



# ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATIVE NEWS

ULSTER COUNTY NEWS INFORMATION  
OFFICE OF ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE  
244 FAIR STREET  
KINGSTON, NY 12401

PHONE: 845-340-3900  
FAX: 845-340-3651

[Legislature.UlsterCountyNY.gov](http://Legislature.UlsterCountyNY.gov)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**June 11, 2021**

## **Chairman Donaldson and Legislators Prepare for Federal American Rescue Funds**

The coronavirus pandemic has had widespread impacts on Ulster County families and local businesses. Record-level job losses, skyrocketing costs, and an unprecedented housing crisis have reinforced the need for more robust safety net supports for our residents and businesses.

**Ulster County will receive \$34,491,474 of federal funding this year from the American Rescue Plan.** The federal funds will help our residents and businesses recover from the COVID pandemic. The federal funds also create an extraordinary opportunity to invest in a wide range of impactful initiatives that will speed our economic recovery and strengthen the county.

Chairman David Donaldson, Majority Leader Jonathan Heppner, and Minority Leader Kenneth Ronk have partnered with the Executive's Office through the Recovery & Resilience Working Group to collaboratively define high-level priorities and goals for the federal funds.

The Recovery & Resilience Working Group has convened a series of public hearings to give county residents an opportunity to make suggestions and help shape how to spend the federal funds. Members of the community can also share their funding priorities through an online survey ([Ulstercountyny.gov/ARP](http://Ulstercountyny.gov/ARP)).

Chairman David B. Donaldson states, "When everybody is included in the conversation, we all benefit. The input we receive from the community will guide our spending decisions and help the county invest in resources and programs that will have a lasting impact on the lives of all Ulster County residents."

The Chairman has reached out to the legislative body for recommendations and detailed proposals to present to the Recovery and Resilience Working Group. Legislators are proactively preparing a wide range of proposals to expand broadband access, improve infrastructure, and help local municipalities make much-needed facility improvements and repairs. Legislators are also developing innovative plans to aggressively reinvest in countywide mental health and substance use disorder services by creating a crisis stabilization center and respite housing.

## **Strengthening Local Resources for Ulster Renters and Landlords**

Chairman Donaldson is actively pursuing the establishment of a Tenant & Landlord Protection Program to help safeguard Ulster residents from eviction and foreclosure proceedings in the wake of the pandemic.

The New York State moratorium on COVID-related evictions and foreclosure proceedings will end on August 31, 2021. The Chairman states, "As we emerge from the pandemic, the county must be prepared to provide emergency funding to ensure that tenants continue to have a roof over their heads and that landlords can pay their taxes and mortgages."

The Chairman applauds the recent launch of the New York State Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). Still, he recognizes that the application process for federal and state-funded programs is highly competitive and often involves complicated forms and documentation. As a result, it can sometimes take a great deal of time for applicants to receive approval and landlords to receive payment.

The Tenant and Landlord Protection Program's aim would be to provide emergency gap funding to Ulster County tenants and landlords between September 1, 2021 and April 30, 2022. It would also underwrite a public awareness program to help eligible county residents submit the strongest possible applications and compete aggressively for crucial federal and state aid.

"It is tremendously important for the county to make resources available locally. Even a small amount of emergency assistance can be an extremely effective solution to housing insecurity and homelessness. The county should do everything it can to inform people about available resources, provide strong guidance, and empower people to access life-altering federal and state aid," says Donaldson.

\*\*\*