



NYS Association of Counties 2021 Legislative Program

KEY COUNTY PRIORITIES

Create a blue ribbon commission to redesign state-local service delivery

Grant counties the flexibility to reduce program costs

End the diversion of county sales tax for state programs and purposes



Children with Special Needs

(Health, Children and Families Committees)

- Expand Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) to include children with special needs.
- Require school districts to transport preschool special education children.
- Require providers to bill insurance before billing counties and the state.
- Cap county fiscal liability for preschool special education.
- Allow telehealth services to continue for the Early Intervention Program (EIP).
- Increase rates for services in high poverty areas.
- Enact a covered lives assessment on third party commercial insurance that matches the Medicaid rate of reimbursement (75%).



Community Colleges

(Higher Education Committee)

- Set the base state aid formula allocation for each community college to 100% of the prior year or increase \$100 per FTE, whichever is greater.
- Classify the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) as a university that provides 4- and 6-year degrees.
- Provide funding for workforce training to ensure community colleges are positioned to provide a skilled, local workforce for business and industry growth.



Economic Development

(Energy and Telecommunications Committees)

- Expand broadband and cellular coverage to unserved and under-served areas.
- Release the Upstate Cellular Coverage Task Force Report.



Environment

(Environment Committee)

- Create a more stable and comprehensive e-waste recycling infrastructure and renew the \$3 million appropriation for collection and disposal programs.
- Support remediation of PFAS and other water contaminants.
- Expand the zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) rebate for municipalities.
- Expand the Bottle Bill to include liquor, wine, and iced tea bottles.



Gaming

(Racing, Gaming and Wagering Committee)

- Resolve the gaming compact dispute between NYS and the Seneca Nation. Allow the Seneca nation to share revenues directly with localities until the dispute is resolved.
- Share sports gaming revenue with all New York counties in conjunction with OTBs in contract with the casinos.



Human Services

(Social Services Committee)

- Reform the use of “handicapping conditions with disabilities” to eliminate outdated use of terms for peoples with disabilities.
- The State should fully fund the cost of any services the State continues to provide when the federal government ends their financial support.



Judiciary

(Judiciary Committee)

- Lower court judgement interest rates.
- Fully fund parental representation in child welfare proceedings.



2021 Legislative Program



Local Finance & Tax Relief

(Finance Committee, Budget & Revenue Committee)

- Grant permanent sales tax authority for all counties.
- Authorize gig economy industries to collect sales tax.
- End the mandatory diversion of county sales tax for state purposes.
- Increase county retention of DMV revenues.
- Enact statutory changes to allow counties to lower local government costs.
- Enact “No New Unfunded Mandates” legislation.



Medicaid

(Social Services Committee)

- Lower local Medicaid caps to reflect current payments and savings.
- Complete the State statutory requirement to takeover local Medicaid administrative functions.



Public Employee Relations

(Investigations, Government Operations, Codes, Civil Service and Pensions, and Labor Committees)

- Reform the NYS Scaffold Law.
- Raise the threshold for Wicks Law (GML § 101) to at least \$10 million.
- Allow counties to set employee residency rules.



Public Health & Mental Health

(Health, Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities, Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Committee)

- If adult-use cannabis is legalized, apply county sales tax and share the cultivation tax with counties.
- Reform individual grants for public health work to a block grant while maintaining funding levels from the consolidated programs into the new block grant, similar to social services program areas, to allow for county flexibility and eliminate costly administrative work.
- Expand supportive housing beds to individuals with developmental disabilities.



Public Infrastructure & Transportation

(Transportation, Local Government Committees)

- Authorize the use of design-build contracts for localities.
- Provide financial support to county-owned airports.
- Increase funding for CHIPS, PAVE NY and BRIDGE NY.
- Support local maintenance costs of the Empire State Trail.



Public Safety

(Codes, Crime Victims, Crimes and Corrections Committees)

- Reform Part 730 of the Mental Hygiene Law to help counties support the mental health condition of those in state custody.
- Raise the minimum age of juvenile delinquency from seven to twelve years old.
- Allow and incentivize shared county jails and grant counties the flexibility to establish minimum staffing ratios.
- Grant counties the ability to create county-wide emergency medical services (EMS) taxing districts.
- Reform 9-1-1 surcharge laws to more accurately collect fees from all devices that can access 9-1-1 service delivery.



Shared Services

(Insurance, Local Government Committees)

- Make it easier for local governments to create Article 47 health insurance consortia.
- Allow shared service matching funds to be used for plan and implementation costs.



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