

# Inter-County Association of Western New York

*Representing the Counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tompkins, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates*

## RESOLUTION NO. 2023-23-IC URGING THE GOVERNOR TO VETO A.04282B/S.3505B TO MOVE CERTAIN LOCAL ELECTIONS TO EVEN-NUMBERED YEARS

**Sponsored By:** Chemung County  
**Moved By:** Tom Sweet (Chemung)  
**Seconded By:** Christopher Vastola (Ontario)

**WHEREAS,** Inter-County Association of Western New York believes that increasing participation in the election process and reducing costs of government operations is good for our republic; and

**WHEREAS,** during the 2023 Legislative Session, Assembly Member Amy Paulin and State Senator James Skoufis reintroduced legislation that would move local elections to even-number years; and

**WHEREAS,** versions of this legislation were introduced in previous years and failed to reach the floor for a vote due to lack of support; and

**WHEREAS,** after the 2022 session concluded, the bill sponsor indicated that hearings would be held on the proposal through the Election Committee process; however, no such hearings were held; and

**WHEREAS,** the legislation passed in the middle of the night on the last days of the 2023 legislative session which is counter to the idea of an open and transparent government; and

**WHEREAS,** members of Inter-County Association of Western New York has several concerns with this bill; and

**WHEREAS,** this legislation usurps the Home Rule powers reserved by local governments and protected by the Constitution of the State of New York, raising questions of legality and constitutional authority; and

**WHEREAS,** local municipalities have had the ability to change their elections to even-number years for decades, and chose not to do so; and

**WHEREAS,** we believe that establishing the schedule of local elections is the right of the local government, and has been for more than 100 years; and

**WHEREAS,** the Assembly bill sponsor indicated that she had not received any messages of support for this proposal from any of the 57 Counties and 933 Towns across New York State impacted by this legislation; and

**WHEREAS,** this legislation excludes more than half of all New Yorkers who vote in cities and villages from the changes to election law, creating an inequity among New York voters; and

**WHEREAS,** this legislation unfairly excludes the elections to offices in New York City and all other cities and villages in New York State, as well as certain offices within all counties and towns; and

**WHEREAS,** the proposed legislation circumvented the legislative committee process during this session, limiting public input and understanding of the impacts; and

**WHEREAS**, there has been no financial analysis or operational analysis of the impacts on local Boards of Elections; and

**WHEREAS**, there are concerns that the current election and ballot counting technology would not be able to adequately meet the demands of the significantly increased ballot size; and

**WHEREAS**, this will create confusion amongst voters in towns and counties across New York State; and

**WHEREAS**, separating the elections affords voters more time and focus to better understand important local issues and provides candidates the appropriate platforms to explain their stance on issues without having to compete against national and state level campaigns; and

**WHEREAS**, moving local elections to even-numbered years would increase the cost of campaigns for local office, reducing the number of candidates willing to invest funds into their own campaign, because the cost of media will increase to compete with national and state level campaign advertisements, and

**WHEREAS**, there are significant legal and constitutional questions regarding the legality of this measure that have not been adequately addressed. Now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that Inter-County Association of Western New York urges the Governor to oppose this legislation and utilize her veto authority to reject this proposal; and

**RESOLVED**, that copies of this resolution be distributed by the Secretary of the Inter-County Association of Western New York to Governor Kathy Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Senate Minority Leader Robert Ort, Assembly Minority Leader William Barclay, Assembly Bill Sponsor Amy Paulin, Senate Bill Sponsor James Skoufis, Senator Thomas O'Mara, Assemblyman Philip Palmesano, Assemblyman Christopher Friend, Inter-county Association of WNY, and NYSAC.

This is to Certify that I, the undersigned, Secretary of the Inter-County Association of Western New York, have compared the foregoing copy of resolution with the original resolution now on file in this office and which was duly adopted by the Association at a session held on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of August 2023 and that the same is a true copy of said original and of the whole thereof. In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed the official seal of the Inter-County Association of Western New York dated August 29, 2023.



Lisa K. Casey, Secretary  
Inter-County Association of Western New York



Sponsored by: Chemung County, Moved by: Tom Sweet (*Chemung*), Seconded by: Christopher Vastola (*Ontario*)

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-23-IC**