

MEMORIALIZING RESOLUTION OF THE PROTECTION AND RESTORATION OF THE HEALTH BENEFITS FOR ULSTER COUNTY RESIDENTS WHO HAVE RETIRED FROM COMPANIES WHO REDUCE HEALTH BENEFITS TO RETIREES AND RAISE THE COST OF THE BENEFITS

The General Services / Community Services Committee (Chairman Tipp and Legislators Every, Maloney, McAfee, Kraft, Rodriguez and Stoeckeler) and Legislators Bartels, Berardi, Dart, Donaldson, Feldmann, Hyatt, Lomita, Loughran, R.A. Parete, R.S. Parete, Provenzano, Shapiro, and Zimet offers the following:

WHEREAS, according to recent estimates, up to ten million retirees across the United States have either had their health benefits reduced or eliminated over the past ten years, and

WHEREAS, over the past two years, hundreds of thousands of IBM retirees throughout the United States paid health benefits premium increases of 67% in 2002 and 29% in 2003, and such premiums have been projected to rise at a catastrophic rate over the next two years according to the *Wall Street Journal*, and

WHEREAS, Ulster County has been the home of two of its primary employers, IBM and Sears Roebuck & Company, for many years, and

WHEREAS, thousands of retirees reside in Ulster County who worked for these companies and many other Fortune 500 companies, and

WHEREAS, United States House of Representatives' Resolution HR1322, the Emergency Retiree Health Benefits Protection Act of 2004, would stop profitable companies from increasing their profits by cutting the health benefits of retirees, and

WHEREAS, the General Services Committee has met and reviewed said request with a majority of the members voting approval.

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature supports the passing of HR1322 by the United States House of Representatives to stop companies from cutting health benefits to retirees and the restoration of the already reduced benefits of retirees and [for the Federal Government to not offer tax incentives to companies that do not comply], and

RESOLUTION NO. 280 SEPTEMBER 9, 2004

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FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature shall forward copies of this resolution to President George W. Bush, Governor George E. Pataki, United States Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton and Charles Schumer, United States Congressman Maurice Hinchey, Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, Senate Minority Leader David A. Paterson, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Assembly Minority Leader Charles Nesbitt, New York State Senators John J. Bonacic and William J. Larkin, Jr., New York State Assemblymen Kevin Cahill, Clifford Crouch, Daniel Hooker and Thomas Kirwan, the National Association of Counties and the New York State Association of Counties,

and move its adoption.

ADOPTED AS AMENDED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 25

NOES: 4

(Legislators: Cummings, DePew, Gerentine, and Noonan)

(Abstain: Legislator Hathaway)

(Absent: Legislators Aiello, Hyatt, and Stoeckeler)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

NONE

Legislator Provenzano moved, seconded by Legislator Lomita, to amend the resolution [in brackets].

AMENDMENT ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 27

NOES: 2

(Legislators: Gerentine and Noonan)

(Abstain: Legislator Hathaway)

(Absent: Legislators Aiello, Hyatt, and Stoeckeler)