

# 2016 Budget Message from Daniel P. McCoy

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

March 2016

I am pleased to present a 2016 Executive Budget that is balanced, meets our fiduciary duties and demonstrates that we have worked together to stabilize Albany County's finances.

Over the last four 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 most 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. I am pleased that we came to the table in 2014 and reached a compromise that enabled us to keep the nursing home open by implementing a new administrative structure. The work that my administration has done with the administrator of the nursing home to negotiate new union contracts, implement efficiencies and increase revenue streams has been paying off and has reduced the subsidy from the county to run the nursing home while also increasing the quality of care and standard of living for the residents of the facility.

In partnership with the Office of the County Comptroller my staff helped to implement a plan for shared services between various municipalities in the county that complies with the requirements set by Governor Cuomo and the State Legislature so that homeowners in the county are eligible to receive the New York State Property Tax Freeze Credit. This 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.

With regard to the tax cap, I am proud to propose a budget that continues to stay 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 four 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 address; 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 would like to thank Legislative leadership for working with me and my administration to do the hard work needed to keep Albany County moving forward on the course that we have set. I am hopeful that we can continue this work in the coming year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Daniel P. McCoy  
Albany County Executive