developers in vetoing the East Hampton legislation.

Governor Pataki is avidly seeking to gain approval of the proposed LILCO-LIPA deal, which has been strongly criticized and opposed by a host of experts and concerned citizens.

Initially, he indicated a willingness to make necessary changes in the deal to ease the criticism, but has since refused to do so. His failure to sign the county's sales tax bill has raised questions as to his motivation. He may well be, as Thiele has charged, "trolling" for political contributions from those who will be enriched by the deal.

And, because the threat of the \$1.2 billion tax certiorari award has been the engine that is driving the deal, he may be concerned that if the county assumes the financial liability, there would be no valid reason to go forward with the disastrous terms of the LILCO-LIPA proposal.

There are some who claim the bill is not yet signed because it is being held up in the senate and has not been sent to Pataki for his signature. Another view holds that the delay in signing is due to Pataki's anger that the county legislators approved a referendum on the deal that will appear on the November ballot. Whatever the reason, there is a savings for Suffolk residents of over \$600 million that is at stake here. If Rizzo's plan dies because of Albany's charades, there's going to be hell to pay in next year's state elections.

The majority of our state senators have either been supportive of the LILCO-LIPA deal or have been involved in a conspiracy of silence, ducking the issue.

The Rizzo plan does not concern the deal, it focuses on the court-ordered tax certiorari award (based on overassessment by Brookhaven Town) of the Shoreham nuclear power plant. It seeks to resolve the tax certiorari problem in a manner that would save taxpayers more than \$600 million from the cost of the settlement proposal in the deal.

If the bill is not signed, that extra \$600 million will come from the ratepayers' pockets. We would strongly suggest that our state senators take whatever action is necessary to move the bill out of the senate, if indeed it is stalled there, and to impress upon the governor the importance of signing this bill.

If this does not happen, our do-nothing legislators and governor will feel the impact at the polls next year.

And why not?



Do You Want Change?

The voters of New York State have an opportunity to enact a Constitutional Convention by voting "Yes" on the proposition question this coming November.

Every 20 years, the residents of New York State are empowered to call for a Constitutional Convention. The purpose of a Constitutional Convention is to study the current Constitution and how New York State government is run.

The delegates, who are chosen by the voters from around the state, are free to examine any issue governed by the Constitution. Those delegates debate the issues and then vote what to change and what not to change. Any changes are then presented to the voters of the entire state for their approval or rejection.

A Constitution Convention can be grassroots democracy in action. New York State has a whole host of problems that need fixing.

Repeatedly, we have asked our state legislature to address these issues and they have failed us. Such items as having Initiative and Referendum rights for this state, on-time budgets, term limitations, school choice or vouchers, tenure reform and binding arbitration, and the list goes on. A Constitutional Convention can address all of these items and more.

Grassroots organizations such as "We The People" have sprung up across the state, encouraging a "Yes" vote.

A coalition of unions, the National

Organization for Women, the League of Women Voters, and environmental groups are opposing the convention. Most of these are special interest groups which benefit from government as it is.

We find it strange that the League of Women Voters has joined this coalition in its opposition. The league has spoken out on several occasions about the many shortfalls in our state government, particularly regarding election reform.

To deny the people an opportunity to fix their state government through the democratic process undermines the value of the league. You would think they would encourage every opportunity for the citizens to participate in their government rather than to leave it to the political establishment.

Suffolk Life is a firm supporter of holding a Constitutional Convention. We are proud to be sponsoring five debates, to be held throughout Suffolk County, so that you, the informed voter, can listen to both sides discuss the advantages and what they see as the disadvantages of democracy in action.

The debates will be held in Hampton Bays on October 14, Northport on October 15, Lindenhurst on October 16, Selden on October 20, and in Smithtown on October 21.

We hope to see you at the debates. And why not?

Fix The State First

New York State Senator Kenneth P. LaValle intends to propose bills to revamp the Suffolk County Legislature. We think he would have the common sense to take care of his home turf, the Legislature of the State of New York, before he meddled in the Suffolk County Legislature.

For starters, if Senator LaValle wants reform, he can start with the state budget and the budget-making process. The New York State budget is supposed to be completed by April. This year, the Fourth of July came and went and the state still did not have a budget.

LaValle, a veteran senator, has about as much input into the budget as you or I. The budget is negotiated almost exclusively by the senate minority leader, the assembly majority leader and the governor.

Most senators and assembly members are locked out of the process. There is little or no floor debate, and when a deal is finally struck, the budget is passed in the wee hours of the morning without the assembly or senate having an opportunity to read or examine the document and figure out the ramifications.

Assembly members and senators do exactly as their leaders tell them, never questioning or daring to disobey. For years, LaValle has lived with this system and he has never been noted to either complain or try to reform it.

It's ironic that he now complains about the Suffolk County Legislature, often a funny farm, but usually responsive to the people.

The Suffolk County Legislature is not in lock-step with the dictates of the political leaders. There is independent thinking and a willingness to fight for the residents

of Suffolk County.

