

The affected municipalities have nearly \$1.6 billion in reserves, more than 26 times the loss in revenue, said Morris Peters, a spokesman for the governor’s budget division.

Cuomo and state lawmakers have until March 31 to agree on a budget.

State Sen. Jim Gaughran (D-Northport) and Assemb. Fred Thiele (I-Sag Harbor) promised to work toward putting the AIM funding back when state lawmakers come up with their proposed budget, but urged Cuomo to heed the call of Long Island officials and provide an amendment to his budget, which Thiele said the governor could do by Feb. 14, Valentine’s Day.

“Don’t send flowers, send the AIM money,” Thiele said.

The Suffolk County Supervisor’s Association, which represents the county’s 10 towns, wrote a letter to Cuomo, opposing the cut.

“As you know, the alternative to cutting vital services are not in any way more

appealing to our residents — raising taxes or dipping into reserve funding,” according to the letter, dated Jan. 25. “Raising taxes would fly in the face of your soon-to-be permanent tax cap. How can you, with one stroke, cap taxes and in the next, force local municipalities to raise taxes?”

Huntington Town Supervisor Chad Lupinacci said his community stands to lose about \$1.1 million, which represents 0.55 percent of the town’s annual budget of about \$200 million.

The town, Lupinacci said, would consider cutting services and staff to balance the budget.

Lupinacci said he would prefer the town not use the money in its reserve funds, which help the town lower borrowing costs. Huntington has \$17 million currently, down from \$41 million in 2008, during the Great Recession.

“It just shows you how you have to dip into it when there is a rainy day,” Lupinacci said.

Get the Breaking News newsletter!

Get the latest breaking news as it happens.

By clicking Sign up, you agree to our [privacy policy](#).

 **By Chau Lam**



chau.lam@newsday.com

Chau Lam reports on a wide range of topics: from crime and courts to aviation, hurricanes and 9/11 first responders.