

STEVE BELLONE: PRIORITIZE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Making government more business friendly, as Steve Bellone has done in Babylon, is pivotal to attracting more high-paying jobs to Suffolk County. Lack of opportunity has led to higher costs, unsustainable debt, and left families throughout Suffolk with an unfair tax burden. Steve Bellone knows we can make Suffolk County an economic powerhouse by transforming government, making it more efficient and effective in building the foundation for strong economic growth in the private sector.

FOCUS ON JOBS

Suffolk County is a large and diverse place with varied economic landscapes from Huntington to East Hampton. At present, there is no central economic development policy or program focus, leaving towns competing against each other for economic development deals. As County Executive, Steve Bellone will:

Create a Regional Economic Development Plan. Babylon, Brookhaven, Islip and Riverhead all have an Industrial Development Agency (IDA) with differing programs and policies, and the remaining towns rely on the Suffolk County IDA – which has yet another set of standards. Bellone will work with IDAs, Governor Cuomo's Regional Economic Council and other stakeholders to create a regional economic development plan to implement his *Innovate Suffolk* economic vision.

Coordinate Permitting Process with Towns and Villages. Businesses need transparency and predictability, and Steve Bellone will put the County Economic Commissioner in charge of creating a coordinated planning process with towns and villages so that economic development applications are processed concurrently, not consecutively. Private sector firms understand that time is money and government needs to understand that as well. Towns and villages will be invited to discuss projects at the beginning of the process, rather than waiting for a crisis or failure to move forward, so that we can dramatically reduce the time it takes to move projects forward.

Refocus the Planning Department. The Suffolk County Planning Department needs to be refocused. We face major challenges that threaten the long-term economic outlook for our region and the Planning Department must focus more on these major challenges rather than the local details better left to town boards. The County Planning Department should give great deference to the work of town and village planning departments and focus all their efforts on addressing our region's big challenges.

Reform the County Health Department. Steve Bellone will make economic development a core part of the mission of the Suffolk County Health Department. Greater innovation and efficiency can keep the health department from being an obstacle to economic growth in the county. By breaking down the permitting process into its component parts and assigning performance measures to each step - as he did in Babylon - he will create accountability in the agency from top to bottom making it more efficient and business friendly.

Increase Investments in Downtown Revitalization. Growth in our downtowns is key to addressing some of the big challenges preventing greater economic development in our region such as a lack of diversity in our housing stock and the accelerating loss of our young, educated workforce. Steve Bellone created the first municipal office of Downtown Revitalization on Long Island in 2003 and his Wyandanch Rising initiative has become a national model for sustainable development. He will launch a new program to help fund community planning in downtown areas and provide additional infrastructure money to implement plans that help confront the challenges impeding growth in our county.

Identify Suffolk Innovation Zones. Steve Bellone will direct the Economic Development Commissioner to inventory all existing county-owned properties to see if any can become viable business properties and designated as Innovation Zones eligible for generous tax incentives. He will also work with State and Town officials to identify properties they own that might be good candidates for designation as Suffolk Innovation Zones.

INCREASED EFFICIENCY

Government ought to work as efficiently as possible, and as Babylon Town Supervisor Steve Bellone has rooted out waste and inefficiency. Today, Babylon has half the workforce it had when he first joined town government and the town is doing more, not less, for its residents. With Suffolk County facing a \$180 million structural deficit, Steve Bellone knows now is the time to make government work better by:

Prioritizing Efficiency. Steve Bellone installed GPS on Babylon town vehicles to not only enhance snow-removal efforts, but also to hold public employees accountable for their time, saving taxpayers thousands of dollars. Implementation of this, and other technologies countywide, could reduce costs significantly.

Performance Management. Steve Bellone created the office of Performance Management to promote efficiency and accountability in Town government. He broke down the critical functions of town government - from filling potholes to issuing building permits - and assigned performance measures to each step. He will bring this management approach to Suffolk County that will insure that critical services can be delivered much more cost effectively.

Minimizing Delays. Over the past decade, too many economic opportunities were lost because good ideas were not met with prompt responses. By engaging community and environmental leaders in major economic development projects up front, Steve Bellone believes we can create an environment where investors will know they will not have to face years of litigation, wasted time and wasted money.

One-Stop Shopping. In Babylon, Steve Bellone drastically increased the town's efficiency by allowing residents to pay property tax bills online or by phone and created a 311-call center to give residents quicker results. This type of efficiency at the county level would not only makes it easier to do business with the county, but will also save taxpayers money.

Expand County Public Nuisance Law. Building on Babylon's successful Community Court model, Steve Bellone will expand the public nuisance law to improve quality of life and save taxpayers money. Expanding public nuisance laws to include major health department violations such as environmental problems, sewage or oil leaks and other health hazards will allow the county to acquire properties sooner and sell them at higher values to pay for expanded quality of life programs.

Expanding Job Training. Currently the Labor Department administers state and federal job training programs. Steve Bellone believes we can do more than merely administering the same old programs created by state and federal bureaucrats. By seeking involvement with universities and private sector employers - ones that will be attracted through the *Innovate Suffolk* economic plan - we can breathe new life into these programs, investing taxpayer money much more effectively in training our workforce for the type of jobs that we are creating in Suffolk County.