The one positive aspect of LaValle's meddling is his suggestion for a bicameral legislature. The legislature would be made up of two bodies—one body would be composed of town supervisors, the other body would be made up of legislators elected from equal population districts.

This would give two forms of representation to the people and facilitate the coordination between the towns and the county. It's worth exploring.

And why not?

WILLMOTTS & WHY NOTS

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It's Their Debt, Not Ours

Proponents of the LILCO-LIPA deal are claiming that under their scheme the public will assume LILCO's debt, refinance it with tax free bonds, and because of the difference in interest and the avoidance of federal income taxes, there will be savings.

This is a nice scenario until you stop to think about it. LILCO's debt is its debt. Why should we take it on? LILCO incurred that debt on behalf of the corporation so it could profit from its investment.

LILCO was never intended for the ratepayers to share in those profits.

LILCO built a nuclear power plant that was never opened. LILCO spent \$4.5 billion to build this plant. Out of the \$4.5 billion, \$1.8 billion was ruled an "imprudent" expenditure and therefore, by law, the value of the plant was reduced by that amount.

Ratepayers, during construction, paid \$3.5 billion through CWIP (Construction While In Process) funds and FSA (Financial Stability Adjustment) payments. That is \$700 million more than LILCO was entitled to recover.

LILCO supporters ignore these facts and calculate that the ratepayers contributed nothing toward the construction of the Shoreham plant.

The deal former Governor Cuomo worked out with LILCO to close Shoreham gave the company annual rate increases of 5% per year for three years. After the first three years, under the LILCO-Cuomo deal, there was only a "plan" to keep the corporation fiscally sound. There was no legal contract or binding obligation.

LILCO collected in excess of \$2 billion through Shoreham rate adjustments between the time that the Cuomo deal was cut and today.

LILCO was supposed to use the Shoreham rate increases to pay down its debt. It did not. LILCO used the money for dividends to bolster its stock prices. Now

LILCO has come back and wants to resell us the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant for the third time. The debt that LILCO is burdened by is its debt, it is not the public's.

How many times can you sell the same house? The folks at LIPA want to buy Shoreham again. They also want to buy another turkey: the Nine Mile Point 2 nuclear power plant upstate—another disaster. They want you, the ratepayers, to convert LILCO's problems into your own. They want you to permanently and legally assume all LILCO's losses by becoming responsible for guaranteeing the payment of an estimated \$23 billion worth of bonds and interest. They want to close the door on any competition that will force the reduction of utility rates in the future.

The average ratepayer's share of paying back this bonded indebtedness will be \$23,000. If bonds run for 30 years, we will annually pay \$766 or over \$63 per month for the privilege of having electricity. Proponents argue we are paying more than this rate right now.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) can change this immediately by performing its fiduciary responsibility and disallowing part of the debt that LILCO claims we owe.

At the start of this controversy, *Suffolk Life* and many others asked the PSC and LIPA to provide us with an audited report that showed exactly how much the ratepayers have contributed to the cost of Shoreham, specifically, how much was paid in for financial stability payments, CWIP funds and rate increases allowed, based upon Shoreham's costs. This information has never been forthcoming and without it, all the numbers that are being thrown around are worthless.

The least that the public is entitled to is the truth, and so far, we have not heard it.

And why not?

Leadership By Example

Finally an inventory of the County cars has been developed. The number of cars assigned to each part of the government has been revealed. In total, Suffolk County maintains about 2,685 automobiles.

Going down the list, we noted that the Suffolk County Legislature has 26 cars assigned to it. There are only 18 legislators.

As the County Legislators came in for interviews, we asked them where the additional cars were assigned. No one had a clue.

Legislator David Bishop has not taken a car and he is to be congratulated. The other 17 legislators indicated that they drive their cars between 5,000 and 10,000 miles per year.

When asked why they need a car, most admitted they could do without one but it was a perk that was there for the taking, and they took it.

It appears that Suffolk County may have a short fall of \$50 million to \$100 mil-

