NEW YORK STATE JOINT LEGISLATIVE BUDGET HEARING ON LOCAL/GENERAL GOVERNMENT

SFY 2026-27 Executive Budget

Testimony submitted by the

New York State Association of Counties

and the

New York State County Executives' Association

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Good afternoon, Chairs Krueger, Pretlow, Martinez, Solages, and other distinguished members of the State Legislature.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify at the Joint Legislative Budget Hearing on Local/General Government. My name is Stephen Acquario, and I am the Executive Director of the New York State Association of Counties.

INTRODUCTION

As we gather here today, New York's counties face a fiscal reckoning. Federal policy changes under H.R. 1 threaten to shift billions in costs to property taxpayers beginning in October 2026—just eight months from today. Health care systems are under strain. Aging infrastructure demands investment. And through it all, counties continue to serve as the indispensable delivery system for virtually every state and federal program touching 20 million New Yorkers.

Counties are not here to complain—we are here to partner. We have solutions. We have expertise. We have 343 years of experience serving New Yorkers. But we cannot absorb federal cost shifts without devastating impacts on local taxpayers and services.

New York's first counties were established in 1683 as regional colonial governments—more than 100 years before New York became a state. During this period, our function was centered around the justice system and public safety, enforcing colonial laws within the county border. Counties were taxing units apportioning taxes amongst the towns within the county. We were responsible for keeping public records and constructing and maintaining roads and bridges.

Today, counties continue these historical functions and now deliver nearly every state and federal program that touches residents' daily lives—from prosecuting felonies and coordinating foster care, to planning and delivering mental health and substance abuse services, to administering nutrition and home energy assistance programs. We fund and administer nearly all federal health and human service mandates. In short, counties are the front line of government—where federal and state policy meets local reality.

The State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2026-27 Executive Budget presents both opportunities and concerns for counties. While we appreciate the continued commitment to the Medicaid cap and investments in critical services, we must be clear about what lies ahead: without robust state partnership to address federal cost shifts and mandates, local property taxpayers will face costs that make New York less affordable for families.

BUDGET INVESTMENTS WE SUPPORT

We appreciate several critical elements of the Governor's SFY 2027 Executive Budget: **Most importantly, continuation of the Medicaid local cost cap.** New York counties pay $7.6 billion annually for Medicaid—**this mandated expense is more than all other U.S. counties combined.** The Medicaid cap will save counties $9.2 billion in FY 2027 and has saved counties and New York City $62.8 billion cumulatively since 2015. This protection is the foundation of county fiscal stability.

We also support:

- $22 million increase in local agriculture assistance (total $83.97 million);
- Maintaining the community college funding floor at 100% of prior year funding, preventing a $101 million (16%) loss in formula aid;
- $173 million increase for preschool special education—critical as counties fund the largest local share of preschool special education of any state in the nation;
- $750 million for water infrastructure ($250 million increase), including $200 million for housing-related projects and $50 million for rural housing-related projects;
- $400 million appropriation for the Environmental Protection Fund;
- EmPower+ and pre-electrification funding to help low-income residents participate in progress towards state and local climate goals;
- $50 million for the County Partnerships Program, with an increased maximum grant award of $1.5 million;
- $4.7 million to crack down on illegal vapor products; and
- $92 million for 18-B assigned counsel to reimburse 50% of costs from the increased statutory rate and $9.9 million for parental representation.

We appreciate that the Executive Budget does not include new major cost shifts from the state or new spending mandates. However, this approach alone is not sufficient given the federal challenges bearing down on counties. We need the state to be an active partner in protecting counties from federal cost shifts, particularly in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) administration and error rate penalties.

CRITICAL PRIORITIES FOR COUNTIES

We respectfully request the Legislature's partnership on the following priorities, organized around immediate federal challenges, necessary systems reforms, and strategic investments.

IMMEDIATE FEDERAL CRISIS RESPONSE

State Support for SNAP Administrative Cost Shifts and Error Rate Penalties

H.R.1 imposes massive new costs on counties for SNAP administration beginning October 1, 2026—just eight months from now.

Under current law, the federal government pays 50% of SNAP administrative costs. Beginning October 2026, the federal share drops to just 25%, meaning state and local governments must cover 75% of these costs. In New York, under current state law, counties pay 100% of the non-federal share. Of the 10 states that require their counties to administer the SNAP program, only three require their counties to pay 100% of the nonfederal match (New York, New Jersey, and North Carolina).

