PAYGO NY: BRINGING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHALLENGES

“PAYGo NY is about protecting tax payers and the high-quality essential services they rely on by utilizing innovative, common sense local strategies to address unfunded mandates and the rising cost of public services. PAYGo NY means constantly evaluating government policies, regulations, and finances in order to develop new ways to deliver those services while keeping taxes affordable.”

— Ulster County Executive Mike Hein
"I believe we should not have to choose between fiscal responsibility and top quality public services like schools, police, and firefighters; we can protect taxpayers and deliver services to those most in need. Government has the obligation to do both. PAYGo NY helps embrace innovation and change to achieve that goal."

Mike Hein
Ulster County Executive
February 3, 2014

Dear County Official,

To identify and highlight innovative solutions to local government challenges that can be replicated throughout the State, I recently had the privilege of convening a series of issues forums where local government and school officials could focus on sharing best practices. Participants revealed innovative solutions to common challenges and the detailed bureaucratic hurdles inhibiting reform during this statewide policy tour. I cannot thank those who participate enough for their passion, creativity and dedication.

Within this report you will find many examples of the serious issues faced and the successful solutions implemented across New York State. Included are stories of town, county, city and school district leaders who have thought outside the box to save their residents money and improve service delivery. Also included are important legislative policy recommendations. But most importantly, this report outlines a plan to create a Municipal Innovation Exchange of New York, a dynamic online forum that will provide elected and appointed leaders at all levels of government and within the schools, as well as students and the public, a searchable database of best practices and innovative solutions.

It is my great hope that this report and the proposed Municipal Innovation Exchange of New York will offer a series of options, strategies and tools needed by local leaders throughout our State well into the future.

Michael P. Hein
Immediate Past President
NYS County Executives’ Association
INTRODUCTION

Ulster County Executive Mike Hein, as President of the New York State County Executives’ Association, brought together New York State’s local leaders in the summer of 2013 to identify and highlight innovative solutions to fiscal challenges that can be replicated by municipalities throughout New York State. County Executive Hein hosted his PAYGo NY roundtable meetings, and the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) staff participated in each meeting. The purpose of the meetings was to give school districts, towns, cities, and county government leaders in New York an opportunity for an open dialogue about how they are meeting the challenges they face in this era of deep cuts, increased costs, unfunded mandates, and the 2 percent property tax cap.

County Executive Hein initiated this statewide conversation because it is imperative that innovative solutions to common problems are made easily accessible. He seized this opportunity to capitalize on the vast experience of New York’s local officials in order to both protect taxpayers and deliver high-quality services. The ambitious goal of this bipartisan effort was to determine how municipalities are staying within the State’s 2 percent property tax cap and paying for unfunded mandates, while at the same time retaining and creating new essential programs and services. As part of the goal of this project, PAYGo NY also seeks to identify and detail the bureaucratic hurdles inhibiting reform.

“PAYGo NY means constantly evaluating a government’s actions, assets and financial position in order to develop new and innovative ways to protect essential services.” – County Executive Mike Hein

During the course of these forums, what became clear is that in addition to necessary State action, one of the best ways to assist local leaders is to improve access to useful and ever-changing information. During these challenging and dynamic times, as local leaders work to provide solutions to the people of New York State, they need at their fingertips thoughtful examples of proven strategies, success stories, and accomplishments utilized by individual governments all across our state. In fact, what is really needed by local leaders is even greater communication and for the traditional boundaries with respect to information sharing between schools and municipalities and between leaders in the various regions of the State to be broken down for the long term. To accomplish these essential goals, County Executive Hein devised a dynamic online forum - the Municipal Innovation Exchange of New York, that is designed to provide elected and appointed leaders at all levels of government and within the schools, as well as students and the public, with an online database of successful practices and innovative solutions to challenges faced by municipalities across New York State. It will enable leaders in similar situations to benefit from the expertise and experiences of others and be:

- Easily accessible online to municipal leaders and the public,
- Well organized and easy to search,
- Interactive and dynamic, and
- Regularly updated.

Four of New York State’s prominent municipal organizations: NYSAC, the Association of Towns of the State of New York, the New York Conference of Mayors, and the New York State School Boards Association, have agreed to collaborate to create this needed forum.

1 See Appendix 1 for press releases.
County Executive Hein hosted PAYGo NY events throughout New York State during the summer of 2013. In May he launched the tour in Albany with City of Albany Mayor Jerry Jennings and representatives of the New York State Association of Counties, the Association of Towns of the State of New York, the New York State Conference of Mayors and the New York State School Boards Association. Productive roundtable meetings were then hosted in the Hudson Valley, on Long Island, in western New York in both Erie and Monroe counties, and in northern New York’s Jefferson County.

In all, elected and appointed representatives from counties, cities, villages, towns, and school districts from at least 20 of New York’s counties attended the events, and others submitted written materials. Their thoughtfulness as well as their willingness to discuss complex problems and share creative solutions with the group was genuinely appreciated. Albany Mayor Jerry Jennings, speaking about County Executive Hein’s PAYGo NY plan, said the plan is all about making communities better for the future.

“If you improve it statewide and come up with ideas, it’s going to alleviate a lot of stress on all of us and as far as I’m concerned, it’s long overdue. Let’s look at the better practices, let’s make some recommendations, subsequent recommendations, to the legislature and the government. Say look, here’s how we can do things more effectively and more efficiently.”

— Albany Mayor Jerry Jennings

During each of the roundtable meetings, County Executive Hein brought together innovators to share ideas that have led to greater efficiencies as well as cost savings. These solutions are documented in this report. Not only did these meetings enable the participating officials to learn from the others at the table, but those not at the table can look to this report for real-world solutions to common problems.

“Looking at what other counties are doing to consolidate and deliver services at a time when money is tight is a great thing...”

— Sullivan County Treasurer Ira Cohen

While participating in the PAYGo NY roundtables, it became crystal clear to County Executive Hein that a report containing examples of successful local solutions which can be replicated statewide, as well as State legislative policy recommendations aimed at removing barriers to local government reform, would be helpful, but in today’s technologically advanced society, it is not enough. And so he proposed a dynamic online forum in which collaboration and communication, as well as “report type information,” can be shared on an ongoing basis.

2 County Executive Hein and the New York State County Executives’ Association are grateful to Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell, Town of Hempstead Mayor Wayne Hall, Center for Governmental Research President and CEO Joseph Stefko, and University of Buffalo’s Center for Excellence and Jefferson Community College President Carole McCoy for hosting the PAYGo NY events.

3 See Appendix 2 for list of attendees.


This report contains examples of successful innovations and recommendations for legislative reform. But more importantly, it outlines a plan to create a Municipal Innovation Exchange of New York. This searchable database is designed to provide elected and appointed leaders at all levels of government and within the schools, as well as students and the public, with an online database of successful practices and innovative solutions to challenges faced by municipalities across New York State. It will enable leaders in similar situations to benefit from the expertise and experiences of others and be:

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“By bringing together county and community leaders across the state, County Executive Hein has set the foundation for an engaging exchange of ideas. Through sharing the struggles we face and the savings we have accomplished as leaders, we can learn from each other and bring about improved services and reduced costs for taxpayers across New York State.”

— Chautauqua County Executive Greg Edwards®

®The Post-Journal, July 21, 2013
The following pages outline some of the many innovative solutions discussed at the PAYGo NY roundtables. They have been implemented by municipalities and school districts throughout New York State and can operate as models for others. Creating a forum for these types of solutions on the Municipal Innovation Exchange of New York will allow local governments and school districts to review a host of solutions others have implemented on an ongoing basis.

I. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A. Land Banks

Vacant, abandoned, and tax-delinquent properties can scar a community. With no authority to take control and redevelop these properties, local governments suffer loss of revenue, unattractive landscapes, and the cost of potential public health and safety mitigation. To address these difficulties, municipalities are establishing land banks to acquire tax delinquent, tax foreclosed, vacant, or abandoned real property. Once a land bank is established, municipalities can design, develop, construct, demolish, reconstruct, rehabilitate, renovate and otherwise improve upon the property.

a. Mark Cornell, Director of Policy and Communications at the Erie County Executive’s office discussed collaboration on a local land bank targeting blighted properties and its transformative nature. According to Mr. Cornell, the Erie County Land Bank is successful because multiple local governments work together. Startup funding was provided by Erie County and it appears likely to be augmented with millions of dollars from the New York State Attorney General’s office, as part of a federal banking settlement. With the help of these funds, dozens of properties are expected to be addressed.

b. The Chautauqua County Land Bank is another successful land bank discussed at the PAYGoNY events. It was created in 2008 with a $200,000 investment and it has turned eyesores into attractive, habitable dwellings. Once a municipality adopts a local law, ordinance
or resolution establishing a land bank, it must be submitted to the Urban Development Corporation for review and approval. Currently, New York State Law permits only ten land banks at any one time. Many of the approved land banks are county-run or are collaborations between counties and cities. As of 2013, eight land banks have been approved:

1. Buffalo, Lackawanna, Tonawanda, and Erie County
2. Syracuse and Onondaga County
3. City of Schenectady, Amsterdam, and Schenectady County
4. City of Newburgh
5. Broome County
6. City of Rochester
7. Suffolk County
8. Chautauqua County

B. S.T.R.I.V.E. Project

Ulster County Executive Mike Hein discussed the S.T.R.I.V.E. (Shared Taxpayer Relief through Innovative Visions in Education) Project. This is a transformative plan for collaboration with a focus on enhanced educational opportunities while containing taxes. The County Executive worked with the Kingston Central School District, SUNY Ulster, and the City of Kingston on the S.T.R.I.V.E. Project, which will improve access to higher education, place surplus county buildings back on the tax rolls, repurpose an elementary school that would otherwise become vacant, provide a single point of access to Ulster County’s health and human services, and provide better educational opportunities for less money.

C. County Nursing Home Sales

A number of county representatives related information about the process of selling their county-owned-and-operated nursing facilities. As New York State’s budget crisis accelerated, the state enacted numerous cuts in state reimbursement to county nursing facilities. Dramatic increases in state mandated pension costs for employees of the county homes exacerbated the impact of the lower reimbursements. This weakened the fiscal position of counties as nearly every one of more than 35 county nursing facilities saw their operating losses increase at an accelerating rate. The losses at the county nursing homes have become so large they have completely drained some counties’ fiscal reserves and more than a dozen counties are currently exploring options for selling their homes to private or non-profit operators. Another six counties recently sold or closed their nursing homes. In most cases, counties transferred these facilities to private for profit operators and as such, the facilities returned to the tax rolls upon transfer, while also helping to alleviate fiscal stress on county budgets and local property tax payers.

Leaders from Essex County, Ulster County, Jefferson County and Madison County provided information at the PAYGo NY events about their experiences with county-owned nursing homes as well as Certified Home Health Agencies and Long Term Care Programs. Carolyn Fitzpatrick, Chair of the Jefferson County Legislature discussed the closing of Jefferson County’s adult home in 2013 in great detail.
D. Surplus & Underutilized Property

Numerous counties have found success selling surplus and underutilized property. For example, Nassau Deputy County Executive Charles Theofan explained how Nassau County was able to sell a vacant parcel of land for $1 million more than its assessed value. These funds provided an immediate cash infusion to the county and put the property back on the tax rolls. A Saratoga County official spoke about Saratoga’s ability to sell its unused landfill facility to a private entity to provide for safe, economically stable disposal of non-recyclable waste. With this transaction, the county obtains a lump sum payment and revenue sharing between the county and the purchaser, creating recurring revenues over the next 20 years.

E. Municipal Consolidations and Efficiency Programs

Governments across the State have recognized the need to become more business-friendly. The City of Rochester for example, relied on innovative technology in order to implement consolidation and efficiency measures within its Department of Neighborhood and Business Development. This resulted in faster customer response times, increased customer service and communication, and less confusion for residents and business owners seeking to access information and resources. These efforts have created millions of dollars in savings to date. Two specific consolidations were reported to be especially successful:

a. Inspection Services

Inspections were performed by staff in various departments, which created lengthy wait times, inconsistent results and other inconveniences. Today the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development is responsible for all inspections, including, but not limited to property, electrical, plumbing, elevators, and permits.

b. Development and Housing Services

Recognizing that economic development, business development, project development and housing support services were inter-related, the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development successfully brought together the resources necessary to provide support and assistance to residents and business owners with needs in this area. The Department has several cross functional teams that coordinate activities such as inspections, demolitions, real estate, neighborhood planning activities, planning activities, and zoning boards and applications. Inquiries and applications for assistance, both technical and financial, now handled by this Department, improve coordination, communication, and service.

II. SHARED SERVICES

Sometimes governmental jurisdictions reach a point where a creative solution is the only way to survive. For many North Country and rural areas with small populations and accompanying small tax bases, working across governmental boundaries to maximize and share available resources becomes a necessity in order to maintain services, achieve efficiencies and improve the quality of life in their communities.

“I firmly believe there are opportunities out there to consolidate services and share services. I think there are redundancies in government. If we streamline those services, then I think there will be a benefit to the taxpayers.”

— Carmel Supervisor Ken Schmitt

Journal News, June 19, 2013
INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

A. Office of Intermunicipal Coordination
In early 2006, North Hempstead Town Supervisor Jon Kaiman established the Town’s Office of Intermunicipal Coordination to improve the way local governments and municipal corporations communicated and worked together to provide the highest level of services at reduced costs for taxpayers. This office has oversight of more than 40 intermunicipal agreements, including those with incorporated villages, schools, libraries, water and water pollution control districts, and police districts. Intermunicipal coordination has allowed the town and its local municipalities and districts to increase their efficiency and cost effectiveness.

B. Shared Medical Examiner Services
Counties are responsible for investigating the circumstances and causes of all deaths in the county, including unattended, violent, suspicious and criminal deaths, as well as any death that takes place in the local jail. Investigative and autopsy reports are provided to the courts, district attorney, and police regarding cases in which there is a belief that a crime may have been committed. Some counties elect coroners and others appoint medical examiners. In counties with a medical examiner, it is sometimes a challenge to fill this position. This happened to Oneida County in 2012 when it sent out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a medical examiner and received no responses. Oneida County officials got creative and the outcome was an intermunicipal agreement between Oneida and Onondaga counties to share medical examiner services.

C. The New York Municipal Insurance Reciprocal (NYMIR)
In the late 1980’s local governments in New York State had a difficult time finding quality and affordable property and casualty insurance to protect the public buildings under their care and public officials working for their residents. In 1993, New York’s three municipal associations—the NYS Association of Counties, the Association of Towns of the State of New York and the New York State Conference of Mayors—banded together to form NYMIR.

NYMIR is premised on reciprocity. Since it began in 1993, NYMIR has grown from a small program with 26 members to the largest insurer of local governments in New York State, with more than 750 members in 2013. The three municipal associations and NYMIR’s board of governors, made up of local officials, use their extensive knowledge of municipal issues and laws to ensure that NYMIR continues to develop insurance and risk management services that are tailored to meet the needs of local governments.

D. The Municipal Electric and Gas Alliance (MEGA)
MEGA is an energy alliance formed in 1998 by Tompkins and Tioga counties to take advantage of the deregulation of electricity. This county-based organization was designed to help local governments control their energy costs and meet public bidding requirements. It is governed by a Board of Directors elected by its membership. MEGA acts as an aggregator that brings together a collective of customers to increase the buying power of each individual member. The result is more competition and lower costs. As of July 2013, 30 counties participated in MEGA, along with hundreds of cities, towns, villages and non-profit organizations.

E. Collaboration on Highway Resurfacing
Recently, Erie County and the Town of Tonawanda embarked on a collaborative project to pave one of the area’s parkways. The town provided a milling machine

SOLUTIONS

and employee labor while the county provided trucks, rollers, asphalt and additional labor to expedite the process.

The work on the parkway, which the county owns, likely would have been delayed until the following year due to budget constraints. But because of this collaboration, the work saved money and was completed earlier than expected.

Erie County also collaborated with the City of Buffalo to repave a portion of road in the City. Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz, Erie County Legislator Lynn Marinelli, Town Supervisor Anthony Caruana, and Highway Superintendent Bill Swanson expressed approval of the project and hope that similar collaborations will become common among Erie County’s many municipalities.

F. Transportation/Streets

a. Counties are responsible for financing and administering special education preschool programs on behalf of the State. For some counties, the cost of transporting children to programs exceeds the cost of the programs themselves. By evaluating its bus routing and schedules, Nassau County officials realized that shifting routes slightly and adjusting schedules by 15 minutes could reduce transportation costs by half.

b. Tompkins County consolidated Ithaca Transit, TOMTRAN and CU Transit into Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Inc. (TCAT). The city, county and Cornell each provide equal funding. TCAT is also funded by the State Transit Operating Assistance Fund, based on ridership and miles traveled. TCAT has been recognized as the best transit system of its size in North America.

c. The Town of Cortland instituted an “Adopt-an-Island” program that encourages businesses, civic organizations and individuals to fund beautification and maintenance of street islands.

