

A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED BY LEGISLATOR MILLS

ECLEG MAY 12 '20 AM 9:35

RE: Resuming Erie County Legislature Proceedings in Legislative Chambers

WHEREAS, the Erie County Legislature has recently responded to the Covid-19 pandemic by holding legislature proceedings via teleconference to limit the number of individuals in Legislative Chambers; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature is a deliberative body invested to constant and frequent dialogue among all elected officials, administration personnel, and concerned citizens; and

WHEREAS, teleconferencing is not an adequate format for legislative proceedings and in-depth discussions, especially given the recent budget deficit declaration, this issue is too serious to confront utilizing a confusing online process that can build frustrations among individuals who need to work collaboratively; and

WHEREAS, the Legislative Chambers can hold up to 148 individuals, and where proper social distancing measures can be implemented in the Chambers, since the presence of elected officials and essential staff would account for 15 percent of the room's capacity; and

WHEREAS, we are now approaching the deadline for New York State Pause on May 15 it is incumbent upon us to show good faith to the residents of Erie County to re-establish legislative session and committee meetings in the chambers of Old County Hall; and

WHEREAS, Erie County owns several facilities that are significantly larger in capacity that could host legislative meetings to maintain everyone's safety, if a larger space is necessary.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that this Honorable Body immediately resume conducting regularly scheduled legislative sessions and committee meetings, and any special sessions if necessary, in the physical Chambers of the Erie County Legislature, or larger venue; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that while a State of Emergency exists in Erie County limiting in-person citizen participation and access to governmental activities, the official proceedings of the Legislature shall be broadcast via teleconference to ensure citizen participation in government; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that physical distancing measures be implemented, and face coverings be worn, while conducting legislative proceedings, while a State of Emergency exists in Erie County.

Fiscal Impact: None