



ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

92 Franklin Street - 4th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

TO: Members of the Erie County Legislature

FROM: Karen M. McCarthy, Clerk

DATE: July 6, 2016

SUBJECT: Comments on Proposed LL Intro. 9-1 (2016)

The attached comments about proposed LL Intro. 9-1 (2016) were received from Paul Wolf prior to the Public Hearing held on July 6, 2016.

McCarthy, Karen

From: Paul Wolf <paulwolf2@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 06, 2016 1:22 PM
To: McCarthy, Karen
Subject: Public Hearing

Public hearing regarding amendments to the Erie County Charter. I would love to appear in person for the public hearing scheduled for July 6th at 5:30 pm but I did not become aware of the hearing until yesterday and will be unable to attend.

As I understand it the public must be given at least 5 days notice of a public hearing. I checked the county web site last week looking for the date of this public hearing and nothing was posted. As the hearing is being held July 6th, more than likely the notice of the hearing was posted on Friday July 1st. The Friday before a holiday weekend. It would have been great if more notice could have been provided. **Can you tell me when and how the date of this hearing was released to the public?**

As a concerned citizen I would like to express my opposition to Erie County Legislators receiving a four year term. I also oppose creating an 18 member Erie County Ethics Board.

One of the biggest problems in government is that we do not have competitive elections. In 2015 every single incumbent county legislator was re-elected.

Many did not have any opposition or they won re-election by a landslide. Only two races were competitive in that they were decided by 10 points or less.

Incumbents have all of the advantages: district lines drawn to benefit them, paid staff to campaign for them, access to help from from patronage workers through Party HQ, Water Authority, Board of Elections etc.; access to special interest campaign funds etc.

A four year term is a gift that will simply make defeating incumbent legislators even harder. Linking four year terms to a so called "independent" re-districting commission is not a sufficient trade off for four year terms. The proposed commission is far from independent in that the members are selected by legislators. Four year terms should not be done without a term limit of eight years.

An 18 member Board of Ethics would be a nightmare to manage in my opinion as it is too big and the selection of board members is being politicized.

Paul Wolf