G. Shared Public Health Services

As fiscal pressures under the tax cap mount and significant mandate relief is elusive, Genesee and Orleans counties had to get creative in how they deliver essential services in a cost-effective manner. In January 2013, Genesee and Orleans counties’ Health Departments began a two-year collaborative Cross Jurisdictional Services (CJS) pilot project to study and assess the merits of sharing public health services. The counties decided to provide services through a shared senior administration model in order to create financial savings while enhancing service delivery. This initiative is the first of its kind in New York State.

Lobbying by County officials and NYSAC resulted in newly-adopted changes in Public Health Law (PHL 351) allowing, with the approval of the New York State Commissioner of Health, up to three counties with a population of less than 150,000 to hire the same Public Health Director (PHD). The retirement of the Genesee County PHD in late 2011 provided the opportunity to reach across the county line and appoint a single Director. In October 2012 the PHD in Orleans County was approved by both county legislatures, the Boards of Health and the NYSDOH to oversee both county health departments. In addition to the PHD, both counties are currently sharing a Deputy/Environmental Health Director and a Director of Patient Services. These three administrative positions have already realized fiscal savings while driving programmatic efficiencies through identifying best practices between the counties.
INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

In addition to shared senior leadership, Genesee and Orleans have successfully achieved several fiscal and programmatic efficiencies that are driving the positive impacts of the project. In June 2013, the counties learned they would be receiving a Center for Disease Control (CDC) Public Health Associate Program (PHAP) Fellow. The PHAP program is a highly competitive, two-year, paid Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) fellowship. Fellows are assigned to a state, tribal, local, or territorial public health agency to work alongside public health professionals. Over the past several years, the departments had unsuccessfully applied separately for this opportunity. This year, working together and leveraging the opportunities through this unique relationship, the counties were chosen as a host site for one of 130 fellows placed across the country. This fellow will be assisting the health departments over the next two years on several projects including helping to prepare a joint Community Health Assessment / Community Health Improvement Plan.

Looking ahead, the counties are developing language for a cross-jurisdictional agreement to share non-administrative staff. This agreement would allow departmental leadership to leverage scarce resources and human capital by having another tool available for assisting in delivering essential services, cross training and emergency preparedness response activities in both counties. The counties will also begin to develop a blue print and strategic plan for future integration of services beyond the end of the 2014 pilot project.

This cross-jurisdictional project has deep regulatory and logistic complexities. It is the result of significant hard work, flexibility and forward thinking by the legislatures, Boards of Health, the NYSDOH, and the staff from both counties. This diverse group has proactively responded to the difficult fiscal environment by working through differences and understanding that by working together, even across county lines, governments can maximize savings while enhancing services to residents.

H. Consolidation of Departments

a. Comprehensive Organizational Restructuring

The Town of East Hampton seized the opportunity to perform a comprehensive organizational restructuring in 2010 when 33 employees retired. Town administrators reviewed all departments and divisions and consolidated functions under a single manager whenever possible. With the redesigning of the Town-wide organization chart, the size of Town government was reduced from twenty-six to thirteen departments and divisions, and processes were streamlined to produce a more effective an efficient work flow. Staff and spending were both reduced. Reengineered departments included:

i. The Harbor Patrol was incorporated into the Police Department;

ii. A Public Safety Division was created which incorporated four departments that previously stood alone: Animal Control, Code Enforcement, Building Inspection and Fire Marshal;

iii. A Division of Finance was established to encompass the Budget Office, Tax Receiver, Human Resources, Purchasing and Information Technology. The Human Resources function was also consolidated into the Budget Office’s Payroll and Personnel Unit.
b. **Tax Clerk/Tax Receiver**

The Town of Alden consolidated the positions of Town Clerk and Town Tax Receiver. It combined offices and staff to save taxpayer dollars, improve efficiency and consolidate workforce. In November 2010, voters approved a required public referendum to combine the elected positions as of January 1, 2011.

c. **Highway/Parks**

By combining its Highway and Parks Department’s maintenance crews into a centralized maintenance staff, the Town of Bethlehem eliminated the need for five full-time employees. The Town also streamlined its payment process in May 2012 by implementing an offsite lockbox system to collect water, sewer and tax payments. This allowed the Town to redirect employees in the Tax Receiver’s Office to other departments. The new system provides the town with better cash flow management, increased security, quicker access to funds, and enhanced research capabilities.

d. **Community Resources**

Essex County consolidated its offices of Community Development and Planning, Youth Bureau, Stop DWI and Traffic Safety into the Office of Community Resources. The services each office offered prior to the consolidation continue to be offered by significantly less employees.

e. **Fuel Depot**

At a PAYGo NY roundtable, Chautauqua County Executive Greg Edwards explained that by co-locating a fuel depot the villages, towns, school districts, fire companies and county could all share it. The depot is key-coded, making it easy to track use. A secondary benefit of this shared fuel depot has proven to be the reduction of environmental hazards.

f. **Road Maintenance**

Towns, villages and the County of Chautauqua are successfully sharing road maintenance equipment.

g. **Street Signs**

Genesee County Manager Jay Gsell reported that the county takes responsibility for procuring all street signs and performing sign maintenance and replacement for all local municipalities within the county except the City of Batavia. The county also maintains location and reflectivity data, which helps with lawsuits and accident investigations. An added benefit is that signs are uniform across the county and catalogued in a GIS system.

h. **Snow Plowing/Paving**

As reported by Lyme School District Superintendent Karen Donahue, successful shared services between the school district and town include snow plowing and paving and maintenance of sports fields.

i. **River Cleanup**

The Black River, which runs through or borders many municipalities in Jefferson County, needed extensive clean up after years of neglect. Five villages and towns formed one sewer district to combine resources and develop and implement a comprehensive plan to clean the river.

j. **Teachers/Business Offices**

Carol LaSala, the Gouvernour Central School District Business Manager reported that a declining student population in the region has
forced districts to share services, including teachers and business offices.

k. Health Insurance Consortium

Tompkins County Board Chair Martha Robertson discussed at a PAYGo NY forum a health care insurance consortium formed by Tompkins County and neighboring municipalities many years ago that has added new municipalities over time. Villages, cities, towns and a neighboring county currently participate in the insurance pool and the shared savings exceed $1 million. The smallest jurisdictions save the most under this model.

l. Fuel Depot/Fire Districts/Justice Court

Town of Clayton Supervisor Justin Taylor explained that in the early 1990’s the town started sharing services with many different entities, including the justice court. With aid from the State, it created a shared fuel depot with school districts and neighboring towns and villages. The Town also combined three fire districts into one; created joint zoning for the town and village, and a joint justice court.

m. Digital Meter Reading

Town of Farmington Supervisor Ted Fafinski worked to establish a Digital Meter Reading shared service with a number of towns. Each invested in equipment that would allow for digital meter reading and as new buildings are built, they must include digital meter reading capability. The next step is to consolidate billing.

n. Multiple Shared Services Opportunities

Town of North Hempstead Supervisor Jon Kaiman explained that the town provides more than 100 shared service opportunities to dozens of local jurisdictions within its boundaries. These include, but are not limited to sharing DPW facilities, equipment, staff and paving roads for other jurisdictions for a fee; managing IT services for a variety of entities; sharing a fuel depot and salt dome; and sharing a recycling program with the school districts.

o. Ambulance Services

Town of Philadelphia Supervisor Cheryl Horton stated that recently the town consolidated seven ambulance taxing districts to form one ambulance district. Each district saves money and the quality of service has improved because the consolidation resulted in more professional and highly trained emergency personnel being attracted due to the larger district and more available resources to support professional staff.

p. Zoning Enforcement

Village of Tivoli Mayor Bryan Cranna spoke at a PAYGoNY event about the village sharing a zoning enforcement officer with the Town of Red Hook, while still maintaining a Village Zoning Board to avoid the loss of “local character/identity.”

q. Repurposing School

Rondout Valley Central School District Superintendent Rosario Agostaro explained that when the school district was faced with closing a school it pursued a plan to reuse the building for another public purpose. Plans are underway to convert the school into a shared town hall for three towns and a police station. This plan requires State legislation.

r. School Facilities – Washingtonville School
District Superintendent Roberta Greene believes that a key to ensuring effective shared service delivery is to have regular monthly meetings with all jurisdictions to assess common problems and catalogue available resources. The school district currently shares a fuel depot and a staff of mechanics with neighboring jurisdictions. It also allows local police and public safety officers to access the computer labs for public safety purposes, and provided students from the drama club for “active shooter” training. Many of the school buildings remain open all year to allow for computer literacy and training to the community. Not-for-profit organizations also use kitchen facilities in the summer to operate soup kitchens or process local farm products, and the school district provides grant writing training for various governmental entities.

“PAYGo is a substantial program that will benefit the overall economy as well as ultimately improve the quality of government.”

