



# ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATIVE NEWS

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATIVE LEADERS REACT TO COMPTROLLER'S REPORT**

Kingston, NY - Ulster County Legislators are dismissive of the latest report from Ulster County Comptroller Elliot Auerbach and feel he is out of touch with the taxpayer.

"We are doing our job, watching the bottom line and protecting the taxpayer," said Legislator Richard A. Gerentine, Chairman of the Ulster County Legislature's Ways and Means Committee. "We continue to provide vital services while reducing property taxes and I believe that is what taxpayers want."

In a report released earlier this week, Auerbach criticized the Legislature's County budget process and the use of the "fund balance" to reduce the amount needed to be raised by property taxes. Gerentine noted that Comptroller Auerbach has made similar criticisms before and neither the Legislature nor their Independent Auditor agrees with the Comptroller.

"It would be irresponsible to do what the Comptroller suggests and raise property taxes while sitting on more fund balance than we absolutely need," said Gerentine.

"The budget process begins with our best projections based on our past performance and takes into consideration the worst case scenarios," explained Ken Ronk, Chairman of the Legislature. "Comptroller Auerbach wants to be a 'Monday-morning-quarterback' at the risk of raising taxes unnecessarily."

Ronk said that that multiyear projections to the year 2022 are included in the Capital Programs Budget and the annual budgets are more detailed projections. He says creating these budgets is just the first part of the process and credits Ulster County's Department heads for watching every day to ensure budgets are on track and have enough of a reserve to cover the unexpected.

Ronk also pointed to the Independent Auditor hired by the Legislature and their vast experience analyzing the budgets of several counties. "Clearly we are doing something right," said Ronk, "Our bond rating is good, our Independent Auditors are happy, we are maintaining and expanding services and we have lowered property taxes!"

"I am disappointed that Mr. Auerbach can't find something more constructive to do with his time and energy," said Gerentine, "but this Legislature will continue to do what it does best – work for the taxpayer."

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