

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Steven Bellone
SUFFOLK COUNTY EXECUTIVE

June 30, 2020

Chairman Thomas Falcone, CEO
Long Island Power Authority
333 Earle Ovington Blvd, Suite 403
Uniondale, NY 11553

Dear Chairman Falcone

It is disheartening to hear that LIPA has declined requests to consent to delay its pending property tax litigation with the Town of Huntington during the COVID-19 crisis, effectively ending efforts to reach a negotiated settlement.

As I said last year, the settlement that had been proposed at the time was unacceptable and that more needed to be done to reach an agreement that was fair and equitable to the Northport community and all involved parties.

Now is not the time, in the midst of the ongoing battle against the COVID-19 virus, to slam the door shut on reaching a fair and equitable solution. The COVID-19 crisis has caused deep seated financial challenges to residents, school districts and local governments across the County and region.

Presently, it is unclear whether the federal government will provide the disaster assistance to state and local governments necessary to help cover the cost of the response to COVID-19. Local taxpayers, first responders and essential employees should not have to bear this burden alone, particularly given the fact that Long Island taxpayers annually send billions more to Washington than we ever receive in return. Without action at the federal level, local communities will potentially be facing significant new tax burdens and cuts to critical services.

At this time of extraordinary crisis, a harsh result in the courts could create chaos and fiscal ruin. Therefore, I urge you to petition the court to delay any decision in this matter until such time that we gain greater clarity on the potential fiscal impacts on local communities due to COVID-19.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

STEVEN BELLONE
Suffolk County Executive