



Press Release

Monroe County Democratic Caucus

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For Immediate Release
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Democrats Support Keeping Budget Deadline As Is Will Oppose Controversial Measure

Rochester, New York – August 2, 2006: A highly controversial, Republican-sponsored proposal to change the county budget submission deadline will come before the Monroe County Legislature Agenda/Charter and Ways & Means Committees tonight.

The proposal aims to shift the submission deadline from the second Tuesday in October to November 15, cutting in half the time that the legislature has to review the 1,000 page, billion-dollar budget.

Democrats are concerned that the proposed deadline does not provide nearly enough time for legislators to address the budget document in a thorough and responsible manner. Furthermore, the proposed deadline would severely limit time for public review and debate.

"Almost 90% of New York State counties that elect their county executive require the county executive to submit a budget to the legislative body before Election Day," reports Minority Leader Carla Palumbo. "Why? Because it makes sense. Having a budget deadline before Election Day preserves accountability. It requires the County Executive to be upfront with voters about county fiscal policy and it allows adequate time for legislators, the public, and agencies that receive county funding to review and debate the extremely voluminous document"

Critics of the proposal argue that a post-election deadline will allow the Republicans to cut services and raise taxes without fear of voter reprisal. The last time a budget was submitted after an election in Monroe County, it contained a Republican-sponsored 47% tax increase.

A similar piece of legislation was put forth by Republicans in 2004, but was ultimately withdrawn after drawing much public criticism.

If the proposal passes through committee, the full legislature will set a public hearing on the matter when it meets on August 8, 2006.

The Agenda/Charter Committee meets tonight at 5:00 p.m. and the Ways & Means Committee meets at 6:00 p.m.

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