— North Hempstead Town Supervisor Jon Kaiman

III. PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

A. Health Care

Village of Angola Mayor Howard Frawley described how Erie County implemented a public health clinic partnership with the University of Buffalo Dental School, Catholic Healthcare and Lakeshore Hospital. Erie County, as landlord, collects rent from health care providers that provide free or reduced cost health care services. Use of the clinic instead of an emergency room saves money for local, State and Federal governments.

B. Crime Reduction

A coordinated effort was undertaken by Nassau County District Attorney Kathleen Rice, Mayor of Hempstead Wayne Hall, Nassau County leaders, community groups and local businesses to develop a step-by-step plan to address Hempstead’s crime. Under this initiative, crime was reduced by nearly 80 percent and the community was able to reclaim the area.

C. Education

Kishore Kuncham, Superintendent of Freeport School District, explained how the school district collaborated with JP Morgan Chase and United Way to start an after-school program at the intermediate school. The program currently provides academics and arts after-school programs for more than 100 students.

In addition, Freeport School District outsources its pre-kindergarten program to St. Joseph’s College, saving them more than $1 million per year. While the teacher’s union initially objected, the program moved forward and is now being replicated by several other districts.

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8 Great Neck Patch, July 11, 2013.
D. Video Conferencing in County Jails

County Corrections Departments are experiencing the same budgetary constraints as other county departments, shrinking resources amidst growing expenses. There is a constant need to maintain a safe facility that protects both the public as well as provides for the safety of inmates and jail staff. Safety can be compromised due to the presence of contraband materials. Also, isolation from family and friends can exacerbate inmate mental health problems and decrease morale. The challenge in jail management is to provide cost savings solutions to problems while promoting inmate well-being.

Westchester County implemented a video conferencing system, the TeleCorrections Inmate Kiosk and Video Visitation System, at the county jail to provide inmates with communication and connection with their families and loved ones, as well as with their legal representatives, bail assessors, and others. This system helps to minimize security risks at the jail, it decreases the demands on security officers, and reduces opportunities for contraband to enter the jail. The County generated approximately $400,000 in cost savings in 2011 by reducing the time it took for bail expediters to meet with inmates to arrange bail.

The Putnam County District Attorney also spearheaded an initiative to replace some court appearances with video conferencing in the jail. Significant cost savings related to transportation and security costs were found. This initiative required State and local law changes.

E. Shared 9-1-1 Emergency Services

Counties in New York State provide 9-1-1 emergency services to the public. Sophisticated emergency communications systems are necessary to connect callers to the network of public safety, first responders, and law enforcement personnel who can assist during an emergency. The recent explosion in technological capabilities—the prevalence of cell phones, smart phones, IP based communications systems and others—present a challenge for emergency management professionals. For this reason, Monroe County partnered with Orleans, Genesee, and Ontario counties to provide seamless interoperable emergency communications capabilities to State and local first responders traveling within and through the four counties. They leveraged state and Federal funding streams and made collaborative communications system investments. In the end, the counties minimized costs while maximizing the benefit to the public.

F. Long Term Strategic Planning

Genesee County Legislator Mary Pat Hancock explained at a PAYGo NY roundtable that Genesee County, a small rural Western New York county sandwiched between Erie and Monroe (each with populations at least 12 times larger) needed to develop a long-term strategic plan. The strategic planning focused on all of the needs and assets of the community with goals to encourage economic development, improve services, and maintain and improve quality of life while encouraging growth. The “smart growth” end-result required cooperation across municipal lines. It led to a countywide water system, targeted regions for development, and a renegotiated sales-tax-sharing arrangement. This effort also produced an expanded community college system that provided satellite locations to make higher education and workforce training more accessible to county residents and to help build a workforce that can support local businesses and attract new ones. The community college satellite locations also provided accessible community space.
G. Combining Programs for Young and Old

Through a public-private partnership, the Town of Sullivan strengthened its Parks and Recreation Department and shored up a longstanding community veterans’ organization by purchasing the local American Legion building and facility for $1. The town then made a series of upgrades and improvements to the building and moved its Parks and Recreation offices into the renovated facility. Today, both organizations are thriving as they share the community space and offer programs for senior citizens, veterans and the young people in their community.

H. Transportation

Nassau County’s privatization of its bus system is saving the county millions of dollars.

IV. SCHOOLS and EDUCATION

A. The S.T.R.I.V.E. Project
   (Shared Taxpayer Relief through Innovative Visions in Education)

Ulster County Executive Hein’s S.T.R.I.V.E. Project is an innovative public sector partnership designed to solve overlapping community issues. The multi-phase project, which received significant State and private funding commitments, broke down traditional organizational boundaries between Ulster County, the Kingston City School District, SUNY Ulster Community College and the City of Kingston to address a number of critical challenges:

- declining elementary school enrollments;
- closure of community schools;
- low graduation rates in City of Kingston;
- barriers to access to higher education for urban students;
- growing public sector budget constraints;
- surplus Ulster County office properties; and
- disjointed public service delivery.

The first phase includes the reconstruction of a vacant urban elementary school for re-use as a SUNY Ulster satellite campus. Thereafter, there will be a co-location of county health and human services, improving access and allowing the county to sell valuable real property that as a result will become surplus. This project will have a positive financial benefit for taxpayers throughout Ulster County.

B. Community College Expansion

With the goals of drawing more students to the campus from greater distances, stabilizing college revenues and better managing students’ utilization of the campus, the Jefferson Community College needed to expand and build a new residence hall. In order to move forward on this expansion project, Jefferson Community College President Carole McCoy explained at a PAYGo NY roundtable, a collaborative effort of the college, the faculty student association, Jefferson County government, local businesses, the City of Watertown, the local job development corporation, New York State, and others was required. Issues such as financing, overlapping and conflicting zoning requirements and the inability to transfer land between certain entities needed to be addressed. Today, the project is underway and is expected to provide a stable foundation for the college’s academic future while strengthening the partnership with local businesses and supporting economic development.
INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

V. TAXATION and FINANCE

County-wide Assessment
Tompkins County is one of two counties in New York State with a countywide assessment unit. The County provides the assessing functions for all municipalities within its borders. The Tompkins County Department of Assessment has a professional staff of 14, reduced from a high of 19 in 2000. The reduction was a result of efficiencies gained by developing an in-house database and by cultivating an exceptional staff. This office is an early and long-standing example of successful consolidation and a shared service that has worked to save money and improve service delivery.

VI. HEALTH INSURANCE
For many municipalities, personnel and benefits are the primary expenses and costs have grown exponentially. In some communities, labor and management work together to devise effective ways to reduce the growth for the taxpayers. These include renegotiating existing labor agreements that require employees to contribute more to health care costs and/or switching to alternative health plans that lower costs while retaining staff.

A. Establishment of a Single Health Insurance Carrier
The Town of Alden entered into a retroactive contract with the Teamster’s Union. As part of the contract, union members agreed to transfer their health coverage to the Town, enabling the Town to contract with a single carrier for all employees’ health insurance and allowing employees to opt for single or double coverage plans, if their personal situations warranted. In exchange, Union members were required to contribute only 5% toward their health insurance premium rather than 10% of the premium they were required to pay for the Teamster’s coverage. This move resulted in a substantial and reoccurring savings to the Town.

B. Consolidated Employee Health Insurance Program
The Town of Gates switched from offering three insurance providers to a single source provider, increasing benefits with comparable co-pays and no additional employee contributions. This has saved the town over $550,000 annually and reoriented the operational model for how the town provides health insurance to its employees. With a single source provider, the town has also streamlined the billing, reconciliation, and payment process for the Finance and Human Resource Departments.

VII. PUBLIC SAFETY

A. Fire Department Efficiency Initiative
The City of Corning Fire Department Efficiency Initiative reduced the Fire Department’s full-time workforce from 24 firefighters to 17 firefighters, creating significant savings to while improving service delivery. This restructuring included:

a. reducing overtime with new scheduling efforts;
b. re-balancing the number of full-time firefighters assigned to each shift;
c. creating a “box alarm” system with neighboring municipalities to increase the number of units automatically responding to structure fires and other hazardous conditions;
**SOLUTIONS**

d. implementing new technologies including Fire Interruption Technology (FIT cans) and Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) technology; and
e. increasing training initiatives.

Overall, department performance has improved, as evidenced by the increase in the City’s Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating from a level 4 to a level 3. This rating increase will also result in fire insurance premium reductions for commercial and residential structures in the City of Corning.

### B. Police Department Personnel Reduction and Precinct Consolidation Initiative

The Nassau County Police Department provides the primary patrol service for the residents of Nassau County not covered by 20 local police jurisdictions. Nassau County’s Police Department Personnel Reduction and Precinct Consolidation Initiative enabled 94 members of the Nassau County Police Department to retire. This initiative also enabled the agency to reorganize the provision of services by consolidating the number of police precincts.

