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ERIE COUNTY COMPTROLLER

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MYCHAJLIW QUESTIONS CUOMO: WHY ARE ELECTIVE SURGERIES NOT PERMITTED AT ALL ERIE COUNTY HOSPITALS

Erie County Comptroller Stefan I. Mychajliw Jr. sends letter to Governor Cuomo asking why it's OK for sports training camps to be open, but not have elective surgeries at all Erie County hospitals

(ERIE COUNTY, NY) –Erie County Comptroller Stefan I. Mychajliw Jr. sent a letter to Governor Andrew Cuomo and Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul today, asking them to explain why all Erie County hospitals are not allowed to resume elective surgeries, in light of multiple sets of data supporting their full operation in our region. Data released by Governor Cuomo himself at numerous daily press briefings show that in Erie County:

- The number of daily COVID-19 related deaths are continually declining
- As of May 24th there were just six new admissions of patients diagnosed with COVID-19
- The number of patients in the ICU on that date was 37
- Ventilator assisted patients are down to its lowest level since the start of this pandemic

“Erie County hit every benchmark imaginable to resume elective surgeries at all Erie County hospitals. Yet New York State refuses to lift this ban for all hospitals here. It makes no sense. Something isn’t right. Why can professional sports teams host training camps, but all Erie County hospitals aren’t allowed to participate in elective surgeries,” asked Comptroller Mychajliw in his letter to Cuomo and Hochul.

“Central New York and the Finger Lakes have seen an increase in COVID cases, yet they were allowed to resume elective surgeries. Other hard-hit parts of the state are also performing these procedures again. Why not Erie County? Seems fishy to me,” added Comptroller Mychajliw.

In addition, one of the criteria for re-starting elective procedures is for hospitals to maintain 30% of beds available in case there is another uptick in coronavirus cases. Comptroller Mychajliw says given the latest data, hospitals in Erie County appear ready to handle that requirement.

“Data shows Erie County flattened the curve. Cases are trending downwards. Now all hospitals need to be allowed to resume elective procedures. I’ve asked the governor for clarity. It makes no sense that Erie County is one of the only regions in the entire state still not allowed,” said Comptroller Mychajliw.

The only other region of the state not allowed to resume these procedures is hard-hit New York City. Most elective surgeries are quite serious and necessary for the potential survival of patients. In many cases these elective surgeries are not “optional” and even help treat patients with cancer related conditions. Elective surgeries provide a significant portion of funding for hospitals. Health care systems are required to apply for waivers to the New York State Department of Health in order to resume elective surgeries.

“People have suffered enough. Many folks, especially seniors, need these elective surgeries for better quality of life. Hospitals are also hurting. They need the resources derived from these important procedures. I look forward to hearing an explanation,” concluded Comptroller Mychajliw.

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