ECLEG SEP18'12 AM10:10

A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED BY
LEGISLATORS MILLS, DIXON, LORIGO, RATH & HARDWICK

Re: Requesting Information Regarding Ralph Wilson Stadium Lease

WHEREAS, Ralph Wilson Stadium is owned by Erie County and its taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, Local Law Number 2 of 1971 authorizes Erie County to enter into leases for the stadium for a term not to exceed forty years; and

WHEREAS, the stadium has been home to the Buffalo Bills since 1971; and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo Bills have had a positive fiscal impact on the local, regional and New York State economies; and

WHEREAS, the team is estimated to generate nearly $20 million in New York State taxes annually, in addition to significant county taxes; and

WHEREAS, the team has been estimated to have an annual economic impact to the region well in excess of $100 million; and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo Bills lease with Erie County for the stadium is set to expire in July, 2013; and

WHEREAS, since taking office, the County Executive has stated that he hoped to sign a new long-term lease that would keep the Bills in Erie County by the start of training camp; and

WHEREAS, that did not happen; and

WHEREAS, the deadline for the Buffalo Bills to apply to the National Football League for funding to make improvements to Ralph Wilson Stadium during the off-season has now passed; and

WHEREAS, it now appears that the County Executive has agreed in principal to an agreement that would keep the Bills in Erie County for one year; and

WHEREAS, presumably, this agreement will have an impact on the Erie County budget and four year plan and that impact needs to be discussed; and

WHEREAS, it appears that the County Executive still intends to pursue a long-term lease with the Buffalo Bills; and

WHEREAS, there is precedent for the Erie County legislature to assist the County Executive perform administrative functions, such as with the legislature's recently created VALER 4 Valor committee; and

WHEREAS, a discussion should occur as to what role the Erie County Legislature can play beyond approving any lease to assist the County Executive to accomplish his goal of securing a long-term lease with the Buffalo Bills.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature requests representatives from the administration to appear before the Finance and Management committee to discuss the impact of the one year lease on the 2013 budget and the four year plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature requests representatives from the administration to appear before the Economic Development committee to discuss in what ways the legislature can assist the administration in its negotiations with the Buffalo Bills; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be forwarded to County Executive Mark Poloncarz, Governor Andrew Cuomo and Commissioner of Environment and Planning Maria Whyte.

Fiscal Impact: None.