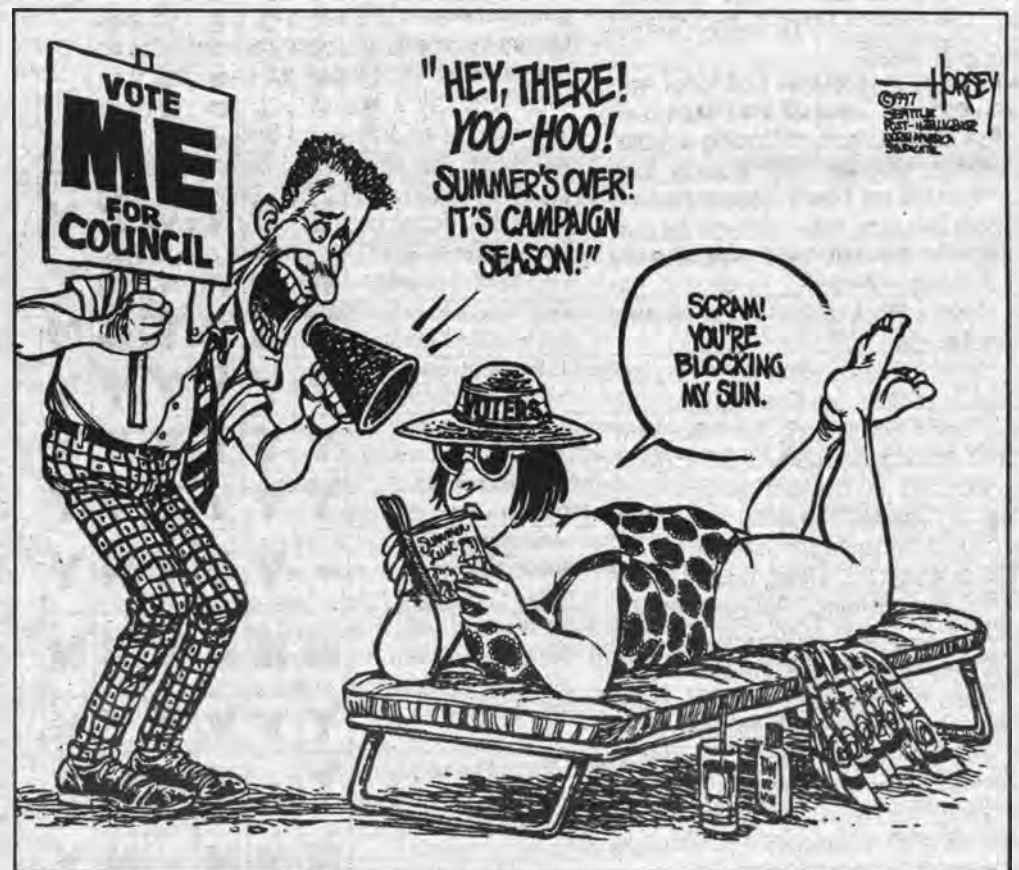
lion this year. The legislature's Budget Review Office is in the process of analyzing County Executive Gaffney's budget and has already found a number of items which were not included in it or revenues they believe are over projected.

Gaffney's original budget calls for a 7% tax increase and preliminary work by BRO indicates that it will have to be close to 9% if the budget stands.

The legislature is going to have to take a scalpel to the budget if it is going to avoid a tax increase. Waste is going to have to be cut out of the budget, perks eliminated.

A good place for the legislature to start is to eliminate cars for legislators. Obviously, by the mileage most legislators put on their cars, a vehicle is not a necessity. Legislators can lead by example by giving up these perks. They are going to have to ask all other departments to cut back; let them do it first.

And why not?



Killing Democracy On A Technicality

Judge Cannavo ruled that the LILCO-LIPA question on the ballot is improper because of a technicality. The judge's actions thwart the will of the people. It denies us our right to vote on this critical issue.

The judge ruled that the people would not be able to understand the question. That we would not understand the underlying changes to the Suffolk County Charter which was the heart and soul of the question.

The LILCO-LIPA question has been feverishly debated for well over two months. It has been the subject of intense publicity and debate.

Suffolk County residents understand the question. They also understand that the amendments to the Suffolk County Charter would have instructed and empowered the Suffolk County Legislature to not only oppose the deal but to take legal action if the deal became a reality that did not live up to the guarantee or promises made by LIPA and state officials.

As the deal is structured now, the proponents can promise anything and deliver nothing. It has the freedom to increase rates up to 2.5% every year without going to any public body for approval.

LIPA is an authority only answerable

to its bond holders. Its sole purpose is not to deliver electricity but to deliver interest on the bonds. When technology allows individuals to generate their own electricity, by passing LIPA, sales will fall and rates will have to be raised to pay the interest on those bonds.

The Charter Amendment would have allowed for oversight and the holding of LIPA's feet to the fire. If the residents had an opportunity to vote on this proposition, they would have built in safeguards.

We believe this ruling was a terrible mistake because it disenfranchised the

residents of Suffolk County. We have never had a voice on Shoreham, LILCO or

LIPA. This was the only opportunity we would have had to vote on this issue.

Judge Cannavo disenfranchised us. He has taken democracy out of our hands and left us in a state of feeling very un-American.

Corporate greed is triumphing over democracy. It appears the check book has won.

Cannavo's decision is being appealed. Let's pray that the Appellate Court will show more common sense and respect for our Constitution.

And why not?

“ Judge Cannavo...has taken democracy out of our hands and left us in a state of feeling very un-American. ”

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The LIPA Alternative

LIPA supporters have constantly argued there is no alternative to the proposed takeover of LILCO. They are wrong, and they know they are wrong.

Last week, we outlined how ratepayers could be enjoying a minimum 9.5% rate decrease, today. A year ago last August, after hearings, the staff of the Public Service Commission recommended that the PSC order a 5.5% decrease in LILCO's rates effective September, 1996.

Governor Pataki had the PSC put this on his agenda because of the LILCO-LIPA negotiations.

In effect, Governor Pataki has caused you to pay 5.5% more in electrical rates over the last 14 months than you should have. If he had allowed this reduction, his deal would not look as good.

