



# STEFAN I. MYCHAJLIW

## ERIE COUNTY COMPTROLLER

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## **COMPTROLLER MYCHAJLIW UPDATES LEGISLATURE ON IMPACT OF FEDERAL TAX CUTS ON COUNTY BUDGET**

*Budget presentation also warns Legislators to cut government spending in out years*

**(BUFFALO, NY)** – Erie County Comptroller Stefan I. Mychajliw Jr. presented his 2019 budget to the Erie County Legislature, detailing his priorities for the coming year. He also opined on the current sales tax figures and the need for legislators to start cutting government spending.

“Erie County experienced a spike in sales tax revenue. This is great news, thanks to President Trump’s tax cuts. Sales tax continues to grow, outperforming last year by more than 4 percent. With more money in their pockets, taxpayers are reinvesting that disposable income into our local economy. This is phenomenal news for the county budget and the municipalities that we share sales tax with,” said Comptroller Mychajliw.

“We usually rely on Canadian shoppers to boost sales tax. Unfortunately, international bridge traffic has decreased. Thankfully, due to federal tax reforms, sales tax revenue is increasing despite the loss of Canadian shoppers. Our economy is roaring again. Families have more money. They are spending it. As for those tax cuts, I applaud the federal government for taking tax revenue away from the politicians and putting it into the pockets of people that paid the bill in the first place,” added Comptroller Mychajliw.

The Comptroller also warned that the increase in county spending remains a concern. Since 2012, government spending increased more than \$177 million dollars and families paid \$42 million more in Erie County property taxes. Comptroller Mychajliw addressed out of control government spending at both the local and federal levels.

“The politicians need to wake up and realize that government spending is out of control. Hard working families are struggling to make ends meet. Yet politicians continue to pick their pockets, making our region one of the highest taxed in the nation. Here in Erie County, families should have been given back that \$177 million in the form of tax cuts. Look no further than the federal government. A recent New York Times story shows interest payments alone on the federal debt will hit \$915 billion in 10 years.”

“In just two years, interest payments on federal debt is projected be more than what is spent on Medicaid. By 2023, interest payments on federal debt is believed to be more than what is spent on the Department of Defense. That is unconscionable. I have two young children. A 13-year-old daughter and nine-month-old son. When our baby boy is 11 years old, the federal government will spend more on interest payments on the debt than what is spent on the military and health care for seniors. It is clear the politicians at the county and federal levels need to go on a debt diet. In the end, taxpayers are the ones getting screwed,” concluded Comptroller Mychajliw.

With regard to his department budget, Comptroller Mychajliw discussed plans to focus on the County-wide Risk Assessment Program to continue to ensure waste and fraud involving taxpayer dollars is stopped.

“As Comptroller I lead by example. My goal is always to efficiently utilize tax dollars to ensure that my office delivers the services that taxpayers need. We have improved several processes and I am proud of the results we have produced. At the same time, I am making sure our audit division remains focused on uncovering waste and fraud,” said Comptroller Mychajliw.

Earlier in 2018 the office launched a new online service to allow taxpayers to easily search for surplus funds and begin the recovery process. The office also added an online enrollment form for the e-vendor Electronic Payments Program.

Among the priorities for 2019 are reviewing the effectiveness of economic development incentives awarded to the Erie County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA) and expanding the whistleblower hotline to assist county employees in reporting abuse, discrimination, sexual harassment and other complaints.

“At the end of the day, it is my mission to protect taxpayers and hold the politicians accountable. I thank my dedicated staff of career civil servants that share that mission and fulfill it every single day on behalf of the families we serve,” concluded Comptroller Mychajliw.

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