



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kenneth P. LaValle

## East Hampton's The Retreat Thanks Senator LaValle for Support

KENNETH P. LAVALLE July 24, 2012

New York State Senator Kenneth P. LaValle was recently thanked by The Retreat of East Hampton for securing state funds for the prevention of and response to domestic violence across eastern Long Island

"The leadership Senator LaValle exercised in securing funds to prevent and address domestic violence across the east end of Long Island will directly result in improved safety, health, and quality of life for our area's women and children. With demand for our services at an all time high due to the unstable economy, the funds secured will enable us to reach and serve more abused women and traumatized children than we otherwise could. It is with deep gratitude that we thank Senator LaValle for his commitment to east end families , " said Jeffrey Friedman, Executive Director of the Retreat.

"I have been an staunch advocate of legislation to help prevent domestic violence," Senator LaValle said, "and I am pleased to assist the efforts, advocacy and support The Retreat provides for so many women in their time of extreme need."

### **About The Retreat**

The Retreat is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing, responding to, and comprehensively addressing domestic violence across eastern Long Island and is the only full-service domestic violence organization (including safe shelter) in the region. The state funds – a total of \$65 thousand -- will support the Retreat's advocacy services.

The Retreat's advocacy department assists survivors of domestic violence in navigating the legal system and the network of agencies clients may find themselves working in as they separate from their abusers. The Retreat advocates work primarily in Family Court, where clients can obtain temporary and/or permanent orders of protection, work out custody of their children, visitation schedules and child support.

Advocates accompany clients to each court date in Family Court and explain the process and proceedings, provide emotional support and help them to understand what the court expects of them. Advocates also assist clients in finding an attorney to represent them by guiding them through the application for legal aid or giving referrals for local attorneys when a client is not eligible for a free, legal aid attorney. Advocates collaborate with clients and attorneys as cases progress and often take a leading role in helping the client file necessary petitions and in debriefing the client after each court appearance.

Retreat advocates are also responsible for performing crisis interventions for Hotline callers, complying with New York State's Crime Victims Board requirements, and outreaching to and educating individuals and staff of local service agencies, as necessary. Advocates develop working relationships with other agencies, including Child Protective Services, Department of Social Services, town court advocates, attorneys, religious organizations, counselors, and other service providers, to further their knowledge of the support system available to clients. Advocates may also accompany clients to local police departments to support them in reporting recent incidents. All advocacy services are available in English and Spanish.