

ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

BARBARA MILLER-WILLIAMS
Chair of the Legislature
3rd District Legislator



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February 14, 2011

Mr. Daniel C. Oliverio
Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority
295 Main Street
Suite 946
Buffalo, NY 14203

RE: In response to your letter regarding the Four Year Plan

Dear Mr. Oliverio:

Thank you for your letter of February 8th regarding the Erie County Four Year Plan.

I feel as you do, that the open and honest dialogue between the various branches of County Government and the Fiscal Stability Authority, have proven to be a productive partnership. And though the Administration, the Comptroller and some Members of the Legislature may not always agree on priorities I do believe that we all agree that we need to make the difficult choices that are demanded of us in challenging economic times.

The Charter for Erie County very clearly outlines the duties of the Legislature with regards to the budget in Section 26. I believe it is the full intent of each Member of the Legislature to follow the language of the Charter. The Charter was amended by Local Law 3 in 2006 and the additional provisions and clarifications in that revision provide the Legislature with specific processes and financial procedures that we must follow with regarding the Erie County Budget. The processes preclude me from specifically answering your questions in the form of a letter today.

In addition to the process we must follow, including considering revisions to the budget throughout the year, we also monitor the budget to make sure it is being followed by the various County Departments. By studying the Budget Monitoring Reports and Vacancy Reports in a timely manner when they are provided to us by the Administration; inviting the Comptroller, Budget Director and Members of the Administration to the Finance and Management Committee Meetings throughout the year; and holding annual Mid-Year Budget Hearings, I feel that we do our very best to stay well briefed on the financial condition of the County.

“We are here to serve the Community”

That said, we stand ready and willing to have a conversation with all of the interested parties including the ECSFA, Comptroller, Budget Director and Administration, about the challenges we face in the out-years of the Four Year Plan.

In order to facilitate that conversation I would like to formally invite the Board Members and Staff of the ECSFA to a meeting of the Finance and Management Committee on March 1, 2011 at 10:00am. I will also be inviting the Comptroller, Budget Director and Administration to take part in this discussion and will advise each Member of the Legislature about the meeting and invite them to attend and participate.

I recognize, as you do, that we face some potentially significant challenges as we watch the impact of State and Federal budgets and the fluctuations in tax proceeds in the coming years. I feel that the best way to find creative solutions that will allow us to be prepared for any challenges that arise will be in a face to face conversation with all of the relevant interested parties.

I look forward to having that discussion with you and the others mentioned above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barbara Miller-Williams', written in a cursive style.

Barbara Miller-Williams
Chair, Erie County Legislature