

RESOLUTION NO. 377

REQUESTING THE NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE TO ENACT LEGISLATION CONTINUING THE HOTEL/MOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX IN ALBANY COUNTY AND AMENDING THE ALLOCATION OF SAID TAX TO CREATE THE “ALBANY COUNTY LAND INTO TRUST AND PRESERVATION FUND”

Introduced: 10/14/08

By Mr. Higgins:

WHEREAS, Extension of the 6% hotel/motel room occupancy tax in Albany County will serve to continue the funding mechanism for the Albany County Convention and Visitors bureau, serve to help offset debt payments and ongoing maintenance improvements at the Albany County Times Union Civic Center and fund county acquisition, preservation and development of open space and land through the creation of a Land Into Trust and Preservation Program, and

WHEREAS, Continuation of the hotel/motel occupancy tax at 6% must be authorized by the State Legislature, and

WHEREAS, Earlier this year, the Albany County Legislature passed Resolution No. 114 by a vote of 23-10 to authorize an alteration of the current hotel/motel occupancy tax funding formula to provide additional moneys from the fund for the proposed development and construction of a convention center downtown, and

WHEREAS, The bill which would have implemented that request in the state legislature failed to pass during the 2008 legislative session, and

WHEREAS, The current hotel and motel occupancy is set to sunset and expire on December 31, 2008, and

WHEREAS, Despite the fact that the Albany Convention Center may never be built, it continues to cost the taxpayers of Albany County tens of thousands of dollars each month in required county funding under the current funding formula, and

WHEREAS, The costs to construct a convention center are only increasing, and

WHEREAS, Continued county funding through the hotel and motel occupancy tax on the Albany Convention Center could be much better spent on a host of projects that will actually benefit those who live in Albany County, and

WHEREAS, It is in the County's interest to begin acquiring open space to help prevent sprawl, increase the number of tourism opportunities in the County for hikers, bikers and others who enjoy the outdoors, as well as for small businesses located in and operating throughout the County, and

WHEREAS, Albany County does not have a county parks department or county run parks facilities for the use and enjoyment of its residents, and

WHEREAS, It is in the best interests of Albany County on behalf of its residents to begin acquiring open space and land for preservation and public use, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, By the Albany County Legislature that we request our elected representatives in the state legislature to introduce a bill to continue the six percent hotel and motel room occupancy tax after December 31, 2008 and amend the funding stream to provide one percent to the Albany County Convention and Visitors Bureau, three percent to the civic center debt service fund and two percent to fund an Albany County Land into Trust and Preservation Fund, and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the County Legislature is directed to forward certified copies of this resolution to the appropriate State and County Officials.

Referred to Audit and Finance Committee. 10/14/08