

LONG ISLAND / **POLITICS****Suffolk lawmakers OK \$2.8 million for project with housing for former female inmates**

As part of a statewide allocation of funds to finance affordable homes, Gov. Kathy Hochul has doled out financing to four LI projects; including Alegria North in Wyandanch. Credit: Beatty Harvey Coco Architects LP

By Vera Chinese

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A proposed affordable housing complex in Wyandanch is on track to receive \$2.8 million in Suffolk County funding despite objections from some county lawmakers because it designates nine units for formerly incarcerated women.

The legislature voted 12-5 at its general meeting Tuesday in favor of providing the money to the 81-unit Alegria North complex by D & F Development Group of Levittown.

Legis. Steve Englebright (D-Setauket), Anthony Piccirillo (R-Holtsville), Trish Bergin (R- East Islip), Leslie Kennedy (R-Nesconset) and Robert Trotta (R-Fort Salonga) voted against it.

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“The taxpayer shouldn’t be funding criminals and providing housing over struggling seniors,” Trotta said after the meeting

D & F will partner with the Brentwood nonprofit New Hour for Women and Children’s Services under a state contract to select tenants and provide other services to them.

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New Hour executive director Serena Martin-Liguori defended the initiative, saying tenants must have no parole or probation violations and stable work histories after leaving prison. New Hour works only with women, 75% of whom are mothers, Martin-Liguori said.

“These are apartments that we want to see for our women who are thriving as mothers and as parents in the community,” she said.

Suffolk County Executive Edward P. Romaine, a Republican, has not said if he will sign the bill although it passed with a veto-proof majority.

“The county executive will consider all of the points that were discussed today when the legislation comes to his desk,” said his spokesman, Mike Martino.

The complex also allocates 12 units for those with mental illness, nine for the mobility impaired, four for visually and hearing impaired people and four for military veterans.

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Also Tuesday, the legislature voted 10-8 to recess a public hearing on a proposal to ban restaurants and food delivery services from providing plastic utensils and condiment packages unless customers request them. The bill, sponsored by Englebright, is intended to cut down on plastic waste and would levy a \$200 fine for first offenders.



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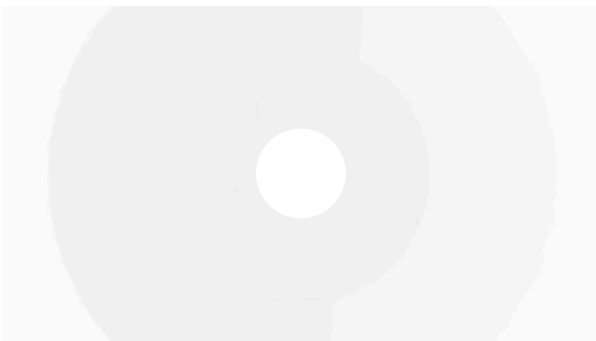
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Vera Chinese covers Suffolk County government and politics. She joined Newsday in 2017 after working as an editor for the East End lifestyle publication northforker and a general assignment reporter for the New York Daily News.

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