

Resolution Recognizing Leadership by Local Governments in Shared Services Initiatives and the Loss of State Aid over the Past Three Decades

Whereas, Andrew Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, during his State of the State address on January 10, 2017 on the topic of reducing state property taxes and sharing services characterized that municipalities, "don't even want to do it. They would rather keep to themselves, and you have your own government,"

AND Whereas, in an effort to reduce property taxes Governor Cuomo has proposed a local government efficiency program that would require county and local governments to devise a shared services plan to be placed on the ballot in November,

AND Whereas State of New York currently maintains a property tax cap in an effort to incentive local governments to share services and reduce budgets,

AND Whereas, unfunded mandates from the State of New York comprise a large component of local budgets over which local municipalities have no ability to reduce,

AND Whereas, the New York State State legislature since 1989 has annually exempted itself from providing municipalities with the full amount of state aid as prescribed by law,

AND Whereas, New York State Comptroller, Tom DiNapoli in his 2016 Report on Local Governments states that, Sales tax revenue growth outside of New York City has been slowing for the last few years. In addition, State revenue sharing aid for municipalities has remained flat and the State's tax cap and tax freeze initiatives have continued to put pressure on governments to contain growth in property tax levies,

AND Whereas, the Town of Caroline, a municipality located in Tompkins County, NY, has been a leader in cost reduction and shared services initiatives through programs such as the Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium, the Joint Youth Commission, the Recreation Partnership, and Energy Independent Caroline,

AND Whereas, drivers of the Town of Caroline budget comprise services such as road maintenance and snow removal, for which the Town purchases materials on reduced cost state contracts, and for which not doing so would create safety and liability concerns;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Caroline, strongly condemns Governor Andrew Cuomo's characterization that high property taxes in the State of New York are indicative of a failure on the part of local government;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call on the New York State Legislature to fully restore state aid to municipalities as required by law and to fully repay unpaid aid for which it has exempted itself since 1989.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that while the Town of Caroline, affirms the importance of, and will continue to be a leader in, developing shared services and engaging in cost reduction measures, we condemn the Governor's proposed initiative as a further infringement on local government and home rule.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution shall be sent to Governor Andrew Cuomo; Senator James Seward; Assemblyperson Barbara Lifton; Tompkins County Administrator Joe Mareane; Tompkins County Legislature Chair Mike Lane; Legislator Dan Klein; and the Supervisors of the City of Ithaca, Town of Danby, Town of Dryden, Town of Enfield, Town of Groton, Town of

Ithaca, Town of Lansing, Town of Newfield, Town of Ulysses, Village of Cayuga Heights, Village of Dryden, Village of Freeville, Village of Groton, Village of Lansing, and Village of Trumansburg