



ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATIVE NEWS

ULSTER COUNTY NEWS INFORMATION
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chairman Of The Ulster County Legislature's Law Enforcement & Public Safety Committee Announces Long Awaited Good News Regarding Repair Of Delaware Aqueduct West Branch Tunnel Leaks

District No. 8 Legislator Jack Hayes, Chairman of the Ulster County Legislature's Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee stated the following: "In this season of thanksgiving the people of Ulster County and Wawarsing, NY, in particular had some long awaited good news. Commissioner Caswell Holloway of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection announced the plan to repair the Delaware Aqueduct West Branch Tunnel leaks. After twenty years of discussions and studies to establish whether the tunnel was leaking, Commissioner Holloway came to Ellenville, NY this June and stated that the Tunnel did in fact leak and that New York City was taking full responsibility for repairing it. I thank Commissioner Holloway and Mayor Michael Bloomberg for stepping up to the plate and creating a solution for a long term environmental nightmare (a 35 million gallon a day leak for 20 years). I appreciate their commitment to the health and safety of the people of Ulster County and New York City (this tunnel provides 50% of NYC's water)."

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“One final detail needs to be addressed; there is still a need to create an Emergency Action Plan in the event of a failure of the West Branch Tunnel before the repairs are completed. This actually happened during the Metro West Water Tunnel repair to the Greater Boston area this spring. A failure of the West Branch Tunnel has been a concern for a number of years and New York State Comptroller James DiNapoli has conducted an Audit and made recommendations regarding Emergency Planning. Local First Responders need to know what the possible risks involved in a failure are so that they can plan accordingly. Once a plan is established, responders can practice the protocols needed to protect life and property. I am confident the recent positive actions by NYC government will manifest a comprehensive Emergency Response Plan with all stakeholders participating in a public safety partnership,” said Legislator Hayes.

Please feel free to contact Legislator Hayes at (845) 594-9367, if you have any questions regarding this matter.