

Accepting The Ulster County Blue Ribbon Commission On School Funding And Tax Reform Recommendations As Forwarded To The State Blue Ribbon Commission On Tax Reform

Legislator Zimet at the request of the Ulster County Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Tax Reform (Chairwoman Zimet, Legislators Decker and Gerentine and Commission members Shebar, Calderone, Gajate and O'Connor-Alisse), the Laws and Rules Committee (Chairman Bischoff and Legislators Decker, Rodriguez, Shapiro, Cummings, Maloney and Roberts) and Legislators Aiello, Fabiano, Felicello, Hansut, Harris, Noonan, Petit, Roberti, Ronk and Terrizzi offer the following:

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Tax Reform consisting of Chairwoman Zimet, Deputy Chairman Gerentine, Legislator Decker and Commission members Shebar, Calderone, Gajate and O'Connor-Alisse met every week for over 6 weeks, and

WHEREAS, the Commission has been studying the issue of Counties' role in the property tax crisis, and

WHEREAS, the Commission has concluded the following issues as critical to the discussion of property tax reform, and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Tax Reform made the following report to the State Blue Ribbon Commission on Property Tax Relief, and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding and Tax Reform is offering the Ulster County Legislature and other counties an opportunity to join with them in taking a stand on tax reform, and

WHEREAS, the property tax burden on the State Taxpayers has reached critical proportions, and

WHEREAS, the State has convened and empowered a Blue Ribbon Commission to recommend legislation to address this problem, and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Legislature supports immediate measures to be adopted to relieve the tax burden on the taxpayers, and

WHEREAS, the State of New York has defaulted on many of its constitutional responsibilities, passing along to political subdivisions, including but not limited to counties, townships, cities, villages, and school districts, in the form of unfunded or inadequately funded mandates, and

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WHEREAS, this default shifts the funding burden from the diverse and steady revenue stream of the State's income to overextended, discriminatory, punitive and regressive property taxes, and

WHEREAS, the market driven real property tax system results in hardship and inequities to millions of homeowners, and

WHEREAS, it is New York State's constitutional responsibility to fund a basic quality education for each child in the State, and

WHEREAS, because of the unstable property tax system of funding education the counties respond by making up unpredictable tax delinquencies so that school districts need not suffer the consequences in their budgets, and

WHEREAS, it is the County that must borrow and suffer the fiscal uncertainties in its own budget, and

WHEREAS, the basis for tax exemptions are broadly defined by the State, and often result in litigation costs to other taxing entities attempting to rein in the shift of the entire burden to the remaining taxpayers, and

WHEREAS, because of the lack of specificity and the liberality of the categories of exemption mandated by the State, taxing jurisdictions have lost, on average, a third and more of their properties from the tax rolls, and

WHEREAS, county budgets are crippled by the unfunded mandate for healthcare in the form of Medicaid which further contributes to the property tax crisis, and

WHEREAS, the Federal government has been remiss in funding its many education mandates, and

WHEREAS, the State has been lax in demanding full funding of said education mandates (i.e. No Child Left Behind and Special Education), which the law allows, and

WHEREAS, the Laws and Rules Committee has met and reviewed said request with a majority of the members voting approval.

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Legislator Zimet motioned, seconded by Legislator Gerentine, to add five "WHEREAS," as indicated in the body of the resolution by bold italics for the purpose of identification.

MOTION ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 32 NOES: 0
(Absent: Legislator Hansut)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
UNKNOWN

0534