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Ah Shucks: Sen. Martinez Honored with Pearl of an Award During Inaugural Oyster Ball
Long Island environmental organization recognizes Martinez for work to protect region's natural resources



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GREAT RIVER, N.Y. – New York State Sen. Monica R. Martinez received the Pearl Environmental Stewardship Award from [Save the Great South Bay](#) on Saturday in recognition of her efforts to protect Long Island's waters and ecosystems. The award was presented during the organization's inaugural Oyster Ball.

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"Protecting Long Island's environment is crucial to safeguarding our future. The health of our communities, economy, and quality of life relies on responsible conservation efforts," said Sen. Martinez. "I'm grateful to Save the Great South Bay for its work revitalizing our region's waters, which complements the pro-environment legislative agenda I pursue in Albany. Together, our efforts address the unique challenges Long Island faces, ensuring its natural resources are protected for generations to come."

Martinez's environmental work includes legislation to protect the state's public lands, wildlife, and fisheries, and is capped off by her sponsorship of the Suffolk County Water Restoration Act, which will be before voters this November. The referendum asks the public to approve a 0.0125% increase in the county sales tax to fund sewer expansion and replace nitrogen-polluting septic systems with clean water technology. This would support new sewer projects and upgrading outdated cesspools and septic systems with high-tech nitrogen-removing systems. Suffolk County has declared nitrogen "public enemy number one for our water."

Todd Shaw, president of Save the Great South Bay, said, "Senator Martinez's advocacy efforts on environmental issues, in particular water quality, are to be commended. We are proud to recognize those efforts with our 2024 Environmental Award."

Save the Great South Bay is a Babylon-based nonprofit organization that actively works to restore this treasured water body while also strengthening Long Island's South Shore communities. Founded in 2012, the organization is composed of past and present baymen, fishermen, boaters, paddleboarders, surfers, sailors, local environmentalists, civic associations, schools, and marine scientists, all committed to working together to protect the bay.