



THE LEGISLATURE
STATE OF NEW YORK

May 11, 2022

County Executive Bruce Blakeman
1550 Franklin Avenue, Second Floor
Mineola, NY 11501

RE: Defunding of the Household Assistance Program that provides relief payments directly to taxpayers in Nassau

Dear County Executive Blakeman,

We write to you today to urge you to reverse your unilateral decision to quietly end the Household Assistance Program (HAP), which was created to give Nassau County taxpayers relief as we recover from the pandemic era, and take that money for some yet-to-be-determined use at your discretion. At a time when the cost of gas and so many common household goods has risen, Nassau families need relief more than ever. It's unconscionable that at a time like this you would choose to take money out of the pockets of taxpayers without even having a plan for how you will spend the money instead.

In attempting to justify your decision, you cited "low participation" in the program, noting that approximately 70,000 payments have been sent out while approximately 400,000 Nassau families were eligible. As the County Executive, the buck stops with you when a program is failing, and any low participation in this program is a direct result of your failure to properly promote and administer it. There are still over 300,000 eligible households who need this relief, and it's your job to get it in their hands as quickly as possible.

With so many families still struggling, the County must keep this vital program going, and do its job to get the word out to eligible families. Anything less would be a dereliction of duty to the people we represent.

Sincerely,

NYS Senator Anna M. Kaplan

NYS Senator Kevin Thomas

NYS Assemblymember Michaele Solages

NYS Assemblywoman Judy Griffin

NYS Senator Jim Gaughran

NYS Senator John Brooks

NYS Assemblymember Chuck Lavine

NYS Assemblywoman Gina Sillitti