

Report From the County Legislator, 12th District

This year the County Legislature is charged with the task of reformulating the sales tax distribution for Onondaga County, specifically the three percent of the four percent retained by the County.

Under the current formula, which was established in 2000, 25.9% goes to the City of Syracuse, 29.7% to the towns and villages, 6.8% to the school districts and the balance of 37.6% is retained by the County. It is important to note that most counties retain approximately 60% of the sales tax collected. There is a different formula for the other 1% collected, which will be adjusted in 2011.

Sales tax, and the 4% which the County collects is considered a county tax and Onondaga County shares it in larger proportion than most any other county in the state. The City of Syracuse has a right of preemption if an agreement cannot be reached which would entitle them to ½ of the sales tax collected in the City of Syracuse. If that were to happen, then the towns and the villages within the towns, who share based on assessed value of the villages, would receive ½ of the amount collected outside the city. The balance of ½ of the sales tax collected in the county and the city would be retained by county government. Schools have no authority to impose sales tax and Onondaga County is one of only five counties in the state that share sales tax with the local districts. The sharing with the school districts is based on school attendance.

All of the towns in Onondaga County, with the exception of one, use the sales tax to offset the tax levy for county expenses. All of the villages with the exception of the village of Fabius use sale tax as a part of their operating expenses as do the schools.

Onondaga County faces a possible 50 million dollar budget gap for the year 2011 and the Legislature will be taking a hard look at the distribution formula, while at the same time taking into account the affect that any change in the current formula will have on other local governments in the County.

Currently I chair the Charter Review Committee which is reviewing the Onondaga County Charter, the governing document of the County. We're looking at changing how a vacancy is filled should one occur in the Legislature. Currently such a vacancy is filled by an appointment by the County Executive and we are considering whether or not a special election would be an improvement depending on when a vacancy occurs in the Legislature. The charter committee is also looking at changing the fiscal year to coincide with New York State's so that we can be more accurate in preparing our budget.

Lastly, we are also looking at a proposal to downsize the County Legislature from its current 19 districts to possibly 17.

Last year and on veterans' issue we approved a Cold War Veterans Exemption for Onondaga County. We are looking to upgrade that exemption based on new state legislation. You can check with your local assessor to see whether or not you would qualify.

If you wish to contact me, my phone number is 683-5655 and my email address is rdemore@cnyemail.com.

Looking forward to Spring, I remain

Yours truly,

Bob DeMore

Upcoming Events

Memorial Day Parade in Fabius—May 31st 10:30 a.m. Boy Scouts will hold a “Fill the Canoe Food Drive” for F-P Outreach

Lion's Club Auction—June 5th—10:30 a.m. @ Pompey Firehouse

Pompey Hill Fire Dept. Field Days—June 16th—19th Parade—June 19th @ 5 p.m.

Manlius—4th Of July Parade— Monday— 10 a.m.

Kellish Hill Farm—Music Jamborees Every Sunday—Noon till late evening. All are welcome!