



# ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

HON. JOSEPH C. LORIGO  
10TH DISTRICT LEGISLATOR  
MINORITY LEADER

January 19, 2021

Hon. April N. M. Baskin  
Erie County Legislature, Chairwoman  
92 Franklin Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Hon. Lisa Chimera  
Health & Human Services Committee, Chairwoman  
92 Franklin Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Chairwomen Baskin and Chimera:

The global Covid19 pandemic remains a threat in our community, throughout the country and across the world. In recent weeks there have been several developments worthy of our attention and inspection. The positivity rate from testing has increased, indicating that the virus is spreading beyond our capacity to reasonably control it with restrictions. On a more positive note, the State has started their vaccine rollout. Unfortunately, that rollout appears to be a disaster compared to the way it is being managed in other communities. This past weekend Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul announced that the distribution wait time will have to be pushed back another 6 months.

Despite these important developments, the Erie County Legislature's Health and Human Services Committee has not met to discuss them in over a month. The Committee's last official meeting was on November 12, 2020. The Committee did meet informally at 10:45am on Thursday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, but it was brief because it was only scheduled for 15 minutes.

I think we need to do better than this, and I am requesting that you call a meeting of the Health and Human Services Committee to discuss the status of the virus in our community and the State's efforts to rollout the vaccine to our constituents. I am particularly interested in learning more about why in places like Florida the vaccine is available at neighborhood drug stores, but in Erie County we are being told it is at least six months away from being conveniently available. What is going on here? What role, if any, does Erie County play? Is this a matter of resources that we as a Legislature can help solve, or is it utter mismanagement at some level?

I look forward to the opportunity to discuss my questions in a formal committee setting with the leadership of our Health and Emergency Services Departments. Please call one.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH C. LORIGO  
Minority Leader