

Establishing A Policy To Prohibit The Use Of Public Funds To Place The Likeness Or Name Of Elected Officials On All Promotional And Informational Signage On County Owned Property

Referred to: The Laws and Rules, Governmental Services Committee (Chairman Roberts and Legislators Donaldson, Haynes, Heppner, and James Maloney)

Legislator David B. Donaldson and Legislator Maloney (Joseph) offer the following:

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution 24 of 2018, the Ulster County Legislature established a policy prohibiting the use of public funds to place the likeness or name of elected officials on public service announcements, non-commercial and non-political advertising, and

WHEREAS, there has been a practice in government to use public funds in promoting elected officials on government facilities and signage, including the Ulster County website and other County property at various locations other than the particular official's office or web page; and

WHEREAS, elected officials are otherwise prohibited by Public Officers Law 73-b from appearing in any advertisement or promotion, including public or community service announcements, published or broadcast through any print or electronic media (including television, radio and internet) by any private or commercial entity or any other entity that publishes such advertisement for a fee, if the advertisement or promotion is paid for or produced in whole or in part with public funds; and

WHEREAS, there is no true public benefit to the taxpayers when public resources are spent on the practice of placing the name and likeness of elected officials on all promotional and informational signage on County owned property; and

WHEREAS, the appropriate expenditure of public money does not include this use, but rather should be used to fund government services to improve the welfare, health and safety of Ulster County residents; and

WHEREAS, this practice amounts to free and inappropriate political advertising for incumbent elected officials not otherwise covered by State Law, and as Ulster County has the power to regulate the expenditure of public funds on its own signs, property and publications; now, therefore be it

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RESOLVED, that it is the policy of Ulster County that on and after the effective date hereof, no County elected official shall appear by likeness, picture, or be named, or otherwise be identified or referenced on any promotional and informational signage on County owned property, where same is paid for or produced in whole or in part with public funds of any kind including grant funds; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this policy shall not apply to the appearance of an elected official's name and/or likeness on his or her office or his or her official web page, or in the County Directory, **or to any promotional and informational signage on County owned property which is in existence prior to the effective date of this policy**, and **this policy** shall not apply to appearances during a declared state of emergency or **to appearances** otherwise required or permitted by law; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately,
and move its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:

NOES:

Postponed in Committee: Laws and Rules, Governmental Services on July 16, 2018

Postponed in Committee: Laws and Rules, Governmental Services on August 13, 2018

Postponed in Committee: Laws and Rules, Governmental Services on September 17, 2018

Postponed in Committee: Laws and Rules, Governmental Services on October 15, 2018

Postponed in Committee: Laws and Rules, Governmental Services on November 19, 2018

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Passed Committee: Laws and Rules, Governmental Services on _____.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

NONE