



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

## Senator Murphy co-sponsors thyroid cancer screening for first responders with PBA, APA, and Heartscan Services

TERRENCE MURPHY January 12, 2018

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Valhalla, NY - Our first responders charge into burning buildings, face down heavily armed criminals and give the breath of life to people caught in life threatening situations. They do not ask to be heroes, but they are. Unfortunately, for many heroes, there is a price to pay. There has been an alarmingly high incidence of thyroid cancer among police, firefighters, and volunteers, particularly among those who worked in the rescue, recovery, and cleanup efforts in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. Thanks to a

state appropriated grant secured by State Senator Terrence Murphy and State Senator Marty Golden, a former member of the NYPD, Westchester first responders received a free thyroid cancer screening.

No one, whether they are a first responder, truck driver or lawyer, is immune to contracting thyroid cancer. Recent clinical findings have shown that thyroid cancer is the fastest growing cancer in the United States, having tripled in the last three decades, with 56,870 expected new cases when the final totals for 2017 are released.

To promote early detection, Senator Terrence Murphy, Westchester County Police Benevolent Association (PBA), the Affiliated Police Associations of Westchester (APA), and Heartscan Services sponsored a thyroid cancer screening at the Westchester Police Academy in Valhalla on January 11.

"Studies have shown that instances of thyroid cancer have been increasing among first responders, women, people who are exposed to high doses of radiation, and people over 40," said Senator Murphy. "Even though a diagnosis of cancer can be terrifying, thyroid cancer is very treatable. This program is about prevention, taking care of our first responders and taking care of our community. Early detection save lives."

"I learned about thyroid cancer through personal experience, my sixteen-year-old cousin was diagnosed and I saw what she went through," said Westchester County Legislator Margaret Cunzio. "This is a valuable service. I would love to see this program expanded to the County level to include volunteer firefighters. A lot of firefighters were in New York helping out after 9/11. I think it our obligation to do everything we can to make sure their state of health is protected."

Michael Hagan Westchester County PBA President stated, "I would like to thank Senator Murphy for setting up this event. In this day and age, it's refreshing to have an elected official who makes the health and well-being of first responders one of his priorities. Each officer who goes through the cancer screening will benefit, either through peace of mind or by early detection and treatment."

"We should always be concerned for the health and well-being of our first responders, especially those who were at Ground Zero," said Mt. Pleasant Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi. "I would like to extend my thanks to Senator Murphy for continuing to care about our community and for thinking about the men and women that help keep us safe."

Marilyn Martinucci, CEO and Founder of Heartscan Services remarked, "Thyroid cancer is the fastest increasing cancer in the United States, as well as the top five cancers affecting women. We are the only mobile company in New York that focuses on early detection of thyroid cancer. Our screenings, which are non-invasive, have been crucial for identifying early thyroid cancer. We educate and screen community members, New York City first responders, laborers and those at risk for thyroid nodules so individuals can be treated by their own physicians, if necessary. There is no doubt that early detection can make a difference. Our responders deserve to be healthy."

The thyroid produces thyroid hormone (TH), which regulates your body's metabolism, heartbeat, temperature, mood, and other important processes-reaching out to nearly every, single cell in your body.

Thyroid cancer is an uncommon type of cancer. Most people who have it do very well, because the cancer is usually found early and the treatments work well. Thyroid cancer is usually very treatable and is often cured with surgery and, if indicated, radioactive iodine.

People who have been exposed to a lot of radiation have a greater chance of getting thyroid cancer. Many patients, especially in the early stages of thyroid cancer, do not experience symptoms. However, as the cancer develops, symptoms can include a lump or nodule in the front of the neck, hoarseness or difficulty speaking, swollen lymph nodes, difficulty swallowing or breathing, and pain in the throat or neck.

There are several types of thyroid cancer: papillary, follicular, medullary, anaplastic, and variants. Papillary and follicular thyroid carcinomas are referred to as well-differentiated thyroid cancer and account for over 90% of all thyroid cancers. Variants include tall cell, insular, columnar, and Hurthle cell. Their treatment and management are similar. If detected early, most papillary and follicular thyroid cancer can be treated successfully.