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COUNTY OF ERIE
STEFAN I. MYCHAJLIW
COMPTROLLER

October 2, 2013

Hon. Mark Poloncarz
Erie County Executive, 16th Floor
95 Franklin Street
Buffalo, New York 14202

Re: Charter Sec 2506 Revenue and certain expense projections reviewed

Dear Hon. Poloncarz:

From reading published reports it appears as though, when you served as Erie County Comptroller, you demanded former Erie County Executive Chris Collins to immediately "hand over" Real Property Tax Revenue and Expense projections that are Charter Mandated by October 1st every year. You violated the Erie County Charter by neglecting to include this critically important piece of information in your report dated October 1st, 2014.

The current Office of Comptroller is going to hold you to the very same standard you established as Comptroller: please immediately "hand over" Real Property Tax Revenue projections that you refused to disclose on time.

This information is critically important to Legislators who will soon deliberate over the proposed 2014 budget. Not only have you violated the Erie County Charter, but you are withholding what is the second largest revenue source for all of Erie County: Real Property Tax Revenue.

While serving as Comptroller, you previously took issue with Real Property Tax Revenue projections being withheld from the Charter Mandated October 1st deadline:

"Poloncarz insisted that the county executive hand over his numbers. The county executive refused. So Poloncarz was not able to review the budget until the complete document was released, at the late last minute, on October 15."

Source: Artvoice, "The Transparent Mr. Collins," Geoff Kelly, 10/31/08

An analysis of the budget is difficult to complete without that (Real Property Tax Revenue projection) hefty slice of the pie chart.

Source: Artvoice, "Running Government Like a Business," Geoff Kelly, 11/05/08

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Please hold yourself to the high standard you held the previous County Executive to. You criticized your predecessor for doing the same exact thing you're doing now. This political hypocrisy hurts taxpayers and leaves legislators in the dark. Government is most responsive to taxpayers when business is conducted in an open, honest, and transparent manner, not in secret.

Concerning the issue of property taxes, I would recommend you heed the advice of Governor Andrew Cuomo, who just announced the creation of a task force to cut property taxes in New York:

"We are way out of pace with the rest of the country in terms of property taxes both in terms of dollars and percentage. Property taxes are a scourge all across this state. The No. 1 burden is property taxes."

Source: NYS Governor Andrew Cuomo, in "The Buffalo News," Tom Precious, 10/02/13

Erie County must reduce property taxes for families who are being crushed by the heavy burden of over-taxation. Please cut property taxes in the 2014 budget.

Sincerely,



Stefan I. Mychajliw
Erie County Comptroller

cc: Erie County Legislature
Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority