

SUFFOLK COUNTY



COUNTY LEGISLATURE

STEVEN J. FLOTTERON
LEGISLATOR, 11th DISTRICT

4 Udall Road, Suite 6
WEST ISLIP, NEW YORK 11795
(631) 854-4100
STEVEN.FLOTTERON@SUFFOLKCOUNTYNY.GOV

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Contact: Michael Martino, Director of Communications
Suffolk County Presiding Officer Kevin McCaffrey
Phone: [516-497-4619](tel:516-497-4619)/[631-201-5595](tel:631-201-5595)/michael.martino@suffolkcountyny.gov

Colleen Valdini, Legislative Aide
(631) [854-4100](tel:854-4100)/colleen.valdini@suffolkcountyny.gov

Legislator Steven Flotteron, Long Island Housing Partnership Announce Home-Buying Grant Program for Fire and Ambulance Volunteers

Up to \$50,000 available for members for home purchase and property rehabilitation through program

West Islip – Suffolk County Legislator Steven J. Flotteron and James Britz from the Long Island Housing Partnership (LIHP) have announced that an existing program that provides grant money to employees of businesses is also available to volunteer members of Long Island’s Fire and Ambulance departments.

“This program can help our volunteer first responders from Malverne to Montauk purchase a home,” said Flotteron. “Until now due to the employer match funding constraints these unsalaried employees (volunteers) could not benefit from State and Federal grants that can provide the money needed to buy a home. Our volunteer first responders put their lives on the line every time they are called, and they are owed a debt of gratitude. We are proud to have worked together to make them all aware of this program.”

As the number of volunteer fire and ambulance personnel continues to plummet, departments have worked to find ways to attract and retain new members and also keep them on Long Island. With real estate prices at record highs and inflation increasing, the dream of home ownership on Long Island is difficult to realize for most families, and many are leaving for other states.

“It is nearly impossible for existing and would-be volunteers to make ends meet and also have the time for the extensive training and work that it takes to protect our communities,” said Flotteron. “Our hope is this program will allow them to own their own home while keeping them on Long Island and allow them to become involved in their communities.”

With his 35 years of financial and insurance experience, Flotteron discovered the program’s ability to be extended to volunteer personnel. Fire and Ambulance departments would need to become affiliated with the program for their members to apply.

“Some of Long Island’s largest employers have been providing this opportunity to their employees, and now we take another step to help more Long Islanders stay right here and raise their families,” said Britz. “The LIHP is eager to begin working with these departments.”

The Employer Assisted Housing Program grant can provide a maximum of up to \$26,000 in down payment assistance for the purchase of a home plus \$24,000 to improve the property after purchase. A \$3,000 payment from the grant receiver, plus \$3,000 company match is required. To help the volunteer departments match funds for their members, a not-for-profit, Long Island Homes for Heroes, Corp., has been formed with the assistance of Brad Wilson, owner of Jones Hollow Realty, to assist the departments with the match.

“Our volunteer organizations are funded by tax dollars and government grants, so they do not have the financial ability to match dollars for their members who want to take advantage of this program,” said Wilson. “We have already begun our fundraising efforts and we are thankful of the response we have received thus far. It is proof that Long Islanders recognize the efforts of our volunteer emergency responders and this is a perfect way to say thank you.”

Those interested in the program can visit LongIslandHomesforHeroes.org

“This is such great news for so many who wish to remain where they were born, raised, work and play and the program is open for business,” said Flotteron. “I urge all departments to become involved and give their members a new advantage in their effort to remain Long Islanders.”