

RESOLUTION NO. 155

URGING THE GOVERNOR AND THE NYS LEGISLATURE TO AMEND THE STATE INSURANCE LAW TO PERMIT MUNICIPALITIES WITH 50 OR FEWER EMPLOYEES TO PARTICIPATE IN HEALTH INSURANCE CONSORTIUMS

Introduced: 4/14/08

By Mr. Gordon:

WHEREAS, Albany County towns and villages with fewer than 50 employees would be precluded under current New York State Insurance Law from participating in a fully-insured County health insurance consortium with other local governments and thus deprived of needed financial relief from the burden of the high cost of health insurance, and

WHEREAS, The County is proceeding with plans to undertake a two-year study of the feasibility and cost-saving potential of joining with other local governments throughout the County to pool health insurance risks through the County's self-funded health care plan which currently is insured through and administered by Empire BlueCross, and

WHEREAS, The study will be financed by a \$150,000 Shared Municipal Services Incentive Grant awarded earlier this year by the New York State Division of Local Government Services in the Department of State, and

WHEREAS, Under current State Insurance Law, half of the 10 towns and most of the six villages in the County would be precluded from participating in the County plan because municipalities with 50 or fewer employees are required to have a community-rated health plan, although some of these could add retirees in the count if they receive the same benefit package as active employees, and

WHEREAS, It is the belief of this Honorable Body that the State's efforts to assist municipalities in reducing costs and achieving efficiencies through shared services and consolidations would be advanced by lifting archaic restrictions on one of government's greatest expenses – the cost of employee and retiree health insurance coverage, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Albany County Legislature urges the Governor and the New York State Legislature to amend the State Insurance Law to permit municipalities in New York State with 50 or fewer employees to participate in health insurance consortiums if they so choose, and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the Albany County Legislature is directed to forward certified copies of this resolution to Governor David Paterson, Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Senator Neil Breslin, Assemblymen Ronald Canestrari, Timothy Gordon, John McEneny and Robert Reilly and to the appropriate County Officials.

Resolution was withdrawn by sponsor. 4/14/08