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BROOKHAVEN CITIZENS AGAINST UNFAIR TAXES, INC. RESPOND TO PRESS CONFERENCE BY ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATES

Long Island environmental advocates, which includes Long Island Pine Barrens Society and civic activists, together with State and Local officials, staged a press conference in a remote location to support the Town of Brookhaven's proposed 2% transfer tax on home sales in the town.

Concerned Brookhaven citizens have organized under the umbrella "Brookhaven Citizens Against Unfair Taxes, Inc." and represent homeowners, builders, Realtors[®], mortgage brokers and community leaders from Brookhaven and neighboring communities. Members of the grassroots organization say the proposed transfer tax adds to the already high cost of owning a home, and will discourage homeownership and encourage people to leave Brookhaven for affordable housing in other areas and out of state. "Of course Realtors[®] would join community leaders to oppose this tax. We are concerned about the community. A transfer tax will unquestionably affect and impede homeownership," explains Linda Bonarelli, President of the Brookhaven Citizens Against Unfair Taxes, Inc.

Brookhaven Citizens Against Unfair Taxes, Inc. has expressed concerns about the Town's objectives to link the tax to expansion of the Community Preservation Fund since no guidelines have been set for what open space land parcels the money will be used to purchase. They are also skeptical since a portion of the taxes will be used for administrative purposes. ***"Realtors[®] are for open space, land preservation and responsible and fair funding. To say we're not is inaccurate and misleading. We are committed to preserving our waterways, parks, natural habitats and open space, which all have a very positive effect on communities where families choose to buy homes," explained Nigel Rose, a Brookhaven resident and Licensed Associate Broker.***

Taxes are a very divisive issue for communities, especially when homeowners living on Long Island are already paying some of the highest taxes in the nation. The implementation of a transfer tax simply adds an additional financial burden to an already overtaxed consumer.