

Creating A Safety Net Task Force To Evaluate The Viability And Financial Impact Of The Safety Net Program To The Taxpayers Of Ulster County

The Health and Human Services Committee (Chairman Frey and Legislators Harris, Maio, Petit, Ronk, Briggs, Loughran, Robert Parete and Stoeckeler) offers the following:

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Ulster County Charter Section C11(k) and the Administrative Code: "Section A2-5 (11) Powers and duties of the Legislature. Among such powers and duties, but not by way of limitation, it shall have the power: *to conduct studies and investigations in furtherance of its legislative functions, and in connection therewith, to obtain and employ professional and technical advice, appoint citizens' committees, commissions and boards, subpoena witnesses, administer oaths, and require the production of books, papers and other evidence deemed necessary or material to such studies or investigations*", and

WHEREAS, the state-mandated Safety Net Program, a public assistance program for people in financial need, has recently become a hot-button issue with the State's announcement that the cost-sharing ratio for the program will no longer be a 50/50 split between the State and the Counties, and

WHEREAS, the 2011 – 2012 State Budget calls for the state to pay only 29 percent of the cost which imposes a burden on the counties of 71 percent, and

WHEREAS, Social Services Law Section 69 reads as follows:

"Responsibility for public assistance and care in a county social services district. The responsibility for the administration of public assistance and care in a county social services district and the expense thereof may either be borne by the county social services district or be divided between such district and the towns and cities therein as hereinafter provided.

1. Unless otherwise determined by the board of supervisors as hereinafter provided, each town shall be responsible for the expense of providing safety net assistance for persons residing or found in such town.
2. Unless otherwise determined by the board of supervisors as hereinafter provided, a city forming a part of a county social services district shall be responsible for the expense of providing safety net assistance for any person residing or found in its territory.

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3. A county social services district shall be responsible for the expense of providing all assistance and care for persons residing or found in a town or city in its territory for which such town or city is not responsible under the provisions of subdivisions one and two of this section. The expense of such assistance and care granted by a county social services district shall be subject to reimbursement by the state in the cases provided for by section sixty-two or by any other provision of this chapter,” and

WHEREAS, Social Services Law Section 72 reads as follows:

“Power of the board of supervisors to assume responsibility for assistance and care.

1. The board of supervisors of the county may, by resolution adopted by a majority vote, direct that the cost of all or any part of the assistance and care for which the towns and cities are made responsible under the provisions of subdivisions one and two of section sixty-nine shall be a charge of the county social services district and administered under the direction of the county commissioner.

2. Copies of any such resolution shall be sent to each town clerk and to the mayor and clerk of each city in the county social services district within ten days after the adoption of the resolution. However, no resolution adopted by the board of supervisors pursuant to subdivision one of this section shall take effect in a city in the county social services district until confirmed by the legislative body of the city,” and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Ulster County Legislature to evaluate the viability and financial impact of the Safety Net Program to the taxpayers of Ulster County, and

WHEREAS, the Health and Human Services Committee has met and reviewed said request with a majority of the members voting approval, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that an eleven (11) member Safety Net Task Force is hereby created and shall be known as the Safety Net Task Force to evaluate the viability and financial impact of the Safety Net Program to the taxpayers of Ulster County and all matters related thereto, and be it further

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RESOLVED, that the Safety Net Task Force shall be comprised of the Chairman of the Health and Human Services Committee, three (3) members of the Legislative majority, three (3) members of the Legislative minority, three (3) Town Supervisors, and the Mayor of the City of Kingston, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive may appoint staff from the Executive branch of government to assist the Task Force in its work, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature hereby delegates the authority to the Safety Net Task Force to evaluate the viability and financial impact of the Safety Net Program to the taxpayers of Ulster County, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Safety Net Task Force shall report back to the Ulster County Legislature within 90 days with its full findings,

and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 31 NOES: 0
(Absent: Legislators Felicello and Hansut)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
NONE

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STATE OF NEW YORK

ss:

COUNTY OF ULSTER

This is to certify that I, the undersigned Clerk of the Legislature of the County of Ulster have compared the foregoing resolution with the original resolution now on file in the office of said clerk, and which was adopted by said Legislature on the 19th day of July, 2011, and that the same is a true and correct transcript of said resolution and of the whole thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of the County of Ulster this 21st Day of July in the year Two Thousand and Eleven.

/s/ Karen L. Binder
Karen L. Binder, Clerk
Ulster County Legislature