By consolidating precincts and redistributing the administrative workload more evenly, while at the same time keeping the number of patrol posts throughout the county constant, the NCPD maintained, and even enhanced, the level of public service within Nassau County.

### VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL ACTIONS

#### A. Modifications to Solid Waste Collection Services

Due to increased recycling in the Town of New Castle, there was a decrease in the need for twice-weekly garbage collection. The town’s Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB) studied neighboring communities and their history of once per week garbage collection and recommended to the Town Board that they move to a once a week garbage collection cycle. This directly reduced the annual user fees and produced a significant reduction in the number of garbage trucks on town roads. It created an estimated savings of 9,500 gallons of diesel fuel per year which translates into a reduction of 109 tons of CO2 emissions.

#### B. Technology

Many municipalities are moving to “cloud-based” operations for IT functions and others are digitizing their records.

- **a.** Tompkins County Legislator Martha Robertson said that Tompkins County pursued an aggressive plan to digitize records in order to avoid a potential $4 million expense necessary to build a records center. State archive grant funds were used to help with the municipal records maintenance.

- **b.** Hamburg Town Supervisor Steve Walters stated that his town reduced its IT department from nine employees to four by utilizing private accounting firms to handle some of the finance applications and not backfilling for staff attrition. Costs are lower today than they were seven years ago. The positive experience has led the town to utilize technology to improve efficiency in other areas as well. One project included converting a paper-based, manual time records system to an electronic system. This has improved productivity and enhanced accountability to taxpayers.
UNFUNDED STATE MANDATES

While this report is not designed to decry State-mandated requirements on local governments, it would be remiss not to include the impact that unfunded mandates have on local governments in New York. Mandates come in many forms, and occur when the State government directs a county to:

- Implement a program or provide a service created and defined by the State,
- Meet an environmental or labor standard,
- Maintain a certain level of financial effort for a particular service, or
- Construct/retrofit/expand a facility (under required State prevailing wage and contracting standards).

To combat the rising costs of unfunded state mandates, the Town of Clayton has spearheaded several initiatives over the past 15 years to share services with neighboring municipalities. “I have yet to see one cent of revenue in my budget from (state) mandate relief.”

— Clayton Town Supervisor Justin A. Taylor

A State mandate requires local governments to strictly adhere to rules set by the State, which defines the scope, eligibility, frequency of service, and amount of benefits, among other requirements. Examples include curriculum mandates on school districts, labor and negotiation mandates on all local governments, environmental mandates and pension mandates, and mandates that control the development and delivery of programs and services at the local level. Local governments typically have no ability to control the cost or management of these mandates.

Home Rule Authority is a central tenet of the New York State Constitution. It provides the flexibility that local governments need to effectively manage their own affairs. The purpose of Home Rule Authority is to provide locally elected officials the ability to manage their budgets in a manner they believe is least burdensome to local homeowners, small businesses and the local economy. However, according to NYSAC, in 2010 nine State mandates consumed approximately 90% of the county property tax levy statewide:

1) Medicaid
2) Public Assistance/Safety Net
3) Child Welfare
4) Preschool Special Education
5) Early Intervention
6) Indigent Defense
7) Probation
8) Youth Detention
9) Pensions

When these mandates are added up, they too often become barriers to local innovation, local service delivery and local government operations.

The successes reported at the PAYGo NY roundtables happened despite the barriers that mandates impose on local government. However, a more concerted effort by the New York State Legislature to work with local officials is needed. The barriers presented by mandates, the impositions, often impede that collective action rather than foster it.

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9 Watertown Daily Times, August 13, 2013

During the PAYGo NY meetings, municipal and school officials repeatedly mentioned the need for New York State legislative action in order for them to turn a number of innovative ideas into successful solutions. Legislation was requested in many areas, including but not limited to the following:

A. Ban Unfunded Mandates and the Expansion of Existing Unfunded Mandates

The New York State Legislature should enact statutory provisions to permanently end the creation of new unfunded mandates and also prevent the expansion of existing unfunded mandates.

B. Implement Tax Reform to Lower Property Taxes and Allow Local Governments to Keep More Revenue

The state’s system of taxation was often cited as a hindrance to local economic development and job creation efforts. This situation stymies the ability of local governments to provide essential services while also maintaining and enhancing critical infrastructure deemed attractive to business. Participants stated that reducing the local property tax burden should be the top priority of the State Legislature. Additionally, simplifying the tax code by reducing or eliminating a variety of property, sales and business tax deductions, exemptions and credits, that generally just shift the tax burden to someone else, should be undertaken with the goal of reducing tax rates across the board. By removing tax expenditures and credits that favor certain special interests, the state can create a more equitable and fair tax system that broadens the tax base while providing the resources necessary to reduce the most onerous taxes identified by PAYGo NY participants.

C. Automatically Approve Home Rule Requests

PAYGo NY participants expressed the need for the New York State Legislature to amend the Tax Law to allow “Home Rule Local Sales Tax Authority” up to 4 percent.

County leaders are calling for a three-way agreement on a proposal that would allow counties with sales tax rates below 4 percent to adjust those rates up to, but not in excess of 4 percent.

When locally elected officials must make a decision to raise revenue as a means of responsibly managing their budget, an option other than the property tax should be available. The 3 percent local sales tax ceiling was set in 1965 and has not been updated since, while county costs for state programs have grown exponentially over the decades.

D. Implement Public Safety Reforms that Allow for Flexibility and Innovation

   a. Enable Smarter Jail Operations

   The State should reduce the regulatory burden on County jails by allowing jail administrators: (1) greater flexibility in the construction standards of jail cells, (2) increased local discretion to best determine housing capacities within the jail, and (3) provide inmates access to legal information using electronic and other innovative and cost saving methods.

   b. Target 9-1-1 to Emergency Response Centers

   Help counties gain access to funding for 9-1-1 services by expanding the allowable uses of Interoperability Grants. Provide a more efficient way for emergency management officials to obtain funding from the State for operations costs as well as communications systems upgrades.
E. Preschool Special Education

A statewide data collection and analysis program is needed in the Preschool Special Education program. Currently, 25 counties use a system called McGuiness which assists with the approval of preschool special education services, and tracks enrollment and other data required by counties. The software is also used to automate payment to providers and create reports required by the State Education Department. By providing every county with software such as McGuiness, the State and counties can achieve administrative efficiencies and maintain accurate data on children in the Preschool Special Education program. The 2013-2014 state budget allocated $1,000,000 for the development of a data collection and analysis tool that may be used to fund this initiative.

Currently the state and counties pay for special education services for preschoolers that are not delivered for a variety of valid reasons. This occurs under the special education itinerant teachers (SEIT) that pays for services on a tuition basis, a lump sum, even though county and State Education data verified that anywhere from 15 to 20 percent of prescribed services are not delivered. State law should be changed to ensure these services are eventually provided or refunded back to the state and county. The state should also develop a centralized web based data system that manages payments and program outcomes for uniform and real time reporting in order to improve program accountability, efficiency and better government.

F. Elections

New York State election law should be amended to permit the federal primary election (non-president) and the New York primary election to be held on the same day. Currently, New York State law requires that the State and local primary be held in September. The federal primary cannot be moved to this day and remain in compliance with federal law. The State Legislature should enact legislation to move the State and local primary to an earlier date which would coincide with the current federal primary date, or any other permissible federal primary date.

G. Indigent Legal Defense

Reduce Indigent legal defense costs through shared services. Local governments are restricted on how to provide indigent legal defenses. Opening up regulations that allow for local governments to share resources, training and personnel could increase service productivity while decreasing costs.

H. Additional Ideas Raised by Local Government Leaders Participating in the PAYGo NY Effort include Passing State Legislation that will Allow or Encourage:

- Co-location of town halls and shared town administration services;
- Governmental consolidations;
- The “Schools without Walls” program, because school districts have difficulty sharing resources due to state aid formulas that default to the lowest reimbursement rate;
- Additional school district funding, as some districts have experienced State aid cuts approaching 25 percent. When combined with the property tax cap, a barrier to quality education is created;
RECOMMENDATIONS

- State education grants because small districts cannot always spend per pupil on a scale necessary to draw down some state education grants;
- Pooling health care costs in a consortium, as the law currently prohibits governmental employers with fewer than 50 from joining these consortiums. The result is that these local governments, and their taxpayers, pay higher premiums and fees for their health insurance plans.
- The sharing of information technology services between levels of government, including a county and BOCES;
- Reducing the regulations involved in leasing local government space to State departments at the municipal level.
- Greater flexibility in the Authorities Budget Office (ABO) audit requirements, as the ABO requires the same audit for small authorities as for authorities with multi-million dollar budgets, so that a small authority must commit a large share of its resources for bookkeeping and auditing services;
- The reduction of paperwork. Many jurisdictions are required to submit hard copy and electronic versions of audits when the federal government allows local jurisdictions to submit audit information one time, to one entity, from which all others can draw down the information.

