



Media Release

Monroe County Democratic Caucus

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For Immediate Release
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The 2009 County Budget Fails the People of Monroe County: *GOP Ignores Looming \$104 Million Deficit*

Rochester, New York –December 2, 2008. Democrats in the Monroe County Legislature announced their opposition to the proposed 2009 County budget, calling it fiscally irresponsible and unsustainable. Included in the Republican budget is a projected deficit of \$104 million in two years.

Democratic Minority Leader Harry Bronson (D-Rochester, Brighton, Henrietta) said, "The people of this County deserve better than the Republican approach of taking future revenue through one-shots to cover current year operating costs. This borrow and spend approach will place today's fiscal burden upon our children. Difficult times require difficult choices. If the Republicans insist upon going down the path of deficit spending, then they have a responsibility to propose a reasonable, long-term plan that shows exactly how they will bridge this monstrous \$104 million deficit created by their own budget policies."

The use of one-shot revenue sources to fund this year's operating costs creates about \$19 million of the County's projected future deficits.

Legislator and Ranking Minority Member of the Ways & Means Committee Paul Haney (D-Rochester, Brighton) said, "Year after year we've seen this administration increase spending and give up future revenues to patch over current shortfalls, which only serves to compound our fiscal challenges. It's time to get real about the crisis facing all levels of government. We're in the midst of the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, yet our Republican colleagues insist on increasing spending almost five percent. This budget is both fiscally irresponsible and unsustainable. Our community deserves better."

The Republican budget calls for selling future revenue, a process known as securitizing, from certain tax agreements known as Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT). This is equivalent to a citizen selling their future paycheck to pay today's bills. In addition, the budget calls for selling additional tax liens. If 2007 is any indication, the County will lose money on the sale of its liens and once again sacrifice incoming revenue from the interest and penalties owed on overdue taxes which only exacerbates the budget problem.

The budget will come before the Legislature's Ways & Means Committee on December 4 at 5:30 pm; a formal public hearing will be held at the beginning of this meeting. The public is encouraged to attend.

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