

From: Carlos Valle <vallec@assembly.state.ny.us>
Date: March 5, 2015 at 12:22:04 PM AST
To: tmiller@timillerassociates.com
Subject: Assemblyman James Skoufis (KJ Scoping Session)

As per request,

Here is a copy of the statement read on behalf of Assemblyman James Skoufis:

Thank you Village Board and officials for the opportunity to speak. I am here on behalf of Assemblyman James Skoufis who is in Albany this evening participating in important budget conferencing. Assemblyman Skoufis has sent the following statement to be read into the record:

Thank you for the chance to provide my thoughts on this very important issue. That said, I am deeply concerned that the decision was made to not postpone tonight's scoping session in light of the Winter Weather Advisory in effect until 10:00am tomorrow. Many residents are not present here due to the inclement and dangerous weather outside, thereby disenfranchising countless people and rendering this scoping session unequivocally inadequate. As your recent mailer to Monroe states, I respectfully remind you that "a community's strength is revealed in its values."

While I will not reiterate the points I raised at the first scoping session last year, particularly the fact that Kiryas Joel officials - not independent property owners - are the driving force behind this petition, I will raise another set of concerns. Namely, as you know, Kiryas Joel proceeded with a scoping session for a 164-acre petition last year despite the fact that a 507-acre petition encompassing the same land was filed first. Now, Kiryas Joel has sued individuals that have submitted a petition to move much of the same land into the Town of Blooming Grove. On what grounds? That the KJ petition was filed first. This double standard would be laughable if the issue wasn't so serious. Regardless of what your interpretation of annexation law is on this matter, that law applies to everyone, all the time - not just when it's convenient.

No number of mailers or statements from your PR firm will result in peace amongst neighbors. Taking concrete actions that demonstrate a willingness to work together will. So, again, I call on you to withdraw your annexation petition and constructively meet with all of our community's stakeholders. Anything less and you're continuing to prove that "peace and harmony" is nothing more than a nice slogan.

Please let me know if you have any other questions.

All the best,

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Carlos Valle
Coordinator of Legislative & Community Affairs
Assemblyman James Skoufis