When the LILCO-BUG (Brooklyn Union Gas) merger is completed, the synergy savings will amount to 3%. The New York State Legislature reduced the gross receipts tax by 25%. Essentially, this will reduce electrical rates another 1%. That brings the total rate reduction to 9.5%.

Con Edison recently announced that it will be cutting New York City's electrical rates by 10%. This was negotiated by the PSC under the state's competitive energy plan. Because the LIPA deal has been pending, LILCO has not had to come up with a competitive energy plan.

In last Friday's *New York Times*, Enron, a large energy company from Texas, has a proposal before the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission to take

over PECO's electrical energy customers in the Philadelphia area. Enron will assume \$5.5 billion in PECO costs and reduce the cost of energy by 20%.

We are in a world of deregulation and competition, but Long Island will be excluded as long as the proposed LIPA deal is pending.

ICE has presented LIPA with a plan that will bring about 20% to 30% rate reductions for LILCO customers. It's based on competition and the stockholders assuming part of the liability for the company's mismanagement.

This coming Friday, Assemblyman Paul Tonka, head of the New York State Legislature's Energy Committee, will hold a public hearing on Long Island to explore alternatives to the LILCO-LIPA plan.

We have been privy to and have read over one plan that will be presented. It is now being reviewed by utility experts and Wall Street economists.

First reports back indicate that the plan will work and will save ratepayers 45% on electrical rates. Details of the plan will be revealed at the legislative hearing.

We are enthusiastic about the plan, which offers an opportunity to end the Shoreham fiasco once and for all, to bring genuine rate relief to Long Island consumers in a sensible, logical scenario. It precludes the need for LIPA. It's free enterprise at its best.

There are alternatives to the LILCO bailout, and they will be revealed.

And why not?

Let The Debates Begin!

Suffolk Life is proud to be hosting a series of debates on the issue of whether we, the people, should enact a Constitutional Convention this coming year.

Question "one" on this year's ballot is "Shall there be a convention to revise the [state] Constitution and amend the same?"

Every 20 years, the citizens of the State of New York are granted the right to call for a Constitutional Convention. The people are given the privilege of looking at the entire Constitution, to see what's working, what is not, and then to recommend changes to fix this document which governs our lives.

The convention is free to tackle any of the tough questions the state legislature has shied away from. Delegates chosen by the people can look at those controversial issues that politicians run from.

There are three delegates from each

senatorial district. They need not, and should not, be existing office holders. There are also 15 delegates who are elected at large from throughout the state.

After the Constitutional Convention has met, debated and voted on amendments or changes, the public is given an opportunity to adopt or reject these provisions.

The changes can be presented to the voters item by item or they can be given in their entirety for an up or down vote.

The Constitutional Convention is, and should be, grassroots

democracy in action.

Turn out, listen to the debaters present both sides of the argument and then make up your mind and vote November 4 on Ballot Question #1.

And why not?



Eliminate Slush Fund

The pig crawled out of the bag this week during our interviews with the Suffolk County Legislative candidates.

It has recently come to light that the legislators, in their infinite wisdom, created a \$65,000 slush fund for each of the 18 legislators.

The little porkers gifted themselves with this money to give it out in the district and assist them in buying votes. The piglets argued long and hard trying to justify this legislative pork. They argued that their counterparts in the state gave themselves \$450 million to distribute in member item grants.

"If the senior piglets can do it and get away with it, why shouldn't the farm team be allowed to do it? And furthermore...we are only using \$1.2 million of taxpayers' money to feed Suffolk's trough."

Each legislator with \$65,000 worth of pork can choose the designees for this money. From what we can gather, there is no criteria, prioritization or accountability

for the money.

The legislators can give the money to a school band in one part of the district and nothing to another school band in the same legislative district. This is neither fair nor equitable, and is not needed.

Some of these elected officials have suggested that this year each legislator will only be allowed \$25,000 in slush fund money and they will have to take the cost of their newsletters and mailings out of that money.

We suppose \$25,000 is better than the \$65,000 in previous years, but with a \$50 million to \$100 million deficit in the county budget, and the threat of an 8% to 10% increase in real estate taxes, we say get rid of it all.

County government should be providing essential services. It should not be spending taxpayers' money on community organizations. Oink, Oink.

And why not?

Looking For Tax Reform

Americans were recently fed a steady dose of the horrors imposed by the Internal Revenue Service. At the senate hearings held in Washington, witness after witness described the terror tactics and how they were forced to pay taxes they did not owe. Some lost homes, businesses and even lives because of the ordeals they suffered.

The IRS, as it is now structured, is judge, jury and executioner. Contrary to the American system of justice, at the IRS, you are guilty until you can prove yourself innocent.

Filing tax returns is a nightmare. The rules are so complicated that even trained IRS agents make mistakes. Studies have been conducted using the same set of figures where respected accounting firms calculated the taxes and came out with different results. There has got to be a better way for the government to collect the money to fund itself.

Last year, Steve Forbes was a primary candidate for president. He stomped from one side of this country to another

promoting a flat tax. His idea seemed attractive, a 13% to 17% tax on all income, no deductions or gimmicks. Calculate what you made or earned and send in a check.

