ECLEG JUN18'13 AM10:23

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

Re: Opposing Taxpayer Funded Campaign Finance

WHEREAS, there are several proposed laws in the New York State Assembly and Senate that purport to institute campaign finance reform; and

WHEREAS, one of the omnibus bills receiving considerable attention, which has no companion bill in the Assembly, is Senate Bill 4009; and

WHEREAS, that bill includes a provision creating a system of public financing of political campaigns, amounting to six dollars of taxpayer funds going to a candidate for every dollar that the candidate raises privately; and

WHEREAS, using taxpayer dollars to fund political aspirations should not be a priority during difficult economic times, or any time for that matter; and

WHEREAS, forcing taxpayers to fund political campaigns without an easy way, or any way, to opt out of the program is an improper imposition of costs on taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, due to the nature of the matching system, an individual who does not wish to fund any candidate would be encouraged to financially participate to support a candidate so that their tax dollars would be used to match their preferred candidate's donations more than a candidate whose views the individual does not support; and

WHEREAS, creating a system which forces a taxpayer to financially support a candidate whose views are in opposition to the taxpayer is an interesting twist on the old adage "taxation without representation;" and

WHEREAS, forcing and encouraging taxpayers to participate financially in a campaign does nothing to change the behavior of those who seek to unethically abuse elected office; and

WHEREAS, combining taxpayer funding of political campaigns with certain proposed donation limits serves to protect incumbents and limit challenger candidates to individuals supported by established political machines; and

WHEREAS, forcing taxpayers to fund candidates whose views they oppose, protecting incumbents and limiting challenger candidates to those beholden to political bosses is not genuine campaign finance reform.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature opposes any proposal which includes involuntary taxpayer funding of political campaigns; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be forwarded to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Senate Majority Leaders Dean Skelos and Jeffrey Klein and the local delegation to the New York State Legislature.

Fiscal Impact: Positive for New York State taxpayers.