

ASSEMBLYMAN

Fred W. Thiele, Jr.



Reports to the People

2021 LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

The 2021-22 enacted State Budget presented a sound and balanced spending plan to help accelerate New York's progress in its comeback from the COVID-19 pandemic. I am pleased to share with you some of the local projects and initiatives across the 1st Assembly District that have benefitted from State funding.



Welcome Back -- South Fork Commuter Connection

Investments in transportation are critical to getting the economy moving again. On September 7th, the South Fork Commuter Connection (SFCC) resumed services after being temporarily halted during the COVID-19 pandemic. The addition of \$500,000 in funding that I secured in this year's State Budget will help keep the SFCC's coordinated rail and bus system operating at full capacity so that East End workers continue to have a viable public transit option between Speonk and Montauk during peak commuting hours.



Restoring South Fork Highway Infrastructure

Across the state, municipalities and local governments struggle with aging transportation infrastructure in need of upkeep and repairs. South Fork highways are no exception. State funding is provided to maintain roads, bridges and highways in New York, including the NY114 re-paving project from Stephen Hands Path to the South Ferry and the resurfacing of Route 27 from South Etna Avenue to Montauk Point which will soon be under construction.



Enhancing the vista of the western gateway to downtown Montauk

On October 22nd, I joined with East Hampton Town Supervisor Peter Van Scoyoc to announce the Montauk Gateway Project, a partnership between the State and the Town to supplement an ongoing private effort to fund the undergrounding of utility lines along Old Montauk Highway. Pictured to my left are Montauk resident John Keeshan, East Hampton Town Supervisor Peter Van Scoyoc, East Hampton Town Councilwoman Kathee Burke-Gonzalez, Montauk resident Dan Cahill, Chris Hawks (PSEG-LI Design Engineer Supervisor), Vincent Frigeria (PSEG-LI Regional Public Affairs Manager), and East Hampton Town Councilman David Lys. Note: Photo is a rendering to indicate what the gateway to Montauk will look like once the project is completed.

Photo credit: Michael Heller



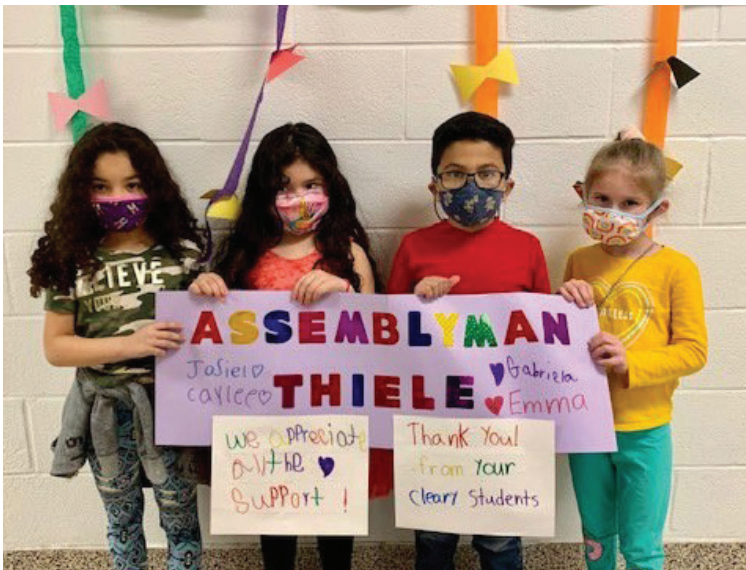
Sufficient funding to increase students' access to a quality education

To meet the fiscal challenges that were worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic, the final State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2021-22 budget made a \$29.1 billion investment to support public schools, an increase of \$3.1 billion, or 12%, over the last school year. Notably, every school district that I represent on the East End saw an increase in state education aid. Moreover, Foundation Aid was increased by \$1.4 billion for a total of \$19.8 billion and satisfies a full one-third of the State's three-year commitment to fulfill the Campaign for Fiscal Equity's obligation, for a total of \$4.2 billion. Districts will receive at least 60% of their Foundation Aid funding during this school year.



