

A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED BY
LEGISLATOR RATH

Re: Supporting state and federal efforts to introduce high-speed internet to rural areas of Erie County

WHEREAS, access to the internet allows for the dissemination of ideas and information at a pace unimagined only a decade ago; and

WHEREAS, the use of broadband cable to access the internet has allowed for individuals to examine and share enormous quantities of data almost instantaneously; and

WHEREAS, many of the crops and resources that we use and rely on everyday come from members of our community located in the outskirts of our cities and towns where broadband cable does not exist yet; and

WHEREAS, these members of our community who supply us with locally grown crops and related resources would benefit greatly from the ability to access high speed internet including real-time weather information, continuously updated commodity prices, and information on intended crops and pest outbreak details from the entire country; and

WHEREAS, other local community safety services, such as volunteer firefighters and EMTs, would benefit from the availability of high speed internet, which would assist in their communication with units in the field as well as the entire community; and

WHEREAS, there are still significant rural portions of Erie County that are not properly served by broadband internet access due to factors such as low population density and geographic isolation making their development by service providers unlikely; and

WHEREAS, in the past the State of New York and the Federal government have implemented funding and proposed plans to enable access to broadband services in these remote locations including Connect NY and Regional Economic Development Grants; and

WHEREAS, funding in 2014, through the State budget, has been dramatically decreased to \$9 million from \$25 million in 2013.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that this honorable body encourages and supports initiatives, including the Connect NY Broadband Grant Program and the Regional Economic Development Councils, by the state and federal governments to enable high-speed internet access via broadband internet connectivity; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be sent to the New York Governor's Office, the Local delegation of the New York State Legislature, and all other parties deemed necessary and proper.

Fiscal Impact: None