

**A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED BY
LEGISLATOR DIXON AND MILLS**

Re: Calling on State to Restore Funding to the Zoo, Botanical Gardens and Aquariums Program

WHEREAS, the Zoo, Botanical Gardens and Aquariums (ZBGA) is a grant program used to develop educational, cultural, and recreational programming, including permanent collections; and

WHEREAS, the stated intent of the ZBGA grant program is to “provide eligible local governments and not-for-profit organizations timely and **stable** annual funding for operating program and support;” and

WHEREAS, the Governor proposed a \$2.5 million cut to the ZBGA program, which has historically been set at \$15 million each year; and

WHEREAS, these cuts will eliminate almost 17% of the program’s funding for area organizations including the Buffalo Zoo (\$60,000), the Botanical Gardens (\$14,000), and the Tift Nature reserve (\$37,000); and

WHEREAS, these organizations are important elements of the community here in Erie County and are vital to the vibrancy of our society not just for the direct educational and cultural benefits they provide but also for the economic boost visitors provide the surrounding businesses; and

WHEREAS, the move to abruptly cut this program’s funding is akin to pulling the rug out from under these organizations’ feet, especially since the ZBGA program purports to provide stable funding; and

WHEREAS, cultural organizations like those named in this Resolution are what make Erie County unique and often require and rely on funding provided by governmental entities. We must continue to provide that promised support.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that this honorable body supports the Buffalo Zoo, the Botanical Gardens, the Tift Nature Reserve, and all of Erie County’s cultural institutions; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this honorable body hereby calls on Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature to reestablish the Zoo, Botanical Gardens, and Aquariums program to the full \$15 million; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this Resolution be sent to Governor Cuomo, the Western New York delegation to the New York State Senate and Assembly, and any other party deemed necessary and proper.

Fiscal Impact: None for resolution