



JOSEPH S. SALADINO  
Assemblyman 12<sup>th</sup> District  
Nassau County

THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

CHAIRMAN  
Assembly Minority  
Program Committee

COMMITTEES  
Environmental Conservat  
Education  
Governmental Employee  
Labor

Good Evening,

I deeply regret that I could not be in Bethpage with you tonight but unfortunately the timing of tonight's meeting coincides with my necessity to be in session in Albany. I would like to express my gratitude to all of the residents in attendance that have gone beyond merely thinking about the very serious environmental challenges we face to taking constructive, positive action as residents committed wholeheartedly to protecting our community from potential environmental health threats. The fact that you have taken the time to be here tonight is evidence that you care deeply and wish to call for vigorous action as a community to protect the health of the public and protect the environment.

As you know, this is not the first time I have taken off the gloves to fight environmental threats that could endanger the regions water supply and the Great South Bay. During my nine years in the State Assembly, I have fought for issues which address air and water quality. I have endeavored to provide lower-cost clean energy to Long Island homeowners and entrepreneurs, joined with the DEC to keep our beaches, bays and ocean protected and labored to maintain our area's many wildlife habitats.

As a voice for our community in the State Assembly I am duty-bound to say "no" to any proposition or consideration that I believe is not 100% in the best interest of my constituents. "No" is a powerful word and should not be spoken frivolously and yet I feel morally and intellectually obligated to tell you tonight that I find the proposed plan to employ well-head treatment as the sole solution to protect our water wells from contamination, absolutely and unequivocally unacceptable.

In all candor, it is important to state that the quality of water at the tap has not reached the level that should incite panic or alarm. It should also be stated that the plume has not yet reached the wells of the Massapequa Water District.

I do wish to outline reasons for my opposition to the proposed measures. First, the employment of well-head treatment is not compliant with New York State DEC regulations which state that well-head treatment "shall be considered as a measure of last resort". Why would this be the case? Well-head treatment is a partial solution that may not bear the assurance of complete protection from contamination and creates secondary and tertiary problems, for instance, increased "system vulnerability" and increased energy consumption. (These "unintended consequences" are brought to light in the U.S. Schumer Committee Overview.)

By way of example, not very long ago the Bethpage Water District had to perform expedited upgrades to breached wells to avoid the breakthrough of VOC's--volatile organic compounds. Our residents must be assured the protection from these VOC's and other contaminants. Perhaps most problematically, it is irresponsible and myopic to commit to a solution before every possible alternative has been tested--particularly when your solution has been declared only viable as a "last resort".

Good science tells us that freshwater from the aquifer works its way into the Great South Bay. Proof of this is the fact that, due to underflow from the aquifer, salinity levels in the Bay are far lower than in the ocean. The day will come when this plume reaches the marine waters south of Massapequa and could threaten sea life and the resources of the Bay. I am confident that the DEC, with its dedicated stewardship of our wetlands and saltwater estuaries, will spare nothing to ensure the protection of this resource. Understanding this and the fact that the DEC has repeatedly taken strong positions and have denied many permits, all in an effort to protect the Bay, there is no question in my mind that these environmentally responsible individuals will fully act one day down the road. Why not implement hydraulic containment now before this plume reaches Massapequa's drinking water wells. Let's protect our residents and our future generations.

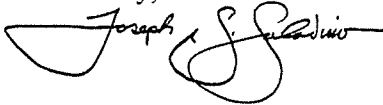
I am deeply concerned that if we do not act immediately and aggressively, sooner than we might expect, maybe 5, 15 or 20 years from now, we will look back to a time when we had the ability, resources, and the singular purpose to remedy this challenge--not in a way that is merely a compromise--but one that is far more successful and complete. We will have spared our communities and citizens from the potential of long term harm. Until we commit ourselves to total remediation of this threat, at the expense of the U.S. Navy, our health and peace of mind are at risk.

I am a third generation resident of this community. These are good people you see before you tonight. On their behalf, I tell you that I believe in your commitment, your strength, and your character to see that the job gets done quickly and with hydraulic containment and remediation.

It was the dedicated and talented citizens of our communities that came to the aid of our nation and the United States Navy to build the planes and equipment needed to protect our national interest and our freedom when the call to war and defense was paramount. The good people of Bethpage, Farmingdale, Massapequa, Levittown and the like, flocked to these hangars and labored to fully protect America! Isn't it only right that America and the United States Navy now step up and repay that patriotism by fully protecting those who answered the call of duty as well as their children and grandchildren?

I give you my pledge that I will work tirelessly with you to see this through.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph S. Saladino". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "S".

Joseph S. Saladino  
New York State Assemblyman