
2015 ALBANY COUNTY ADOPTED BUDGET

INTRODUCTION AND HIGHLIGHTS

MESSAGE FROM YOUR COUNTY EXECUTIVE



Daniel P. McCoy

County Executive

David J. Friedfel

Commissioner of Management & Budget

2015 Budget Message from Daniel P. McCoy

March 2015

The Members of the Albany County Legislature and the People of Albany County:

I am pleased to present a 2015 Executive Budget that is balanced, meets our fiduciary duties and demonstrate that we have worked together to stabilize Albany County's finances.

Over the last three years, we have partnered to improve the county's financial picture. Like our colleagues from around the state, we have been burdened by unfunded state mandates and the national financial crisis that have challenged us to do even more with fewer resources. Additionally, we were facing a structural deficit; a nursing home that was costing our taxpayers nearly \$1 million a month in unreimbursed expenditures; programs and services that had been dramatically cut or eliminated; and perhaps troubling of all, property taxes that had been increased to close budget gaps.

My administration has been successful in reducing costs and achieving efficiencies. As a result, the Executive Budget as enacted is structurally balanced without the use of reserve funds or the use of any budget gimmicks. This budget is based on prudent fiscal management and demonstrates how we have "turned the corner" financially, particularly with regard to the administration of our nursing home.

As you know, for years the nursing home has been a financial strain on County finances, operating at an annual deficit of nearly \$12 million. These deficits led to considerations of a number of options, one of which included selling the nursing home or closing it. I am pleased that we have come to the table and reached a compromise to keep the nursing home open, and implement a new administrative structure. As a result, my administration has worked on an almost daily basis with the administrator of the nursing home to negotiate new union contracts and to implement needed operating efficiencies. I am confident that these will help reduce the county's subsidy of the nursing home by millions of dollars, and retain the quality of care of our nursing home residents. Due to the fact that many of the improvements are being made to service delivery and to the facility, the quality of care has improved significantly.

I remain committed to making sure the nursing home operates with the highest degree of professionalism and fulfills our commitment to providing our most vulnerable seniors the highest level of nursing home care possible.

We will soon have the results of an energy performance evaluation for the nursing home that we believe can achieve further savings for our county. In the short term, my team will also pursue the possible use of solar power at the nursing home and at other county facilities to achieve cost savings as well as benefits to our environment.

As to county-wide cost saving initiatives, we will be working closely with local governments within the county to implement a plan for shared services that will comply with Governor Cuomo and the State Legislature's requirements so that homeowners are eligible to receive the New York State Property Tax Freeze Credit.

As you know, the law provides that homeowners will receive the Freeze Credit for taxes from any taxing jurisdiction in which the homeowner resides that stays within the property tax cap and that puts forward a compliant plan to save one percent of their tax levies in each of the following three years.

I have been working closely with local municipal leaders within the county on the issue and my budget office has begun assembling information on existing shared services and on opportunities for shared services going forward, so that a county plan can be filed that will meet the statutory requirements.

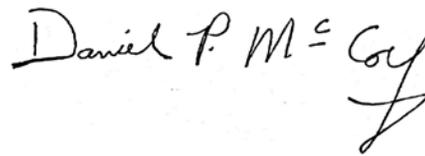
2015 Budget Message from Daniel P. McCoy

With regard to the tax cap, I am proud to propose a budget that stayed under the cap. I am also proud that we have one of the lowest property tax rates in New York State. Building on the work we've done over the last three years, I presented a budget that proposed no tax increase. I believe that our property owners deserve a break from increasing property taxes and that to attract new residents and businesses we must send a message that in Albany County, sound fiscal management, not higher taxes, is the order of business.

I wish to renew the pledge I made in 2012 during my first State of the County; I will work tirelessly to ensure that we will continue on the road to recovery. I believe this budget demonstrates that together we have made great progress.

I am grateful to Shawn Morse, the Chairman of the Legislature, Majority Leader Frank Commisso and Minority Leader Lee Carman for working with me and my administration to do the hard work needed to keep Albany County moving forward. I am hopeful that we can build on that work in the coming year.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel P. McCoy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized flourish at the end of the name.

Daniel P. McCoy
Albany County Executive