William Floyd Elementary students enjoy a safe path to school

On September 13th, I was proud to join Brookhaven Highway Superintendent Daniel Losquadro, William Floyd School District Superintendent Kevin Coster, and Principal Keith Fasciana to announce the completion of the installation of concrete sidewalks on roadways surrounding the William Floyd Elementary School. This project was made possible by funding that I secured through the State and Municipal Facilities Program to provide a safe pathway for students, their families and the community without having to place any burden on the taxpayers.



"Thank you!" from Cleary students

The Cleary School for the Deaf, located in Nesconsett, has become a vital resource in ensuring a high-quality education for deaf students across Long Island and within our East End community. I worked with many members of the Assembly Long Island Delegation to secure \$500,000 in funding to assist Cleary School in continuing its mission of equipping students with essential academic and life skills and preparing them for a successful future.



Continuing Stony Brook Southampton's transformation

Ever since the State University of New York purchased the property from the Long Island University in 2006, the Southampton campus has become a center of graduate education with marine sciences, fine arts, and health sciences at the core of its mission. Most recently, the campus celebrated the expansion of the Stony Brook School of Health Technology and Management's Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) program. I was pleased to nominate Stony Brook for a \$500,000 grant through the State and Municipal Facilities Program to help fund the restoration of the iconic Windmill which will be another step forward in securing the campus's future.



Strengthening Mental Health Services

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the demand for accessible programs to address the mental health consequences of this crisis, especially on Long Island's East End. To help better protect the mental health and well-being of our students, I was able to secure a total of \$350,000 in this year's State Budget that will be equally divided by the South Fork Behavioral Health Initiative and the North Fork Coalition for Behavioral Health. These are collaborative initiatives between school districts, Family Service League, Stony Brook Southampton, Stony Brook Eastern Long Island and Stony Brook University Hospitals, local governments and other local service agencies, that ensure critical mental health services are available close-to-home for struggling students and their families.



Protecting the Peconic Estuary

This year's approved spending plan invests \$1.84 billion in funding for the environment including \$500 million for clean water infrastructure and \$300 million for the New York State Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). I successfully advocated for the inclusion of \$450,000, which reflects a \$200,000 increase over last year's funding total, to support the further protection and restoration of the more than 125,000 land acres and 158,000 surface water acres that make up our prized Peconic Estuary.



Welcome Webelos

On June 30th I welcomed Southampton Cub Scout Pack (Webelos II Group) to my office in Sag Harbor to discuss my job duties as an elected official representing the 1st Assembly District.



Celebrating African American culture and heritage

Juneteenth weekend 2021 marked the grand opening of the Southampton African American Museum (SAAM). I was proud to secure state funding to support the restoration and renovation of SAAM's new home at 245 North Sea Road, Southampton. I joined with SAAM Executive Director Brenda Simmons, SAAM members and other Southampton Town officials at the ribbon cutting ceremony on June 18th.



Expanded opportunities for the Bridgehampton Child Care & Recreation Center

The Bridgehampton Child Care & Recreation Center (BCCRC) has long been a beacon in our community, offering educational and enrichment programs to students and serving as a dedicated lifeline to working families on the East End. I am a strong advocate and have sponsored capital grants and legislative initiatives to build upon its programming efforts. Last year, I was thrilled to join BCCRC Board members Paul Jeffers, Jr. and Dan Rattiner, BCCRC Executive Director Bonnie Cannon, then Lt. Governor Kathy Hochul, who at the time served as the Chair of the Statewide Regional Economic Development Council, Suffolk County Legislator Bridget Fleming and Suffolk County Town Supervisor Jay Schneiderman at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new building that will enable BCCRC to expand quality childcare offerings and support even more working families.

3350 Noyac Road, Building B, Sag Harbor, NY 11963



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REPORTS TO THE PEOPLE

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Assemblymember Fred W. Thiele, Jr.

DISTRICT OFFICE

3350 Noyac Road, Building B
Sag Harbor, New York 11963
631-537-2583



ALBANY OFFICE

837 Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12248
518-455-5997

EMAIL

thielef@nyassembly.gov