This means New York counties will face an estimated increase of $168 million annually in SNAP administrative costs—a cost that will grow in future years to meet the new reporting and program integrity requirements under H.R. 1.

Even more concerning are the benefit error rate penalties. The Payment Error Rate (PER) for SNAP measures instances where SNAP benefits are overpaid or underpaid. These errors can occur in several ways:

- Mistakes made by county Department of Social Services (DSS) staff in calculating benefit amounts;
- Recipients failing to provide updated information about changes in income, household size, or other circumstances; or
- Administrative processing errors in applying complex federal eligibility rules.

The federal government considers even small discrepancies as errors—a $67 difference in monthly income that results in an incorrect benefit amount counts as a full error for PER purposes. This makes the error rate metric extremely sensitive and difficult to control, as it depends not only on county staff performance but also on recipient reporting behavior and the complexity of federal eligibility rules.

Currently, there is no cost-sharing requirement for benefit errors. Under H.R.1, states will be penalized based on their error rates:

- States with error rates under 6%: No penalty
- States with error rates 6-8%: 5% of benefits paid
- States with error rates 8-10%: 10% of benefits paid
- States with error rates over 10%: 15% of benefits paid

New York's current error rate exceeds 10%, which means the state and counties would be required to share $1.1 billion annually in SNAP benefit costs as a penalty. Implementation could begin as early as fall 2027.

To put this in perspective for individual counties: Erie County faces a combined SNAP administrative and error rate penalty impact of $56 million annually. Monroe County faces $42 million. Onondaga County faces $26 million. Albany County faces $12 million. Even smaller rural counties face impacts in the millions of dollars.

This is not a failure of county administration—this is a structural challenge created by federal policy that requires a structural solution at the state level.

We respectfully request that the state:

1. Assume 100% of any SNAP benefit error rate penalties, protecting counties from federal penalties that are largely beyond local control and counties' ability to pay.
2. Work with the counties and New York City to minimize the SNAP administration cost shift on local governments.
3. Provide immediate and robust financial, technical, and administrative assistance to help counties meet new federal requirements, including:
    a. Funding for expanded local workforce capacity to handle new eligibility verification requirements;
    b. Information Technology (IT) system enhancements to meet new federal reporting standards—these systems must be operational before October 2026;

    c. Intensive state-supported training for local staff on new federal procedures;
    d. Greater centralization of functions where it can improve efficiency and accuracy;
    e. Clear guidance with dedicated state staff available for real-time support; and
    f. Proactive communication protocols to identify compliance issues before they result in federal penalties.
4. Work directly with our congressional delegation to allow more time to prepare for these new mandates.

These investments must be included in the SFY 2026-27 State Budget. Federal changes take effect in October 2026, and counties need time to hire staff, train workers, and upgrade systems.

Support New York State's Effort to Pursue a Federal 1115 Medicaid Waiver
A federal 1115 Medicaid Waiver would allow eligible justice-involved adults and youth incarcerated in state prisons and county jails to be enrolled in Medicaid/the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) 90 days before their expected release from incarceration.

Counties have long supported the state's pursuit of this health care waiver; however, it is our understanding that the state is currently working on another waiver submission that will likely not include incarcerated individuals in county jails.

We strongly encourage state lawmakers to reach out to the Governor's Office and the Department of Health to encourage them to include counties in this critical waiver program. Incarcerated individuals at both the state and county level often live with higher rates of substance abuse use disorders (SUDs), chronic physical health conditions, poor health care coordination, and other health concerns that can realize improved treatment outcomes if formal treatment and coordination occur prior to their release.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has approved at least 19 state waivers to support prisoner re-entry as of January 2025, and another eight states have waivers pending. NYSAC strongly believes that approval of a Medicaid 1115 waiver that enables high-risk incarcerated individuals, including those in county jails, to be enrolled in Medicaid/CHIP prior to their release is necessary to improve health outcomes, save lives by preventing overdose deaths, improve public safety, and reduce recidivism.

