



# **NEWS.....**

## **FROM CHRIS HIGGINS**

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## **COUNTY LEGISLATORS, HIGGINS, DOMALEWICZ, COMMISSO ANNOUNCE FUNDING FOR GUN BUY-BACK PROGRAM**

ALBANY, NY – Legislators Chris Higgins, (D-6<sup>th</sup> District), Gary Domalewicz, (D-11<sup>th</sup> District), and Majority Leader Frank Commisso, (D- 12<sup>th</sup> District), announced that Albany County will allocate \$10,000 in funding for a countywide gun buy-back program at tonight’s full meeting of the Albany County Legislature. The money will be specifically earmarked for the gun buyback program sponsored by the Rev. Charles Muller of the Victory Christian Church in Albany.

The program, started in response to a recent spate of gun violence in Albany, has already been responsible for getting more than 60 working guns off the streets.

“Albany County is proud to be partnering with Rev. Muller in this proactive approach to combating gun violence in our communities,” Legislator Higgins said. “If this funding helps get even one more gun out of the hands of those who seek to take lives and threaten the safety of our neighborhoods, then it will be a huge success.”

The Legislature in May adopted a resolution by Legislator Higgins to allocate \$10,000 for the County Sheriff to implement its own gun buy-back program. However, due to the overwhelming success of Rev. Muller’s program, the Legislature has instead decided to allocate the funds towards this community based program, which trades guns for gift cards to local shopping centers.

The program was initially funded through private donations. However, that funding was quickly depleted due to the success of the program.

The county funding will allow the church's gun buy back program to continue.

“Anytime we can confiscate guns is a plus for all residents of Albany County,” Majority Leader Commisso said.

Legislator Domalewicz echoed those sentiments, stating that: “We are here today to help Rev. Charlie get guns off the streets. With this \$10,000 will hopefully be able to remove 60 more guns off the streets.”

Rev. Muller thanked the County Legislature and noted that, “the success of the program so far is due to 13 years of service. With this new funding it will make it possible for us to not only expand this program but will ensure a greater success of what has already been established.”