This would effectively abolish the IRS and all its rules and regulations. It would eliminate loopholes that the ultra-wealthy hide behind, not paying their fair share. It would put everyone on a level playing field, paying the same percentage, based on earnings.

Another proposal to eliminate the income tax is the creation of a national sales tax, a straightforward tax on everything that is sold. This is less appealing, but would also end the nightmare of the IRS.

Congress is in the mood for tax reform and elimination of the IRS. A good, healthy debate on these two issues and a flushing out of the facts is long overdue. This should be top priority when congress goes back to work after the new year.

And why not?

WILLMOTTS & WHY NOTS

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Vote 'Yes' On Constitutional Convention

Question 1

to convene a Constitutional Convention every 20 years if they so desire. The original authors of the New York State Constitution recognized that times change and the document they wrote may need to be periodically revised and amended to serve the best interests of the citizens.

If we, the voters, approve the question on November 4, in next year's election, three delegates from each senatorial district will be selected by the people. Fifteen delegates will be chosen at large from throughout the state.

After the election, those delegates will convene, debate and discuss the Constitution. They will explore possible changes to the Constitution that will reform government, eliminating the archaic ills and bringing us into the next millennium. The delegates will vote on each issue and those that are approved will be presented

to the voters for final ratification.

There are massive problems with New York State government. We are one of the few states that do not have Initiative and Referendum. Because of that, it is difficult for citizens to petition the government for change and reform.

We do not have term limits and as a result New York State legislators are continually kept in office. Rarely are they adequately challenged as they have the perks of office for constituent service, free mailings and access to the media.

The governor and the legislature have been unable to agree on a budget on time, which causes massive delays and extra taxation on local municipalities and school districts.

There is a whole host of problems

throughout the state which the legislature refuses to address. A Constitutional Convention will give "we, the people," an opportunity to bring back government to its grassroots level.

There are groups opposed to the Constitutional Convention; they like the status quo. They enjoy the success of their lobbyists and being able to buy legislators at will. The current system feeds their trough and they do not want any interference.

Once the Constitutional Convention is passed, it will be up to us to find acceptable delegates among the people. The last thing we want is established politicians dominating the convention. This will be a battle for next year. This year, make sure you turn out to vote, and vote "Yes."

And why not?

QUESTION NUMBER ONE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Shall there be a convention to revise the constitution and amend the same?

Question One on the November 4 ballot asks the voters whether they want to hold a Constitutional Convention to revise and amend the state's Constitution.

We urge the voters to emphatically pull down the "Yes" lever.

New York State law allows the citizens

Vote 'No' On \$2.4 Billion School Bond Act.

Proposal 3

New York State already has one of the highest levels of debt in the union. Our children and our grandchildren are already indebted for billions of dollars. The Albany politicians now ask us to approve a \$2.4 billion bond issue, allegedly to be used for schools.

Unbelievable as it may be, there is no plan for the expenditure of this money, there are no criteria either. The Albany politicians are asking for a blank check that will cost almost \$8 billion to pay back over the next 30 years.

The Wall Street financiers are jumping with joy because they will have another instrument to derive big commissions from.

New York City Democratic Assembly Majority Leader Sheldon Silver is licking his chops. He is the author of this bond issue and you can bet your sweet bippy a major portion of the funds will be used for him in New York City—to keep New York City Democratic.

If the school districts throughout the state had been given criteria and asked to develop a list of construction projects they anticipated needing and the bond issue was based on a set plan, it might make some sense.

This bond issue is ill-conceived and, if it is successful, will do little more than to create a huge pot of pork.

The bond issue should be resoundingly turned down by the voters.

Vote "No" on Proposition 3.

And why not?

PROPOSAL NUMBER THREE, A PROPOSITION SCHOOL FACILITY HEALTH AND SAFETY BOND ACT OF 1997

Shall section one of chapter 328 the laws of 1997 known as the school facility health and safety bond act of 1997, which promotes the health and safety of the children of New York and provides for critical projects related to construction, expansion and moderation of public school facilities, by authorizing the creation of state debt to provide monies therefor in the same amount of \$2.4 billion be approved?

Vote 'Yes' On County's LIPA Opposition

Proposal 4

There is only a slim chance that Proposition 4 will be on the ballot. Governor Pataki's political operatives had this question knocked off the ballot in court. The opinion is being appealed, but there is only one chance in a hundred that further appeals will be successful.

There are those who say the system is wired and that democracy has been subverted.

Proposition 4 directs Suffolk County to actively oppose the LILCO-LIPA takeover. A "Yes" vote indicates that you support this direction. The proposition also mandates, if the deal were to go through, that the county use its full force and resources to hold LIPA's feet to the fire, making sure it lives up to its promises. This is key, because LIPA is an authority and is not answerable to any other form of govern-

ment, nor will it have any form of oversight.

LIPA's only obligation is to the bond holders. LIPA has to make sure there is enough revenue being generated to ensure the integrity of the bonds and pay the interest that will be due. What ratepayers are charged is of little concern.

