

Urging The Governor And The New York State Legislature To Reduce State Spending Without Shifting Costs For State Programs To County Government

The Ways and Means Committee (Chairman Lomita and Legislators Cahill, Dart, Gregorius, Provenzano, Zimet, Cummings, Gerentine and Noonan) offers the following:

WHEREAS, counties in New York have long served as the principal partner in administering the State's most critical programs in areas such as health, human services and public protection, and

WHEREAS, as part of administering these programs, the State mandates that counties fund a significant portion of these programs through the county budget, and

WHEREAS, these State mandates are the root cause of high property taxes at the county level, and

WHEREAS, the enacted budget for State Fiscal Year 2008-09, included an across the board 2 percent reduction that affected over 100 county programs, and

WHEREAS, the majority of the programs affected by this across the board reduction are State mandated, thus significantly limiting a county's ability to mitigate the fiscal burden of this State action, and

WHEREAS, as State policy makers continue to address looming State budget deficits, it is critical that they draw a clear distinction between "cuts" in State funding and simple cost shifting that requires counties to fund a larger share of State mandated services, and

WHEREAS, as experienced managers who must balance their own budgets, county officials understand and support the need for restraint, especially in difficult times, and

WHEREAS, counties believe that it is preferable to restructure and eliminate unnecessary and wasteful spending than to implement across the board reductions without examining the merits of each program and service, and

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

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature joins the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) in urging the Governor and the New York State Legislature to reduce State spending without shifting the costs for State programs to county government, and

Resolution No. 347 November 12, 2008

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FURTHER RESOLVED, that Ulster County and the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) believe that by working together, the State and its counties can fashion program efficiencies and changes that provide real, timely and mutual fiscal benefit, while minimizing the impact on taxpayers, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature shall forward copies of this resolution to Governor David Paterson, New York State Comptroller's Office, Senate Majority Leader Dean G. Skelos, Senate Minority Leader Malcolm Smith, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Assembly Majority Leader Ron Canestrari, Assembly Minority Leader James N. Tedisco, New York State Senators John J. Bonacic and William J. Larkin, Jr., New York State Assemblymen Kevin A. Cahill, Clifford W. Crouch, Peter Lopez and Thomas Kirwan, and the New York State Association of Counties,

and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 31 NOES: 0
(Absent: Legislators Aiello and Kraft)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
UNKNOWN