



NEWS FROM
ULSTER COUNTY
County Executive Jen Metzger

******For Immediate Release******

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**County Executive Jen Metzger and Chair of the Legislature
Peter Criswell Introduce Ukrainian ‘Sister Community’
Resolution**

**AGREEMENT WITH CHERNIVTSI REGIONAL COUNCIL OF UKRAINE ENCOURAGES
PARTNERSHIPS AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE IN AREAS OF CULTURE, EDUCATION, AND
LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

KINGSTON, NY - Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger and Chair of the Legislature Peter Criswell have introduced a resolution in the County Legislature to authorize the signing of a "Sister Community" agreement between Ulster County and the Chernivtsi Region of Ukraine to work toward mutually beneficial exchanges in the areas of education, culture, and municipal service. The City of Kingston signed a similar Sister City agreement with the Ukraine City of Sokyryany in February 2024.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower founded Sister Cities International in 1956 to foster global peace through city-to-city partnerships promoting cultural exchange, economic collaboration, and mutual respect. Today, it connects more than 1,800 communities across 138 countries, exemplifying citizen diplomacy and global cooperation.

County Executive Metzger and Chair Criswell began exploring a possible partnership last year, when Kerhonkson native Tim Distel, who had spent a period of time living in the Chernivtsi Region of Ukraine, connected them with the Chernivtsi Regional Council.

The Chernivtsi Region of Ukraine, part of historic Bukovina, is home to notable landmarks, such as the UNESCO-listed Chernivtsi National University, a Byzantine-Romanesque architectural site, and the Khotyn Fortress, a medieval structure.

“I am a big believer in the benefits of international partnerships between communities, and we already have a strong foundation for this partnership in Ulster County, which has long had a thriving Ukrainian community and cultural center in the hamlet of Kerhonkson,” **said Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger.** “I look forward to building on this foundation and partnering with the Chernivtsi Region to further promote mutual understanding and cultural enrichment and the exchange of ideas. It is particularly important to show our solidarity with the Ukrainian people at this time, as they fight for their independence and an end to this unjust war.”

“Ulster County is proud to stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine through this partnership. This initiative reflects our commitment to global cooperation, humanitarian support, and building resilient communities,” **said Peter Criswell, Chair of the Ulster County Legislature.** “We believe this partnership will foster meaningful connections, allowing us to share knowledge and resources while learning from the remarkable strength and innovation demonstrated by Ukrainian municipalities. By working together, we can make a tangible impact in supporting Ukraine’s recovery and strengthening local governments on both sides.”

“It’s truly an honor to help our County build a bond of friendship and cooperation with the Chernivtsi Oblast,” **said Tim Distel.** “I’m very proud of our community for continuing to Stand with Ukraine as they defend their independence.”

The County Legislature will act on the resolution during their April 15 session.

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