



STEFAN I. MYCHAJLIW

ERIE COUNTY COMPTROLLER

September 10, 2020 – For immediate release
Contact – Office of Erie County Comptroller, 854-8400

ERIE COUNTY SALES TAX DROPS MORE THAN 12% IN JULY

Covid-19 continues to impact County's biggest revenue generator

(ERIE COUNTY, NY) –The Office of Erie County Comptroller has provided lawmakers with the latest data on sales tax revenue. Income generated from sales tax for the summer months is down significantly from prior years. For the month of July, 2020 compared to July, 2019, sales tax revenue dropped 12.48% for a month-to-month loss of \$4.98 million. According to data shared with the Erie County Legislature, Erie County's share of sales tax revenue for July, 2020 was \$34,964,295 compared to \$39,952,259 in July, 2019.

When comparing the total amount of sales tax received for the first seven months of the year, from January, 2020 to July, 2020, sales tax for this year compared to last year is down 8.7% county share for a seven-month loss of \$23.7 million.

"Erie County typically performs well in summer months. Tourists, shoppers, and people just looking to enjoy a Buffalo summer spend their hard-earned tax dollars here. But with the pandemic, so many attractions have been closed or are not operating at usual capacity. Quarantines have made travel difficult. People are out of work. So the money just isn't being spent. Lawmakers rely on those sales tax dollars in the county budget. It's definitely going to hurt," said Comptroller Stefan Mychajliw.

The County share sales tax revenue from January, 2020 through July, 2020 totals \$248,795,434.58. For that same period in 2019 sales tax collected county share was \$272,513,681.19.

The negative news about county finances is just the latest indicator of the epidemic's impact on the Western New York economy, and will potentially impact any spending plan for 2021. The Administration typically releases its proposed budget in October, as lawmakers then spend several weeks fine-tuning that budget, before voting on it in early December. The 2020 budget projected more than \$491 million in sales tax revenue for this year.

"It's just further evidence of the crushing impact COVID has had on our region. We are going to bring in far less than the \$491 million. Going forward Erie County lawmakers are going to have to make tough decisions," concluded Comptroller Mychajliw.

###