



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin Thomas

## Lawmakers Hold Roundtable Discussion to Address Housing Crisis & Homelessness on Long Island

SENATOR KEVIN THOMAS January 22, 2020

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State lawmakers recently met with local advocates and nonprofit organizations to discuss Long Island's affordable housing crisis and its impact on homelessness. The round table, organized by Senator Velmanette Montgomery and Nassau Suffolk Law Services, Inc., took place at SUNY Farmingdale on Thursday, January 16, 2020.

Local lawmakers say the lack of affordable housing on Long Island, combined with the high cost of living and high property taxes, is forcing many to leave the region. Among the groups most affected are young people, seniors, veterans, and people living with disabilities.

Representatives from 27 nonprofit and government service agencies from across the Island had the opportunity to share their perspectives and ideas with local Senators and Assemblymembers. The topics of discussion included expanding access to affordable housing, improving mental health services, and ensuring educational equity.

"This was a productive and enlightening conversation," said State Senator Kevin Thomas, who represents parts of Nassau County. "Conversations like this are incredibly valuable because they help us understand the complexities of the issue. When we think of Long Island, we think of idyllic suburbs, great schools, a wonderful place to raise a family. This image erases the struggles of thousands of families on Long Island who are dealing with homelessness in some way, shape, or form. I'm grateful that we're having these conversations and seeking real solutions to a problem that's impacting so many Long Islanders."

Lawmakers will bring their new insights back to Albany as the State's 2020 Legislative Session goes into full-swing.