



Media Release

Monroe County Democratic Caucus

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County Republicans Fail to Act

Home Rule Sunsets - Budget Crisis Looms

Rochester, New York – June 18, 2007. As the end of the State Legislature's session rapidly approaches, the Monroe County Legislature's Democratic Caucus' request for a special session of the legislature has been met with silence from across the aisle. The Democratic Leadership had sought the support of the Legislature Republicans to convene a special meeting of the full legislature on June 19th to consider the home rule request authorizing the abolishment of the Monroe County Water Authority, as well as the recruitment and retention grant for the Monroe County District Attorney's Office. Republicans have failed to join with Democrats in requesting a special meeting to consider these important matters.

Embroiled in scandal, and with roughly \$21 million in excess funds, the MCWA makes a perfect candidate for the type of smart government consolidation that would not only make government more directly accountable to taxpayers, but would also go a long way towards solving the county's budget crisis. Democratic Minority Leader **Carla Palumbo** believes that the time for real solutions has come. "Failing to act on this issue in a timely manner means we close the door on home rule," said **Palumbo**, "and with that Monroe County loses the ability to determine for itself the future of the Water Authority."

By failing to act, the legislature would also cut off another potential revenue stream, bringing the administration one step closer to raising taxes. "County Republicans are choosing a path that leads to a tax increase by failing to consider other options," said **Palumbo**. "We have heard time and again that other levels of government control too much of our affairs here in Monroe County. Here is a chance to take some of that control back and we are passing it up."

County Democrats had also sought bi-partisan support for the district attorney's office recruitment and retention grant, but none has materialized. The state grant funds would be used to support the county's team of prosecutors in their public safety efforts, but authorization to accept the grant has oddly become a politically contentious issue in the Republican led county legislature.

Debate will likely continue at the County Legislature's Ways and Means Committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 27th.

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