

November 16, 2016

Aaron M. Martin  
Legislative Clerk  
Broome County Legislature  
Broome County Office Building  
44 Hawley Street  
Binghamton NY 13901

Dear Mr. Martin:

On September 15, 2016, I presented to the Legislature my Budget message and proposed 2017 Broome County Budget and Capital Improvement Program. Given the current economic times, my team and I presented a realistic plan for the operations of Broome County Government in 2017. The Legislature, as is their duty under the Charter, has made several changes to the proposed budget. I think the Executive and Legislature branches of government should be commended for their professionalism during the budget hearings and throughout the budget process.

The Legislature has returned the budget to me with seven changes (initiatives). I am not submitting a formal objection to Initiative No. 1. However I am expressing my concerns about this initiative in a separate memorandum. I believe that reducing fund balance by \$1.4 million is not prudent for the County for the reasons set out in my memorandum.

**Objection No. 1. Budget Amendment No. 2. Reduce Property Tax Levy increase by \$100,000.**

I am objecting to Legislative Initiative No. 2. I have no objection to the Legislature's desire to reduce the tax rate to benefit the taxpayers in Broome County. I would ordinarily be supportive of an initiative such as this one. However, I cannot support reducing funding for Willow Point Nursing Home to pay for this reduction in the tax rate. My team has worked over the last five years to improve the financial condition of the Nursing Home. I believe this reduction in funding together with other initiatives proposed in this budget would be a step backwards. These reductions would reverse the improvements made in the financial condition of the nursing home over the last five years. I spent a significant amount of my free time at the Nursing Home when my family members were staying there. I know how important Willow Point is for those elderly in our community with nowhere else to go for services. We have built a \$400,000 fund balance for the Nursing Home and I believe this change will reverse that improvement and weaken the financial position of the Nursing Home.

**Objection No. 2. Budget Amendment No. 3. Provide funds to restore pre-shift briefing for Corrections Officers.**

I am also objecting to Legislative Initiative No. 3. This initiative is also being funded in part by reducing the revenue to the Nursing Home. I am objecting to this initiative for the same reasons as set forth in my objection to Initiative No. 2. I have heard the arguments made in

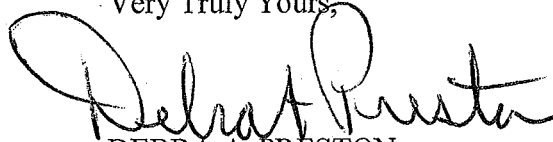
support of this initiative that pre-shift briefing is necessary for the safety of the Corrections Officers and others at the Public Safety Facility. I would never take an action that I believed would create a safety risk at the Public Safety Facility. I have heard these arguments over the last two years and have consulted during the last two years with the administration at the Sheriff's Office regarding these concerns. They have repeatedly advised me that the lack of a pre-shift briefing has not resulted in an increased risk to the facility, the inmates or the staff working in the facility. With these representations from the Sheriff's administration and because I believe reducing the Nursing Home revenues will have a negative impact on the financial position of the Nursing Home, I am objecting to this Initiative No. 3.

**Objection No. 3. Budget Amendment No. 6. Provide funds for Legislative Assistant.**

Finally, I am objecting to Legislative Initiative No 6. This initiative is funded by reducing appropriations to the Nursing Home. The reasons set out in my objection to Initiative No. 2 apply to this objection. In addition this initiative specifically reduces appropriations for equipment and alterations that will enhance safety of the facility and its residents.

Please present this veto statement to the Broome County Legislature for reconsideration.

Very Truly Yours,



DEBRA A. PRESTON

Broome County Executive