



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF
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The People's Advocate Advocates To Remove Information Barriers

Kingston, NY (June 20, 2016)-Ulster County Comptroller Elliott Auerbach commends Legislator Dave Donaldson for his introduction of Resolution No. 297 of 2016 which establishes a policy that governs the accessibility and timeliness of information and records. The policy, which has been referred to the Government Efficiency and Review Committee, would formalize the ability of the Comptroller's Office to receive information and materials requested of County departments and programs in a timely manner and in accordance with the Ulster County Charter.

"This proposal removes the artificial barriers that we often come up against in our efforts to advocate for the people of Ulster County," Comptroller Auerbach stated. "In these ethically challenged times, when taxpayers increasingly feel disconnected from their elected officials and decisions makers, we must do what we can to ensure that information relating to the inner workings of government is both free flowing and readily available," Auerbach went on to say.

The policy would apply countywide and would generally require that units of government respond directly to a Comptroller's inquiry in full within three days of a request unless certain conditions were met. Presently, all requests for information from departments must first be vetted by the Office of the County Executive with a typical response taking up to ten business days or more.

"I am confident that both the Executive and Legislature recognize that the lengthy response time and its circuitous progression cast a cloud over a process that should be acutely transparent," said Auerbach. "The prolonged delay not only raises questions as to the authenticity and integrity of the information, but could help foster continued irregularities. This policy simply defines the Ulster County Charter, which affords my Office access to the books, records and accounts of the County at any time."

The Comptroller applauded the work of the Government Efficiency and Review Committee and lauded Legislator Donaldson for "seizing this opportunity to shine a little more sunlight onto the daily affairs of our County government."

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