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COUNTY OF ERIE

MARK C. POLONCARZ
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

April 19, 2012

Common Council
City of Buffalo
1400 City Hall
Buffalo, New York 14202

Re: Proposed Construction of New Academic Building at Erie Community College

Honorable Council Members,

Recently there has been much discussion regarding the proposed construction of a new academic building at Erie Community College ("ECC"), including what has been reported as the position of my administration as to its construction. In response to your letter of March 5, 2012 and to clarify my position, please be advised that while I have reaffirmed Erie County's (the "County") commitment to redesignate $7.5 million out of the County's fund balance towards the construction of a new ECC academic building, I do not at this time support or oppose the construction of this building on any one of ECC's three campuses over another and have not agreed to appropriate the amount at this time.

For the record, in late January, Deputy County Executive Richard Tobe and I met with representatives from ECC to discuss the proposed $30 million building project for ECC's North Campus in Amherst, NY. In this meeting and subsequent conversations, it became quite clear that although there has been much public discussion about the potential project, including obtaining tentative financing from the County and New York State, a great deal of work remains to be accomplished before the County will appropriate funds for construction. Therefore, I requested that ECC provide my administration with significant background information on the planning process and any related research, including any reports and plans developed. I have enclosed a copy of the letter sent to ECC President Jack Quinn, dated February 10, 2012, detailing that request.

President Quinn provided to us in a timely manner all of the requested materials that were readily available and proposed the County and ECC meet on a regular basis to coordinate the process of information gathering and move us closer to understanding ECC's needs. The County is committed to working with ECC throughout this process which is expected to take approximately nine months to a year. We are confident the research process will result in

credible data that will allow us to be sure that we are making the correct decisions and to gain the support a project of this type requires.

Although representatives of ECC originally stated the building to be located on the North Campus would be used for health sciences programs, no formal building use report or analysis of the academic needs of ECC has yet been completed. Without a thorough analysis of ECC's needs and the intended use for the building, no determination can be made of either the programs to be housed in it or the most appropriate site. In fact, representatives of ECC have now informed my administration that it was premature to identify the building as a health sciences center and no use has been determined at this point. Therefore, any belief that the building is a "health sciences" building is incorrect and anyone stating so is misinformed.

I thank you for your concern into this important communitywide matter and look forward to a continued dialogue with the members of the Common Council about this important project.

Sincerely yours,

Mark Poloncarz
County Executive

MCP/eb

cc: Erie County Legislature
Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority
Jack Quinn, President, Erie Community College
Richard Tobe, Deputy County Executive
John Loffredo, Commissioner of Public Works
Maria Whyte, Commissioner of Environment and Planning
Robert Keating, Director of Budget and Management