In addition, it was reported that New York’s Taylor Law and Triborough Amendment are major barriers for local governments to control wage and benefit costs of public employees. And at least one municipal leader expressed the need for the New York State Workers’ Compensation Board to fully implement changes in a relatively new law related to declaring an injury a permanent partial disability when appropriate.

While participating in the PAYGo NY roundtables, it became crystal clear to NYS County Executives’ Association President and Ulster County Executive Hein that municipal leaders need a place to review and exchange innovative ideas. An online forum is needed in which collaboration and communication as well as “report type information” can be shared.

“County Executive Hein’s PAYGoNY is a vital initiative not only for Putnam, but for the entire state of New York. Today we saw great ideas shared about cost saving tactics and we look forward to learning more from other counties.”

— Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell

While this report contains examples of tremendously successful innovations and recommendations for legislative reform, in today’s technologically advanced world more is needed. This report outlines a plan to create a Municipal Innovation Exchange of New York. This searchable database will provide elected and appointed leaders at all levels of government and within the schools, as well as students and the public, with an online database of successful practices and innovative solutions to challenges faced by municipalities across New York State. It will enable leaders in similar situations to benefit from the expertise and experiences of others and be:

- Easily accessible online to municipal leaders and the public,
- Well organized and easy to search,
- Interactive and dynamic, and
- Regularly updated.

11 Putnam County Executive Odell’s June 21, 2013 press release.
New York State’s four prominent municipal organizations: NYSAC, the Association of Towns of the State of New York, the New York Conference of Mayors, and the New York State School Boards Association, have agreed to collaborate in order to create this needed forum.

A. Collaboration Between Municipal Associations

County Executive Hein brought together the leadership of four of New York’s municipal associations to create the **Municipal Innovation Exchange of New York**—The Association of Towns of the State of New York, the New York State Association of Counties, the New York Conference of Mayors, and the New York State School Board Association. Together, these organizations have agreed to collaborate in order to develop a searchable database of best practices and innovative solutions to challenges faced by municipalities across New York.

**Conclusion**

Municipal and school leaders throughout New York State create and execute innovative solutions to shared problems every day. Ulster County Executive Hein initiated PAYGo NY to find a way for New York’s leaders to share their innovative ideas with others facing the same or similar issues.

Although County Executive Hein promised a final report on PAYGo NY that would include the detailed solutions and legislative hurdles discussed by local leaders during the PAYGo NY tour, it became apparent early on in the process that a report would only be useful for a short time. In fact, what is really needed by New York State’s local leaders is improved communication and for the traditional boundaries between schools and municipalities and between leaders in the various regions of the State to be broken down for the long term.

Today, New York State’s four prominent municipal organizations have agreed to collaborate in order to implement the **Municipal Innovation Exchange of New York**, a dynamic online forum that will meet this need.
ULSTER COUNTY EXECUTIVE MIKE HEIN LAUNCHES PAYGo NY AND ANSWERS GOVERNOR CUOMO’S CALL FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM
STATEWIDE TOUR TO IDENTIFY SOLUTIONS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT FISCAL CHALLENGES KICKS-OFF IN ALBANY
Events to Follow on Long Island and Across New York

(Albany, NY) – Mike Hein, Ulster County Executive and President of the New York State County Executives Association today launched PAYGo NY, a statewide policy tour aimed at identifying and highlighting innovative solutions to local government fiscal challenges that can be replicated throughout the state, as well as detailing any bureaucratic hurdles inhibiting reform. In a press conference today in Albany, Hein announced he will convene a series of local government issues forums, bringing together local government officials focused on developing solutions and sharing best practices.

While the state has made progress in easing the burden on local governments through various reforms to programs like Medicaid and the workers compensation system, additional changes must be made at all levels to ensure the long-term viability and efficacy of the tax cap. PAYGo NY will bring stakeholders together to identify solutions that can be put to work for all New Yorkers.

New York State continues to face its own fiscal challenges, and it’s clear that a dramatic increase in state aid is not a viable solution to the many problems facing local governments. The tax cap is a necessary reality in New York State and it has encouraged local governments to deliver creative and innovative solutions, and in some cases, to fundamentally redesign government.

“PAYGo NY will bring together the best ideas from all regions of the state – and put them to work locally,” said County Executive Mike Hein. “Governor Cuomo has called upon local governments to put our fiscal houses in order, and local officials are doing that work on the ground throughout the state in their localities and with their Associations. By bringing people and strategies together, PAYGo NY will develop real solutions, from the ground up, and identify state and federal barriers to change. Ultimately, this will allow local governments to both protect taxpayers and continue to deliver high quality services.”

PAYGo NY is about protecting taxpayers and the high-quality essential services they rely on by using common sense and innovative local strategies to address mandates and the rising cost of providing services. PAYGo NY means constantly evaluating government’s actions, assets and financial position in order to develop new and innovative ways to ensure that essential services are protected.

PAYGo NY will include stops throughout New York State, and will conclude with a final report to state and local leaders. The PAYGo NY report will collect a set of solutions that can be replicated, as well as comprehensive state Legislative policy recommendations provided to remove state barriers to local government innovation and reform.

“Real reform is happening all across New York State, and together, we can make that change work locally,” Hein said. “Governor Cuomo’s New New York agenda has the potential to restore the state to long-term fiscal stability, instead of relying on the old
bad habits of one-shots and raising taxes. Despite the progress being made on a state level, local governments are still being forced to do more with less. Communities must have the strategies and tools to make these reforms work on a local level.”

Mike Hein was elected as Ulster County’s first County Executive in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, and has implemented a unique approach to government spending and service delivery that has brought forward fundamental changes and real results for taxpayers and a reputation as an effective reformer.

“The economic crisis coupled with the rising cost of providing services has presented local governments with new and enduring challenges. In Ulster County, we’ve learned that just like New York’s families, government must live within its means. By constantly evaluating our actions, assets and financial position, we’ve been able to develop innovative ways to ensure that essential services are protected. In fact, our 2014 budget is poised to deliver the largest reduction in spending in County history while at the same time ensuring more services than ever before. These types of solutions can and must be replicated across New York State,” added County Executive Hein.

New York State Association of Counties Executive Director Steve Acquario said: “New York’s Counties are on the front lines, providing essential services that taxpayers rely on — even as the cost of providing those services continues to rise and resources remain scarce. I applaud County Executive Mike Hein for bringing local officials together for this important conversation about creative problem solving and policy changes that will ease the burden on county governments while protecting taxpayers.”

New York Conference of Mayors (NYCOM) Executive Director Peter Baynes said: “In the face of unprecedented fiscal challenges – many of which have been brought on by an accumulation of state mandates – mayors and other local officials are making tough choices and using innovative strategies to navigate the changed economy. The last thing local governments and their taxpayers now need is more state mandates. That is why NYCOM applauds County Executive Hein’s PAYGo NY effort, which will facilitate sharing successful local initiatives, removing state-imposed barriers to local efficiency, and stopping the adoption of new mandates in Albany.”

Gerry Geist, Executive Director of the Association of Towns, said: “Town officials strive to provide quality services at a price taxpayers can afford. Innovative thinking and working together are required in order to keep taxes affordable without sacrificing needed services. There are countless examples of cost saving ideas employed by town officials that they are anxious to share with each other. We applaud County Executive Mike Hein for providing a forum for local government officials to get together to share ideas.”

David Little, Director of Governmental Relations at the New York State School Boards Association, said: “As a result of several years of diminished aid, schools have been engaging in efforts to regionalize and to share best practices and services. Yet, outdated state laws and regulations prevent them from making more efficient use of precious resources. The New York State School Boards Association recognizes that schools need to recalibrate our resources to the new fiscal reality facing our communities. To do that, the state needs to free us to become better partners with local government and it needs to refrain from passing new and burdensome mandates on our schools and municipalities. We’d like to thank County Executive Hein for focusing much needed attention on this vital issue.”

As President of the New York State County Executives Association, Hein is committed to working with and highlighting other local government officials as they share strategies for confronting the common challenges facing localities throughout the state. Following today’s Albany launch, Hein will continue the PAYGo NY conversation with officials on Long Island County in early June, and in subsequent stops across New York.