Under the LIPA agreement, it can raise rates up to 2.49% each year without having to go to the Public Service Commission or any other oversight board. The deal is extremely unfair to the ratepayers, saddling them with more than a 30-year mortgage that will require the average ratepayer to pay back \$23,000. This comes down to \$63 per month before a cent of electricity is calculated.

The deal rewards LILCO for the risk it took on Shoreham. It allows the company to recover its investment as if the plant was up and operating.

The proposed deal also leaves LILCO as the manager of the LIPA for 15 years and mandates that we buy all our electricity from LILCO.

The plan relieves LILCO of its obligation to the Nine Mile Point 2 nuclear plant upstate and leaves the ratepayers with the responsibility of picking up another bad investment.

Proponents claim there will be a 17% rate savings, but independent experts (including the New York State Assembly Committee on Energy) find there will only

be an 8% savings. The plan ignores the changes in technology and the advantages of free competition.

This past week, respected economist Charles Studness revealed his "Free Enterprise Plan," which is similar to the plans approved by the Public Service Commissions in the states of California and Massachusetts which bring about real competition and lower electrical rates of up to 45%.

This is not a pipe dream, it is a carefully crafted plan that allows LILCO to earn its way out of its deficit each year for the next eight years, reducing the consumers' cost of electricity by 3% per year.

The plan has been looked over by three different economic experts in energy and utilities. They found the plan sound and workable. Their only criticism was that it was too conservative and should be done over six years.

LIPA officials dismissed the plan out of hand without even reading it, which gives you some idea of what will come if LIPA takes over LILCO. LILCO opposed the plan, as expected, because it means that it will have to work for its profits instead of just adding them to the consumers' bills.

Competition is coming in a big way. Self-generation will be common before the first 10 years of the deal have gone by. Because people will be able to generate electricity substantially cheaper than LIPA

can provide, demand will go down and this will lead to higher and higher rates.

Eventually, we will reach a point where LIPA will force the municipalities to levy real estate or sales taxes to make up for the shortfall.

The LIPA plan is one of financial disaster. Even though our right to vote has been stolen from us, we must still continue to fight.

Ironically, our best hope now is the IRS, which must levy a \$17.32 additional tax on every taxpayer in the United States by excusing it from paying \$2 billion on windfall profits.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is charged with deregulating the utility industries across the United States in order to bring about competition. Staff is reported to be very upset by the deal.

If our congressional delegation can get its act together, it can demand hearings on Long Island. If the LIPA plan is subjected to the light of day in FERC hearings, it will be defeated.

The question is, are the IRS and FERC wired? Has LIPA been able to unjustly influence these agencies? If so, who is responsible? During the next year we are sure the culprits will be revealed.

In the meantime, if by chance Proposition 4 finds its way on the ballot, be sure to vote "Yes." It's your pocketbook, it should not be LILCO's.

And why not?

PROPOSAL NUMBER FOUR, A PROPOSAL

Shall A Charter Law Directing Suffolk County to Actively Oppose the LILCO/LIPA Takeover Plan Be Approved? (Res. No. 636-1997)

WILLMOTTS & WHY NOTS ENDORSEMENTS

DAVID J. WILLMOTT SR., EDITOR



Southold Town Council

John Romanelli (R,C) Ruth Oliva (D,US)



John Romanelli

Over the past few years, Southold's town board has become entrenched in playing politics instead of representing the resi-

dents of this quiet town.

Elected officials have been more concerned about their own private agendas instead of researching and then voting on issues according to the facts. That has seriously damaged the egalitarian reputation Southold once enjoyed.

This is Southold's opportunity to eliminate another portion of that less savory form of government. Instead of having a government run by bullies who want things done their way instead of the people's way, a simple vote could change everything.

John Romanelli is the newest and freshest voice in Southold politics. He is a businessman who believes the environment should be cherished as much as the economic growth of the town. He also believes the residents of this town should be represented by people who honestly believe in good government.

He is a fiscal conservative who would like to see compatible businesses located in Southold to increase the tax base and cut taxes. He is willing to back that position up by supporting at least partial tax abatements to encourage clean

industry in Southold. Most specifically, he is looking to represent the residents of Southold, to accomplish the goals of the tax-

payers, without hiding behind closed doors in secret meetings.

Ruth Oliva does not have much independence to offer. On most issues, she is a follower who can be easily led, except for the environment. Ruth has a very long and impressive history of working to protect the environment of Southold.

As one of the first presidents of the North Fork Environmental Council during the early eighties, Oliva has been a major player when it comes to the environment.

When she ran in the late eighties, she promised to continue to be a watchdog for the town's many environmental issues, from waterways to open space. She has been the most consistent voice on this issue and actually demanded the state and county participate with the town to resolve problems at Goldsmith Inlet and Kenny's Beach, or the Mattituck Inlet.

When it comes to the other issues, however, she would be wise to work with Romanelli and other town board members who are serious about providing Southold with one simple thing: good government.

We endorse Romanelli and Oliva.



Ruth Oliva

industry into Southold Town, but that appears to be what Southold wants. Cochran has been a strong advocate of preservation.

