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ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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County of Erie

DENNIS T. GORSKI
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

January 29, 1999

PHONE: 716/858-8500
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The Honorable
Erie County Legislature
25 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14202

Honorable Members:

For the past several years, Erie County has done well lobbying Albany, in part because we have had direct representation at the Capital. The annual budget delay, combined with significant cuts to local governments promise a difficult year when it comes to the state budget.

I would like to continue our successful representation in Albany, which augments the efforts of our Western New York State Delegation and our own staff.

As a result of our most recent RFP process and its analysis, I am recommending the firm of Bolton - St. Johns, Inc. as the County's representative in Albany for 1999 at a cost of thirty thousand (\$30,000) dollars, plus limited incidental expenses.

The firm was selected in accordance with the RFP provisions specified in Section 19.08 of the County Administrative Code. I do not believe we could secure a better representative for the competitive price offered. I, therefore, recommend the approval of a one-year contract.

Please refer this communication to the Government Affairs Committee. A representative of Bolton - St. Johns, Inc. will be on hand to answer any questions you may have.

Very truly yours,

DENNIS T. GORSKI
County Executive

DTG:smc

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ACCOMPANYING MEMORANDUM

I. Summary of Recommended Action

The attached resolution requests authority for the County to enter into a one-year contract with the firm Bolton-St. Johns, Inc. for representing and promoting Erie County's interests at the New York State government level. The resolution proposes an appropriation from the Contractual Agencies and Service Charges account in Department 310 in an amount not to exceed thirty-four thousand (\$34,000) dollars.

II. Fiscal Implications of Proposal

The source of funding for the proposed contract is Department 310, Account 830 - Contractual Agencies and Service Charges, Subaccount 0105 - Municipal Association Fees. The contract would authorize a basic fee for services of thirty thousand (\$30,000) dollars per year and limit incidental expenses to an amount not to exceed four thousand (\$4,000) dollars.

III. Reasons for Recommendation

The County has a concern over continuing losses in state aid for numerous local programs. Additionally, there are a variety of concerns unique to Erie County (e.g. reimbursements to the Erie County Medical Center and the advancement of other Home Rule interests) that require special intervention at the state government level.

The breadth of experience possessed by Bolton-St. Johns, Inc. will enhance the lobbying services provided, including one-on-one member visits to present Erie County's interests; direct negotiation of program and fiscal legislative initiatives designed to enhance Erie County programs; meetings with agency heads and departmental directors to assist in the development of rules and regulations conducive to Erie County regulated programs; and briefing the Governor's program and budget staff on Erie County's position on issues of importance to the County.

IV. Selection Process

In accordance with Section 19.08 of the County Administrative Code, a Request for Proposal was developed and issued to several different lobbying firms and a Public Notice ran in the Buffalo News. Two firms submitted responses to the Request for Proposal. Each response was reviewed and evaluated by a three (3) member committee. The results of this evaluation found that Bolton-St. Johns, Inc. understands Erie County's prime issues and has done an excellent job lobbying over the past five years.

V. Consequences of Negative Action

Failure to adopt this resolution would impede the County's efforts to protect and enhance the County's receipt of state aid.

VI. Steps Following Approval of Measure

The County Attorney will prepare a contract and the County Executive will engage the services of Bolton-St. Johns, Inc.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

**RE: Authorization and Funding of County Contract with the Firm
Bolton-St. Johns, Inc.**

WHEREAS, the County desires to retain the services of a professional firm which has in-depth experience in promoting the interests of a local government entity at the New York State level of government, and

WHEREAS, the need for the County of Erie to wage an effective lobbying effort at the State Capitol takes on even greater significance given the potential threat of state aid losses and the unique funding needs and service missions of Erie County government, and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 19.08 of the County Administrative Code, a Request for Proposal was forwarded to several firms and a Public Notice ran in the Buffalo News, and

WHEREAS, the responses to the Request for Proposal were reviewed and evaluated, and

WHEREAS, it is recommended that the County of Erie enter into a one-year contract with the firm Bolton-St. Johns, Inc., One Commerce Plaza, Suite 1810, Albany, New York 12260 for purposes of providing a variety of services including, but not limited to, direct negotiation of program and fiscal legislative initiatives designed to enhance Erie County programs; meetings with agency heads and directors to assist in the development of rules and regulations conducive to Erie County programs; and briefing the Governor's program and budget staff on Erie County's position on issues of importance to the County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, the County Executive is authorized to enter into contract with the firm Bolton-St. Johns, Inc. to represent and promote the interests of the County of Erie at the New York State level of government and to provide such services to the County of Erie for a twelve month period beginning January 1, 1999 with a fee structure consisting of a basic fee for services of thirty thousand (\$30,000) dollars per year, and reimbursement of incidental expenses that are incurred in the specific performance of services for Erie County in an amount not to exceed four thousand (\$4,000) dollars, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the sum of thirty-four thousand (\$34,000) dollars is hereby appropriated from Department 310, Account 830 - Contractual Agencies and Service Charges, Subaccount 0105 - Municipal Association Fees, for the purpose of funding the aforementioned contract with the firm Bolton-St. Johns, Inc., and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to the County Executive, the Director of Budget and Management and the County Comptroller.