

Senator Boyle Calls for Special Prosecutor in Gilgo Beach Case

Lawmaker Demands Answers about Actions by Suffolk Officials

By James B. Teese

New York State Senator Phil Boyle (R-Bay Shore) this week called on the State's Attorney General Letitia James to appoint a special prosecutor to review the initial stages of the Gilgo Beach/Long Island Serial Killer (LISK) investigation.

He also wants a review of the actions of disgraced former Suffolk County Police Chief James Burke, as well as officials who put and kept him in power – including former Suffolk County District Attorney Thomas Spota, and current Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone.

"We have a serious problem in Suffolk County," wrote the Senator to the Attorney General.

"The most heinous crimes in our county's long history are the horrific murders of at least ten victims whose remains were found in the area around Gilgo Beach, New York. Although the last victim was found more than a decade ago, no arrests have been made in this case," wrote Boyle of the unsolved murders.

"Incredibly, the prime suspect in the minds of many people living in Suffolk County and throughout the entire country has become former Police Chief James Burke himself. We need an objective, outside review of how we got here," Boyle added at the press conference.

The Senator held his press conference at Oak Beach County Park on Monday, June 28, to highlight his request for a special prosecutor and to demand answers from Suffolk County officials.

Letter to SCPD

On Monday, Senator Boyle also delivered letters to current Suffolk County Police Department (SCPD) Chief and Acting Police Commissioner Stuart Cameron, as well as to Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone.

From the SCPD, the letter demands the release to the public information as to whether former Police Chief Burke was ever questioned and cleared as a potential suspect. From Bellone, a letter demands that the County Executive explain his failure to remove Burke as his Police Chief even as it became clear that Burke was hindering progress in solving the Gilgo murders.

"Suffolk County residents have the right to know if their former Police Chief James Burke was ever cleared, or even questioned, about any direct or indirect connection to these crimes," Boyle declared. "And if Chief Burke was questioned, when and by whom?"

The SCPD issued a statement in response: "The Gilgo Beach homicide investigation continues to be a top priority for the Suffolk County Police Department. The department has detectives who are solely dedicated to this investigation and our department is working closely with both the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office and with the FBI. The Suffolk County Police Department does not comment on suspects in any criminal investigation."

Letter to Bellone

The Boyle letter to the County Executive demanded that Bellone disclose to Suffolk residents his reasons for not removing Burke as Police Chief even as it became clear that Burke was hindering progress in solving these "heinous crimes" by refusing assistance from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

"County Executive Bellone continually and consistently protected Police Chief Burke, refusing to replace Burke despite Burke's efforts to derail the investigation into the most horrific crimes in Suffolk County history," Boyle said. "According to his own words, Bellone did not fire Burke as his Police Chief even after coming to the realization that Burke was a sociopath."

"Why?" Boyle demanded to know.

A spokesperson for Bellone told news outlets the County Executive was "not going to respond to what is nothing more than a political charade."

Tierney Backs Boyle

Career prosecutor Ray Tierney says he supports Senator Boyle's demands to bring in a special prosecutor to look into the murders that occurred at Gilgo Beach and remain unsolved to this day.

Tierney noted of Boyle's press conference that the Senator spoke about the criminal case involving former SCPD Chief James Burke and that what happened the following three years was "a cover-up,"



DA candidate Ray Tierney

not just by Burke, but by then-DA Spota, and Spota's aide Christopher McPartland.

In noting Boyle's criticism of Bellone, a Democrat, for failing to immediately fire Burke, and for stating that the Suffolk County residents need to know whether or not Burke was involved in the Gilgo case, Tierney (who is the Republican candidate for Suffolk District Attorney seeking to



Senator Phil Boyle

unseat incumbent DA Tim Sini) said the political corruption within law enforcement and Suffolk County government – along with the lack of supervision of Chief Burke – has contributed to these murders going unsolved.

"This is what happens when you hand key positions in county government to a political operative like Tim Sini," Tierney said.

"Jimmy Burke was able to flourish due to the culture of corruption that exists in Suffolk County government," declared the DA challenger.

"Tim Sini contributed to that culture of corruption when, as Deputy County Executive in charge of Public Safety, he refused to act for 16 months and allowed Mr. Burke, Mr. Spota and Mr. McPartland to operate with impunity within the county. His reward for such negligent inaction was an appointment as SCPD commissioner, a job for which he was grossly unqualified," Tierney explained.

Tierney said that Sini, as DA, has systematically eliminated all outside oversight into the investigation of these murders, which is particularly egregious in a case like this, and where the list of potentially involved parties includes many public officials with significant ties to the sitting DA.

"This case needs outside oversight to ensure that it is not business as usual in Suffolk County and the people of Suffolk County need a strong, independent voice fighting to keep them as their District Attorney," Tierney said. "We need a special prosecutor that is willing to take a proactive approach to these cases and find out who is responsible."

"It's sad for the families of these victims that they go on unsolved. The public should be concerned there is still likely a serial killer still on the loose," he added.