Cochran spent a lot of productive years on the town board representing the people. She has spent the past two years mending Southold's wounds and gearing up to move forward in the best interest of the public. She has the experience to lead Southold into the future.

We endorse Jean Cochran.

Jean Cochran...

FROM Page 1

While claiming to want to preserve the open space environment of the North Fork, Wickham unsuccessfully attempted to push TDR legislation through the town board that would have benefited developers but would not have provided open space preservation. Despite the fact that his family has been in farming for generations, almost no preservation happened under Wickham's tenure. The residents of Southold do not need this again.

Neither candidate is looking to bring major

Shelter Island Supervisor

Harold McGee (R,C)



Harold E. McGee

After working for many years as negotiator for New England Telephone and AT&T, Hal McGee should be instrumental in helping the town move through its ongoing comprehensive planning and development.

We expect him to help maintain the Shelter Island Town Board's direction toward providing a comprehensive plan which will enable the town to preserve land, while controlling development to maintain the island's rich rural character.

We also expect McGee to become a people's supervisor, by being responsive to the public's everyday needs and concerns as well as the overall development of the town and surrounding

waterways.

McGee's opponent, Gerry Siller said that one of the reasons he should be elected to the supervisor's chair is because he brings "youth and energy" to table. But we think that vitality might be better off in the next election when Siller can run for a council seat, gain experience on the board, and then pursue the chair of supervisor.

Siller has presented his issues in a competent campaign and he would make a diligent public official who would listen to the people, make tough decisions, and get the information needed to the people.

However, Siller's views and ideas correlate with what has already been established or is in the process of being established by McGee and the current town board.

Suffolk Life is endorsing McGee because he is an experienced businessman, an avid community member, and has shown a strong element of leadership as a six-year councilman.

Shelter Island Council

Sharon Kast (R,C) Glenn W. Waddington (D,IA)



Sharon Kast

The continuing trend of preserving and planning for the future of Shelter Island has been moving forward at a steady pace with the current town board.

Incumbents

Sharon Kast and Glenn Waddington have provided leadership and focus on both the short and long term goals of the town.

Kast has been a strong advocate of preservation and her drive to maintain the remaining open space in Shelter Island is impressive. She is adamant about protecting the island's natural surroundings and has consistently offered a powerful voice for the residents.

Waddington has focused on the town's comprehensive plan, providing housing for senior citizens, addressing second homeowner issues and planning for the next generation. He likes to be referred to as the "nuts and bolts councilman," and as long as he follows that philosophy, Shelter Island is in good hands.

Neither Kast nor Waddington have completed all they set out to do, therefore we expect them to continue to provide leadership and openness to the people of Shelter Island.

We are not endorsing Garth Griffin because the two incumbents have been doing their job.

However, we do endorse the idea of appointing him to the town board if current councilman Hal McGee is elected to the office of supervisor. Griffin, we think, will make a strong council member and should fill the remaining two years of McGee's term.

Griffin's views and ideas regarding the development and control of the town's beaches and waterways would work well with Kast's and Waddington's. This makes him a strong third candidate. The experience he could bring to the board will help round out the town's push to remain a tourist destination while being a place to raise a family.



Glenn Waddington

First Legislative District

Michael Caracciolo (R,C,I, RTL)

Michael Caracciolo

Known for his independence, Mike Caracciolo has represented his district staunchly and has not been afraid of controversy. He has a history of willingness to stick his neck out to benefit his constituents.

As chairman of the county's Energy and Environment Committee, Caracciolo has been instrumental in making sure the county has been active in informing the public about the tritium contamination at Brookhaven National Laboratory. At his insistence, the county was allowed by the federal government to put two full-time environmental engineers on the site to oversee contamination monitoring and cleanup operations at the federal facility.

Caracciolo is not without contradiction, however. In one area of *Suffolk Life's* questionnaire, he advocates saving money by requiring that employees work 40-hour weeks, police work 10-hour shifts four days a week, eliminating positions through attrition, selling excess county property, modifying the police department's binding arbitration

process, and reducing public relations activities.

In other questions, he supported spending a "significant" amount of taxpayers' money to advertise the positive aspects of Suffolk County and to promote commercial and sports fishing, opposes restricting the county executive from switching funds arbitrarily, and opposes the hiring of civilians for non-enforcement jobs in the police department.

He has been a strong opponent of the proposed LILCO-LIPA deal, demanding that LIPA and LILCO representatives come before the county's Energy and Environment Committee to explain the proposal, but fell short as that committee's chairman in the argument for subpoena powers. We were also disappointed that his committee declined to release a public statement on its findings from those LILCO-LIPA hearings.

His opponent, Louis Passantino, is running for county legislature for the first time. His answers to our questionnaire, for the most part, mirrored Caracciolo's. Passantino is dedicated, sincere, and willing to do the job, but he made no case for replacing the incumbent.

Suffolk Life endorses Mike Caracciolo for reelection.

Suffolk County Sheriff

Pat Mahoney (R,D,C,RTL)

Once again, it is a pleasure to endorse incumbent Republican Pat Mahoney for Suffolk County Sheriff. This time around, Mahoney was cross endorsed by the Democrats, the Conservatives and Right to Life.