For more information about County Executive Hein and PAYGo NY, please visit: www.paygony.com
For Immediate Release: June 18, 2013
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ULSTER COUNTY EXECUTIVE MIKE HEIN BRINGS PAYGo NY TO PUTNAM COUNTY
Local Leaders Participate in Forum to Identify Innovative Solutions to Local Government Challenges; Events to Follow on Long Island and Across New York

(Carmel, NY) – Mike Hein, Ulster County Executive and President of the New York State County Executives Association today hosted a forum with local elected officials and community leaders as part of PAYGo NY. PAYGo NY is statewide policy tour aimed at highlighting new and innovative solutions at the County, City, Village, Town or School District level; and identifying additional innovations that are being blocked by bureaucratic or regulatory hurdles.

In today’s discussion in Putnam, Hein was joined by Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell, NYSAC Director of Finance & Intergovernmental Relations Dave Lucas and numerous other local government and community leaders for a local government issues forum focused on developing solutions and sharing best practices.

“PAYGo NY is bringing together the best ideas from all regions of the state,” said Ulster County Executive Mike Hein. “Governor Cuomo called upon local governments to put our fiscal houses in order; we must seize this opportunity and capitalize on the vast experience of our local officials. The leaders in today’s forum have the expertise to put common sense solutions to work. By bringing people and strategies together, PAYGo NY will continue to identify real solutions, from the ground up, and target state and federal barriers to change. This will allow local governments to continue to both protect taxpayers and deliver high-quality services.”

“In Ulster County, my administration is protecting taxpayers and the high-quality essential services they rely on by using common sense and innovative local strategies to address mandates and the rising cost of providing services. We are constantly evaluating and prioritizing government’s actions, assets and financial position in order to develop new and innovative ways to ensure that essential services are protected.

“While the state has made progress in easing the burden on local governments through various reforms to programs like Medicaid and the workers compensation system, additional changes must be made at all levels to ensure the long-term viability and efficacy of the tax cap. The leaders here today at the first PAYGo NY forum are sharing best practices and identifying solutions that can be put to work for all New Yorkers,” County Executive Hein concluded.

In addition to the forum in Putnam, PAYGo NY will include stops throughout New York State, and will conclude with a final report to state and local leaders. The PAYGo NY report will contain local solutions that have been successful and can be replicated statewide, as well as state legislative policy recommendations provided to remove state barriers to local government innovation and reform.

“I am constantly making tough decisions that impact my constituents,” said Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell. “This is why County Executive Hein’s PAYGo NY effort is a vital initiative for not only Putnam, but for the entire state of New York.
PAYGo NY will enable the sharing of successful local initiatives and identify feasible ways to remove state-imposed barriers to local efficiency. Today in Putnam we saw great ideas shared about cost saving tactics and we are anxious to learn from our neighbors. We commend County Executive Hein’s leadership and appreciate this forum for local government officials to get together to share ideas."

“The Putnam community is bursting with innovation; we understand how to put our work boots on and find common-sense solutions,” said Deputy Putnam County Executive Bruce Walker. “County Executive Hein demonstrates great leadership in bringing together experts from across this state, identifying solutions to restore New York to long-term fiscal stability, instead of relying on the old bad habits of one-shots and raising taxes. Turning to local communities for this important conversation about creative problem solving and policy changes is crucial to real reform that will ease the burden on county governments while protecting taxpayers."

SUNY New Paltz Associate VP for Regional Engagement and CRREO Director Dr. Gerald Benjamin said: "Bringing local leaders together to discuss key local issues and identify smart grassroots approaches - some that have already worked - is a winning strategy for addressing the extraordinary challenges faced by local governments throughout the state. Ulster County Executive Mike Hein’s leadership of the state's localities in focused conversations through PAYGo NY to achieve greater collaboration and innovation is a path to success."

Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress President and CEO Jonathan Drapkin said: "In order to maintain the growth and vitality of the Hudson Valley — and regions throughout New York State — it's critical that local leaders share best practices and work together to identify the innovative solutions that will protect services and taxpayers. We commend County Executive Hein for his work in moving these issues forward as part of PAYGo NY."

As President of the New York State County Executives Association, Hein is committed to working with and highlighting other local government officials as they share strategies for confronting the common challenges facing localities throughout the state. Hein will continue the PAYGo NY conversation with officials on Long Island and in subsequent stops across New York.

Mike Hein was elected as Ulster County’s first County Executive in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. His unique approach to government spending and service delivery has brought forward fundamental changes and real results for taxpayers and gained him a reputation as an effective reformer.

For more information about County Executive Hein and PAYGo NY, please visit: www.paygony.com

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ULSTER COUNTY EXECUTIVE MIKE HEIN BRINGS PAYGo NY TO NASSAU COUNTY
Local Leaders Participate in Forum to Identify Innovative Solutions to Local Government Challenges;
Events to Follow Across New York

(Hempstead, NY) – Mike Hein, Ulster County Executive and President of the New York State County Executives Association, today hosted a forum with local elected officials and community leaders as part of PAYGo NY. PAYGo NY is statewide policy tour aimed at highlighting new and innovative solutions at the local and school district level; and identifying additional innovations that are currently blocked by bureaucratic or regulatory hurdles.

Hein was joined by Nassau County District Attorney Kathleen Rice and other local government and community leaders for a forum focused on developing solutions and sharing best practices. Today’s discussion comes on the heels of a recent PAYGo forum in Putnam County.

“PAYGo NY is bringing together the best ideas from all regions of the state,” said Ulster County Executive Mike Hein. “We must seize this opportunity and capitalize on the vast experience of our local officials in order to both protect taxpayers and deliver high-quality services.”

In addition to today’s Nassau County forum, PAYGo NY will include stops throughout New York State, and will conclude with a final report to state and local leaders. The PAYGo NY report will contain local solutions that have been successful and can be replicated statewide, as well as state legislative policy recommendations provided to remove state barriers to local government innovation and reform.

“A local perspective is vital when developing policies that impact each community across New York State,” said Nassau County Executive Edward P. Mangano. “Here in Nassau County, we plan to share the many efficiencies, public-private partnerships and cost cutting policies used to save taxpayers over $290 million. I thank County Executive Hein for his efforts as President of the County Executive’s Association of New York.”

“The problems facing New York governments are too large to fight single-handedly but with the input of and ideas of leaders from across the state, we can enact real reform to make our governments more efficient and effective,” said Nassau District Attorney Kathleen Rice. “I want to thank County Executive Hein for his leadership on this issue and I look forward to being part of this collaborative process.”

As President of the New York State County Executives Association, Hein is committed to working with and highlighting other local government officials as they share strategies for confronting the common challenges facing localities throughout the state. Hein will continue the PAYGo NY conversation with officials in subsequent stops across New York.

“While the state has made progress in easing the burden on local governments through various reforms to programs like Medicaid and the workers compensation system, additional changes must be made at all levels to ensure the long-term viability and efficacy of the tax cap,” said Hein. “In Ulster County, my administration protects taxpayers and the services they rely on by using common sense and innovative local strategies to address mandates and rising costs.”

Mike Hein was elected as Ulster County’s first County Executive in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. His unique approach to government spending and service delivery has brought forward fundamental changes and real results for taxpayers and gained him a reputation as an effective reformer.

For more information about County Executive Hein and PAYGo NY, please visit: www.paygony.com

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ULSTER COUNTY EXECUTIVE MIKE HEIN BRINGS PAYGo NY TO ROCHESTER
Local Leaders Participate in Forum to Identify Innovative Solutions to Local Government Challenges;
Events to Follow in Buffalo and Northern New York

(Rochester, NY) – Ulster County Executive Mike Hein, President of the New York State County Executives Association, today hosted a forum with local elected officials and community leaders as part of PAYGo NY. PAYGo NY is a statewide policy tour aimed at highlighting new and innovative solutions at the municipal level, and identifying additional innovations that are currently blocked by bureaucratic or regulatory hurdles.

At a forum hosted by the Center for Governmental Research in Rochester, Hein was joined by local government and community leaders from Monroe, Seneca, Genesee, Ontario, Steuben, Chemung and Tompkins Counties for a solutions-based conversation focused on sharing strategies and best practices for confronting local government challenges. The Rochester discussion comes on the heels of recent PAYGo forums in Putnam and Nassau Counties, and an additional PAYGo NY forum will be held tomorrow at the University at Buffalo.

“Local governments are facing fiscal challenges head-on, and PAYGo NY is working to bring together the best ideas and strategies from all regions of the state,” said Ulster County Executive Mike Hein. “We must seize this opportunity and capitalize on the vast experience of our local officials in order to both protect taxpayers and deliver high-quality services.”

PAYGo NY will conclude with a final report to state and local leaders. The PAYGo NY report will contain local solutions that have been successful and can be replicated statewide, as well as state legislative policy recommendations aimed at removing state barriers to local government innovation and reform.

