



Save the Sound®

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 18, 2017

#### **Contacts**

Louise Harrison: 631-428-1315  
Ariel Shearer: 774-487-2088

## **Suffolk County Legislature strongly opposes sale, supports conservation of Plum Island**

*Bipartisan letter of strong opposition sent to Governor Andrew Cuomo*

SMITHTOWN, N.Y. – Members of the Suffolk County Legislature signed a letter sent to Governor Andrew Cuomo on Wednesday unanimously opposing the sale of Plum Island by the General Services Administration and Department of Homeland security. The letter cites concern for the island’s wildlife and environmental sensitivity while emphasizing the federal sale as a direct conflict with municipal coastal policies.

In the letter, Suffolk County legislators urged Cuomo to utilize New York State’s authority under the Coastal Zone Management Act and the Coastal Management Program to stop the federal government from selling Plum Island. This follows a similar letter sent to Cuomo on April 26, 2017, signed by all five of Long Island’s East End town supervisors and 10 village mayors.

“There is unanimity among elected officials, municipalities and conservation groups on the East End and in Suffolk County that Plum Island should be preserved for future generations,” **said Legislator Al Krupski, whose district is home to Plum Island.** “It is terribly short sighted for the Federal Government to consider selling this national asset.”

With additional concern for regional job loss resulting from the upcoming relocation of the Plum Island Animal Disease Center (PIADC) slated to take place by 2022, the letter supports repurposing the PIADC as a research facility capable of creating new jobs while preserving the island’s undeveloped land.

“Plum Island merits conservation as it is an asset which not only benefits residents of Suffolk County, but those of New York State and the entire nation as well,” **the letter said.** “Preservation of the 600 plus acres of the undeveloped land on the island has the full support of countless conservation, environmental and recreational organizations as well as individuals, municipalities and businesses.”

“Ever-growing support from local elected officials confirms our conviction that there is a pivotal role for Governor Cuomo in saving Plum Island,” **said Louise Harrison, Save the Sound’s New York natural areas coordinator.** “Our champions at the federal level are working in the House and Senate, too, to keep

Plum Island from being sold. If we can protect undeveloped acreage on Plum Island, it would be a victory for natural areas, wildlife, and citizens alike.”

According to the letter, the federal government failed to consider important factors when determining the fate of PIADC and Plum Island. “Critical issues were ignored, potential uses were not fully explored and local stakeholders, including Suffolk County and the Town of Southold, were not brought into the process,” **the letter said.**

*The 18 Suffolk County legislators are: Sarah S. Anker, Thomas F. Barraga, Kate M. Browning, Robert Calarco, Thomas Cilmi, Lou D’Amaro, Bridget Fleming, Kara Hahn, DuWayne Gregory, Leslie Kennedy, Al Krupski, William J. Lindsay III, Monica R. Martinez, Kevin J. McCaffrey, Thomas Muratore, William Spencer, Steven H. Stern and Robert Trotta.*

###