Mahoney, who is being challenged by Independence candidate Benjamin Russo, is a former police union representative with more than 20 years on the force and a former Suffolk legislator.

When he first took office, his department was in disarray. Since then he has established a strong working relationship with his deputy sheriffs and correction wardens.

He quickly established an in-house drug and alcohol rehabilitation program for the inmates—who are largely dependent on those vices—and that program has shown some significant success.

He was also responsible for reinforcing several other programs, including the expansion of services for victims of domestic violence, the Sheriff's Labor Assistance Program (SLAP) and the Youth Enlightenment Seminars (YES),

which offer an inside view of being incarcerated. These youths are taken behind bars, locked up, and put in contact with real convicts. The students get a taste of what can happen to them if they go wrong. This experience has saved many kids.

Mahoney claims to have aggressively worked to reduce overtime. He claims the county executive has refused to provide him with the necessary staff that would eliminate overtime completely. There is some truth to this, but we do believe Mahoney could have done more to harness his department's overtime.

Mahoney could have requested the civilianization of more jobs held by sheriffs. He could have established a cross-training system so that both wardens' and sheriffs' duties could be intermingled.

Hopefully, upon reelection, Mahoney will institute some vision and imagination in running the jail.

Suffolk Life endorses Pat Mahoney because he is the better of the two candidates.

District Attorney

James Catterson (R,C,I,RTL)

James Catterson

The powers of the District Attorney are enormous. A District Attorney has the ability to affect every taxpayer and put the fear of God in the public's heart.

James Catterson is seeking his third four-year term. He has piled up a credible record of convictions over his tenure. He has come up with innovative programs working in conjunction with the police to rid communities of undesirables, troublemakers and common criminals.

Catterson has ruffled the feathers of political insiders by investigating when allegations of wrongdoing were made. Although he is part of the "good old boy" network, he has forcefully demonstrated that he will go after the members if there is any appearance of impropriety. This has earned him anger and malignment.

Catterson has put together a highly capable staff that is partially responsible for the drop in crime in Suffolk County. This staff is loyal and motivated.

Catterson has refused to play the games that *Newsday* demands and, as a result, has earned its wrath.

The district attorney's office has 142 attorneys, plus another 228 in support personnel. With a \$20 million budget, it

is no small operation.

His opponent, Theodore Scharfenberg, argues that Catterson has destroyed the integrity of the district attorney's office because he allegedly abused his power when he reportedly threatened several political figures with grand jury investigations if they opposed him on particular issues, he charged that it was unethical for Catterson to have been involved, even slightly, with the county's car leasing fiasco, and other issues that would have damaged Catterson's reelection bid, had Scharfenberg been able to present documentation to support those claims.

Scharfenberg is a bright attorney who served under the district attorney for a number of years. Currently, he is in private practice, managing a small firm.

In our interview with the two candidates, Scharfenberg did not come across as aggressive enough, and clearly demonstrated he was no match for Catterson. He lacks the experience to run an operation as large as the Suffolk County District Attorney's office. He offered very few innovations on how he would do the job better or why he was a better choice.

From *Suffolk Life's* perspective, we are better off dealing with a person we know rather than taking a chance on a neophyte.

Suffolk Life endorses James Catterson for Suffolk County District Attorney.

Suffolk County Treasurer

John Cochrane (R,C)

Democrat Susan LeBow rightly points out there is a need for more women in the higher echelons of county government. But is that enough reason to make her treasurer? We do not think so.

During his first four years as treasurer, Republican John Cochrane, a former assemblyman and county GOP chairman, has done a more than credible job of both protecting taxpayer money and computerizing one of the largest treasurer's departments in New York State.

Cochrane deserves credit for the computerization of the Suffolk County Treasurer's office and how he accomplished this monumental task.

Cochrane, calling on his Navy experience, broke the treasurer's office into segments. He made a deal with Suffolk County Community College to teach computer courses in-house. Each day, over several months, a different segment of the department was instructed, leaving the other segments to keep the office rolling. This innovative approach saved a tremendous amount of money and kept chaos to a minimum.

LeBow faulted him for allegedly not processing the illegal late tax refunds to the residents who had

been victimized. LeBow's anger should have been directed at the county executive and the legislature. They were responsible for these illegal charges and when the legislature was confronted with the court decision that they had to refund those who had paid the illegal penalty "under protest," they did not provide the treasurer with the funds to accomplish this goal.

When the legislature was faced with a howl of protest from those who had paid the illegal fines but did not note on their checks that they were paying "under protest," the legislature decided to refund everybody. They still did not provide Cochrane with the funding needed to accomplish this goal.

Using his new computer system and temporary work fare and share fare personnel, Cochrane was able to execute most of the refunds in a timely fashion.

Also, through research and negotiation, Cochrane has moved county revenues to depositories that provide greater interest rates and no longer charge outrageous ATM fees.

While LeBow is indeed a worthy candidate, we think Cochrane deserves another term at the helm.

Suffolk Life endorses John Cochrane.