

**Urging The Governor And Legislature Of The State Of New York To Gradually Restore The 50/50 State/County Cost Sharing For The Safety Net Program And To Increase Shelter Grant Reimbursements To Counties**

Referred to: The Public Health and Social Services Committee (Chairman Lopez and Legislators Allen, Belfiglio, Heppner, and Roberts)

Legislator Carl Belfiglio and Legislators Allen, Lopez, Heppner and Roberts offer the following:

WHEREAS, the 2011-12 State Budget dramatically lowered the State's fiscal responsibility in the Safety Net Program by shifting the cost to 71% county / 29% state, severing the historic 50% state / 50% county partnership; and

WHEREAS, this continues a long line of state legislative actions that has transferred the State's constitutional and fiscal responsibility to care for the needy to county taxpayers, while providing counties virtually no control over eligibility for services and benefit levels; and

WHEREAS, the Safety Net funding shift also builds upon recent trends where the State has leveraged significant savings from maximizing available federal resources largely for state financial plan purposes only, at the expense of local property taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, the net effect of this state practice forces local property taxes to be higher than they should because available savings are being spent by the state rather than being user to lower the cost of state mandates which can provide direct relief to local property taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, nearly half of the states do not have Safety Net programs and New York is one of only 11 states that provide benefits to childless adults that do not have some disability; and

WHEREAS, most other states do not require counties to fund such a large share of public assistance costs; and

WHEREAS, counties in New York are required to finance the vast majority of Safety Net costs, putting in twice as much funding as the State; and

WHEREAS, for the first half of 2015, State data indicates that county Safety Net costs have increased by nearly 9% over the prior year; and

WHEREAS, Ulster County believes that the rising cost of providing shelter assistance to recipients is a major contributor to this increase; and

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WHEREAS, the reduction of State funding support for Safety Net Assistance is part of a larger trend where the State has reduced its fiscal commitment for nearly every public assistance program including child welfare, adoption subsidies, food stamp administration, Safety Net, Child Support Enforcement, juvenile justice and programs designed to help recently released state incarcerated offenders return to the community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature calls on the State to gradually restore the historic 50/50 state/county cost sharing for the Safety Net program over a five year period, starting with an increase in county reimbursement for shelter assistance in order to lower the local property tax burden for homeowners and small businesses; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature shall forward copies of this resolution to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Assembly and Senate Majority and Minority Leaders, all Ulster County elected Assemblymen and Senators, the Assembly and Senate Social Services Committee Chairmen, the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance Commissioner and the New York State Association of Counties,

and move its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:  
AYES: 22                      NOES: 0  
(Legislator Lopez left at 7:19 PM)

Passed Committee: Public Health and Social Services on February 29, 2016

FINANCIAL IMPACT:  
NONE

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STATE OF NEW YORK

ss:

COUNTY OF ULSTER

I, the undersigned Clerk of the Legislature of the County of Ulster, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution is the original resolution adopted by the Ulster County Legislature on the 15<sup>th</sup> Day of March in the year Two Thousand and Sixteen, and said resolution shall remain on file in the office of said clerk.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of the County of Ulster this 17<sup>th</sup> Day of March in the year Two Thousand and Sixteen.

|s| Victoria A. Fabella  
Victoria A. Fabella, Clerk  
Ulster County Legislature