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NEWS RELEASE

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Suffolk Water Fund Raid is Key Issue in Races

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The Long Island Environmental Voters Forum has released its candidate endorsements, urging voters to support those for whom the environment can be expected to be a priority, if they are elected. Candidates were endorsed for the Nassau and Suffolk County Legislatures and in some town races. There has been no endorsement yet in the contest for Suffolk County Executive.

The top story is that the Environmental Voters Forum declined to consider for endorsement, any Suffolk County Legislator who voted to raid the county's Drinking Water Protection Program, enacted by voters at referendum to protect drinking water and preserve open space. Money was re-directed from this fund to plug holes in the Suffolk County Budget without a mandatory referendum and the Voters Forum has sued to nullify the legislation. While that does not mean that the Forum would automatically endorse opponents of such legislators, no candidate who supported the raid was considered. The policy mirrors one last year in which the Voters Forum declined to endorse and state legislator who voted to slash the state's Environmental Protection Fund in half.

Candidate for Suffolk County Executive who was endorsed:

Steve Bellone

Candidates for Nassau County Legislature who were endorsed include:

Denise Ford
Norma Gonsalves
Judy Jacobs
Peter J. Schmitt

Candidates for Suffolk County Legislature who were endorsed include:

Robert Calarco
Louis D'Amaro
John Giannott
Kara Hahn
Cornelius Kelly
Ed Romaine
Susan Sineo

Candidates for Town Supervisor who were endorsed include:

Zachary Cohen	East Hampton
James Dougherty	Shelter Island
Kate Murray	Hempstead
Scott Russell	Southold

Anna Thorne-Holst
John Venditto

Southampton
Oyster Bay

Candidates for Town Council who were endorsed include:

Susan Berland	Huntington
Jane Bonner	Brookhaven
Marie Domenici	Southold
Steve Fiore-Rosenfeld	Brookhaven
Bridget Fleming	Southampton
Sylvia Overby	East Hampton
Daniel Panico	Brookhaven
Christine Scalera	Southampton
Matt Van Glad	Riverhead

In an unusual move, LIEVF made a dual endorsement in the race for Suffolk County Legislature in the 7th District — a seat being vacated by Suffolk County Legislator Jack Eddington. There, the Environmental Voters Form gave high marks to both Democrat Robert Calarco and Republican Giannott. We appreciate Calarco's experience — he was an aide to Eddington and to former New York State Assemblywoman Ginny Fields. But Giannott has made a compelling case for environmental advocacy and would bring new blood to the legislature. Both said they opposed the raid on the Drinking Water Program. "Voters for whom the environment is a priority would likely be served well by either and should make their choice based upon other criteria of importance to them," said LIEVF Board Member, Tom Casey

"We consider candidates' previous performance on environmental issues, both in and out of government," said LIEVF Chairman, Richard Amper. "We understand that this is no guarantee that the candidates will perform in office exactly as promised, but we need to help voters make the best choice possible since an overwhelming number of Long Islanders consider the environment important or very important in their lives," he added.

Two endorsements still to be decided are those for Suffolk County Executive and for Brookhaven Town Supervisor. "We just need a little more time to follow-up on positions espoused by these candidates in questionnaires and screenings," Amper said.

The Long Island Environmental Voters Forum is a non-profit, non-partisan, grassroots organization created to identify, recruit, endorse, support, train and actively campaign for pro-environment candidates for public office.