“As a longtime advocate for mandate reform and more local control to better protect taxpayers across New York State, I am grateful to Ulster County Executive Mike Hein for bringing his PAYGo program on a stop in Rochester,” said Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks. “With a record of property tax stability, shared service collaboration, and world-class quality-of-life services, Monroe County has much to offer when it comes to best practices for doing more with less. I look forward to a productive forum and thank County Executive Hein for this effort.”

“Tompkins County is committed to collaborative approaches that save taxpayer dollars and often provide better service at the same time. A prime example is our Health Benefits Consortium, which brings most of the municipal employees and retirees from local governments within the county into a larger insurance pool. As a result, countywide, we’re saving nearly $1,000,000 annually on premiums and administrative costs,” said Martha Robertson, Chair of the Tompkins County Legislature. “This and other initiatives have greatly benefited Tompkins County residents over the years. I look forward to sharing our experience and hearing from other local leaders about their ideas as well.”

“What Mike Hein is doing is an absolutely necessary look at what’s going on, and what needs to go on,” said Genesee County Legislator Esther Leadley.
Hornell Mayor Shawn Hogan said: “I’m looking forward to hearing about Ulster County Executive Mike Hein’s progressive and positive agenda, bringing communities together to share money-saving ideas for upstate.”

“CGR is pleased to participate in this conversation with leaders from communities throughout the region and state,” said Joseph Stefko, Ph.D., President & CEO of CGR. “For nearly a century, CGR has been working on these very issues and helping local governments strengthen their fiscal and service delivery capacity. We face common challenges, and there is a lot we can learn from each other. We are proud to host PAYGo NY and provide a vehicle for sharing those best practices and innovative solutions among our region’s leaders.”

As President of the New York State County Executives Association, Hein is committed to working with and highlighting other local government officials as they share strategies for confronting the common challenges facing localities throughout the state. Hein will continue the PAYGo NY conversation with officials in subsequent stops across New York, including a forum tomorrow at the University at Buffalo.

“While the state has made progress in easing the burden on local governments through various reforms to programs like Medicaid and the workers compensation system, additional changes must be made at all levels to ensure the long-term viability and efficacy of the tax cap,” said Hein. “In Ulster County, my administration protects taxpayers and the services they rely on by using common sense and innovative local strategies to address mandates and rising costs.”

Mike Hein was elected as Ulster County’s first County Executive in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. His unique approach to government spending and service delivery has brought forward fundamental changes and real results for taxpayers and gained him a reputation as an effective reformer.

For more information about County Executive Hein and PAYGo NY, please visit: www.paygony.com

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For Immediate Release: July 16, 2013
Contact: Jessica Bassett, 518-593-7628, jbassett@skdknick.com

ULSTER COUNTY EXECUTIVE MIKE HEIN BRINGS PAYGo NY TO BUFFALO
Local Leaders Participate in Forum to Identify Innovative Solutions to Local Government Challenges;
Event to Follow in Northern NY

(Buffalo, NY) – Mike Hein, Ulster County Executive and President of the New York State County Executives’ Association, today hosted a forum with local elected officials and community leaders as part of PAYGo NY. PAYGo NY is a statewide policy tour aimed at highlighting new and innovative solutions at the county, city, village, town, and school district levels; and identifying additional innovations that are currently blocked by bureaucratic or regulatory hurdles.

Hein was joined by local government and community leaders from Chautauqua, Erie, Niagara and Genesee Counties for a forum focused on developing solutions and sharing best practices. Today’s discussion comes on the heels of recent PAYGo forums in Putnam, Nassau, and Monroe counties.

“Local governments are facing fiscal challenges head-on, and PAYGo NY is working to bring together the best ideas and strategies from all regions of the state,” said Ulster County Executive Mike Hein. “We must seize this opportunity and capitalize on the vast experience of our local officials in order to both protect taxpayers and deliver high-quality services.”

In addition to today’s forum at the Center of Excellence at the University at Buffalo, PAYGo NY has included a number of stops across New York State, and will conclude with a final report to state and local leaders. The PAYGo NY report will contain local solutions that have been successful and can be replicated statewide, as well as providing state legislative policy recommendations aimed at removing state barriers to local government innovation and reform.

“I am pleased to see County Executive Hein take the initiative on such an important project,” said Chautauqua County Executive Greg Edwards. “By bringing together county and community leaders across the state, he has set the foundation for an engaging exchange of ideas. Through sharing the struggles we face and the savings we have accomplished as leaders, we can learn from each other and bring about improved services and reduced costs for taxpayers across New York State.”

Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz said: “As Erie County Executive and formerly as Erie County Comptroller, my office has been at the forefront of identifying cost-saving measures and innovations to benefit residents while continuing to provide essential services in a more efficient and effective manner. In my recent ‘Initiatives for a Smart Economy’ address I pinpointed 64 initiatives designed to stimulate economic growth, protect and improve quality of life, and help our community reach its potential while fostering partnerships and investing in our future. I would like to thank County Executive Hein for continuing this important discussion and for exploring solutions that work to protect taxpayers while ensuring delivery of services.”
“I applaud County Executive Hein’s efforts to bring local leaders together throughout the state to share the ideas that have proven effective for our cities, counties and towns,” said Cheektowaga Supervisor Mary F. Holtz. “We all know that we still have hard work ahead of us, but the common-sense solutions we’ve exchanged today could go a long way to protecting the services our residents have come to expect while taking some of the burden off our taxpayers.”

As President of the New York State County Executives’ Association, Hein is committed to working with and highlighting other local government officials as they share strategies for confronting the common challenges facing localities throughout the state. Hein will continue the PAYGo NY conversation in August with officials in Northern New York, which will be the PAYGo tour’s fifth stop.

“While the state has made progress in easing the burden on local governments through various reforms to programs like Medicaid and the workers compensation system, additional changes must be made at all levels to ensure the long-term viability and efficacy of the tax cap,” said Hein. “In Ulster County, my administration protects taxpayers and the services they rely on by using common sense and innovative local strategies to address mandates and rising costs.”

Mike Hein was elected as Ulster County’s first County Executive in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. His unique approach to government spending and service delivery has brought forward fundamental changes and real results for taxpayers and gained him a reputation as an effective reformer.

For more information about County Executive Hein and PAYGo NY, please visit: www.paygony.com

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ULSTER COUNTY EXECUTIVE MIKE HEIN BRINGS PAYGo NY TO WATERTOWN
Local Leaders Participate in Forum to Identify Innovative Solutions to Local Government Challenges

(Watertown, NY) – Ulster County Executive Mike Hein, President of the New York State County Executives’ Association, today hosted a PAYGo NY forum at Jefferson Community College. Local elected officials, school district officials and community leaders from across Northern New York participated in the forum, which is the fifth and final stop of PAYGo NY, a statewide policy tour aimed at highlighting new and innovative solutions at the municipal level and identifying additional innovations that are currently blocked by bureaucratic or regulatory hurdles.

Carolyn Fitzpatrick, Chair of the Jefferson County Legislature and Carole McCoy, President of Jefferson Community College, as well as officials from local school districts, towns and community leaders joined County Executive Hein for a solutions-based conversation focused on sharing strategies and best practices for confronting local government challenges. Officials from Jefferson, St. Lawrence, Oswego and Herkimer Counties participated in the forum.

Today’s discussion comes on the heels of recent PAYGo forums in the Hudson Valley, Long Island, Western New York, and the Finger Lakes.

“Local governments are facing fiscal challenges head-on, and PAYGo NY is working to bring together the best ideas and strategies from all regions of the state,” said Ulster County Executive Mike Hein. “We must seize this opportunity and capitalize on the vast experience of our local officials in order to both protect taxpayers and deliver high-quality services.”

PAYGo NY will conclude this fall with a report to state and local leaders. The PAYGo NY report will contain local solutions that have been successful and can be replicated statewide, as well as state legislative policy recommendations aimed at removing state barriers to local government innovation and reform.

As President of the New York State County Executives’ Association, Hein is committed to working with and highlighting other local government officials as they share strategies for confronting the common challenges facing localities throughout the state.

“As the state has made progress in easing the burden on local governments through various reforms to programs like Medicaid and the workers compensation system, additional changes must be made at all levels to ensure the long-term viability and efficacy of the tax cap,” said Hein. “In Ulster County, my administration protects taxpayers and the services they rely on by using common sense and innovative local strategies to address mandates and rising costs.”

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For more information about County Executive Hein and PAYGo NY, please visit: www.paygony.com

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For Immediate Release: August 12, 2013
Contact: Jessica Bassett, 518-593-7628, jbassett@skdknick.com
## APPENDIX 2

### PAYGO NY PARTICIPANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>PAYGo NY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Carolle McCay</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Jefferson Community College</td>
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<td>Waterman</td>
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