



Dear Mr. Cohen, Members of the Nassau Retirees Legal Fund, and Nassau County Retirees,

I want to begin by expressing both my gratitude and my respect. Your years of service built the foundation of the community we live in today. Nassau County is stronger, safer, and better because of the work you did. As someone now serving in public office, I feel a deep responsibility to stand with you and ensure that the promises made to you are honored.

I know how critical health benefits are in retirement. For decades, public employees accepted modest salaries in exchange for the assurance of pensions and healthcare that would carry them through life. That tradeoff was not only fair—it was binding. A deal is a deal, and the County must uphold the commitments it made, especially those enshrined in Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs).

Protecting access to affordable, reliable healthcare is one of my highest priorities. As long as the Empire Plan remains available, I will fight to preserve it as an option for Nassau’s retirees. At a time when costs are rising on everything from groceries to utilities, retirees should never have to worry about whether they can afford their healthcare.

I also want to be clear on several important points:

- Retirees were not part of the 2023 Memorandum of Understanding negotiated between the County and the union representing active employees, because the law prevents unions from representing both groups at once.
- The CBA in place at the time of retirement controls your rights going forward. That agreement guaranteed County-paid health insurance for life, with benefits that cannot be reduced.
- Federal law defines “benefits” as the services covered under a health insurance plan. By that definition, retirees are entitled to fully paid health coverage for life, at least as comprehensive as the NYSHIP Empire Plan.

I strongly urge the County Executive to stand publicly with Nassau’s retirees and to protect the benefits you earned and were promised. Retirees are among the most financially vulnerable members of our community, and honoring their healthcare commitments is not optional—it’s a matter of respect and fairness.

Thank you once again for your service to our County. Please know that I will continue to use my voice and my vote to stand with you and to ensure that the promises made to Nassau’s retirees are kept.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Nuñez

Candidate for Nassau County Legislative District 14