MODERNIZE BROKEN SYSTEMS

Reform Raise the Age Funding: Delink from Tax Cap and Convert to Grants
With federal volatility threatening to force counties to override the 2% Property Tax Cap, we urgently need the state to reform Raise the Age funding in two critical ways. First, we urge the Legislature to delink Raise the Age reimbursement from the Property Tax Cap. The current system creates an impossible trap: counties that breach the 2%

cap—even when that breach is driven by state-mandated costs or federal cost shifts beyond local control—lose their Raise the Age reimbursement entirely. With H.R.1 threatening to add over $1.3 billion in new SNAP costs to county budgets, many counties may be forced to override the cap. Counties should not lose Raise the Age funding as a result of federal policy changes.

Second, we urge the Legislature to convert Raise the Age funding from a reimbursement model to a grant model. The current reimbursement approach forces counties to pay upfront for youth justice costs and then seek approval through a lengthy, multi-agency process involving the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), and Division of Budget (DOB). These delays create serious cash-flow challenges for county budgets. A grant structure would provide predictable, upfront funding and allow counties to meet state-mandated youth justice obligations without financial uncertainty.

We must also note with concern that the Governor has cut the Raise the Age reappropriations in her Executive Budget proposal by more than one-half. This reduction sends the wrong signal at a time when counties need assurance that the state will honor its commitment to fully fund the costs of this reform.

Fund State-Operated Youth Detention Facilities
Counties urgently need the state to appropriate funds for building and operating regional youth detention facilities. The closure of state-run facilities has created a public safety and operational crisis for counties. We are now forced to transport youth long distances and across state lines—often requiring overnight hotel stays and two-officer supervision for safety. This creates enormous liability issues, increases overtime costs, makes it difficult to secure appropriate placements for youth who need specialized services, and weakens local public safety efforts as staff are reassigned from their regular duties.

The state should establish at least four regional facilities to ensure adequate capacity statewide. This would reduce transportation burdens on counties, ensure youth can be placed closer to their communities and families, and provide appropriate specialized services. This is a state responsibility that should not be shifted to counties.

Reform CPL § 730: Fix the Competency Restoration Crisis
Under Criminal Procedure Law (CPL) § 730, individuals found incompetent to stand trial are ordered to receive “restoration services” before their case may proceed. These services are delivered at state-operated forensic psychiatric centers and primarily consist of courtroom education focused on legal processes, not treatment of the serious mental health conditions that often drive incompetency findings.

The current system often results in lengthy confinements that courts have declared unconstitutional, with defendants sometimes kept in restoration for three, six, or even ten years without receiving treatment for their underlying mental health needs. It is estimated that between one-quarter and two-thirds of defendants cycle through the restoration process multiple times on the same charge—affecting hundreds of individuals each year. Meanwhile, insufficient investment in community-based mental health services has contributed to a crisis in which local jails have become the primary setting for mental health care in some communities.

The SFY 2021 State Budget shifted 100% of competency restoration costs onto counties, doubling the prior cost-sharing arrangement and creating an estimated $22 million annual cost shift to counties outside of New York City. Since 2019, counties in every region of the state have experienced dramatic cost growth—often far outpacing overall budget growth. In many counties, annual CPL § 730 costs now routinely reach seven figures, even in small and mid-sized counties. For example, Warren County's CPL § 730 costs increased by more than 10,900% between 2019 and 2024, Livingston County's costs rose by more than 6,500%, and Chemung County's costs increased by over 2,200% during the same period. Even large counties have seen multi-hundred-percent increases, with Erie County's costs rising nearly 400 percent since 2019 and Westchester County's rising nearly 300%. At more than $1,300 per day, these costs have diverted hundreds of millions of dollars from the community behavioral health services counties oversee, manage, and operate.

We strongly support the comprehensive reforms outlined in S.1004 (Brouk)/A.5567 (Simon) to:

- Clarify that restoration is not mental health treatment;
- Establish specific criteria for examiners to assess competency;
- Require an assessment of a reasonable likelihood of restoration before restoration services are ordered;
- Allow courts to divert appropriate individuals to actual mental health treatment instead of expensive restoration services; and
- Limit the time defendants can be ordered into restoration services.

Taken together, these reforms would reduce the fiscal burden on county taxpayers, redirect millions of dollars to community-based behavioral health services, improve clinical outcomes for individuals in crisis, and modernize CPL § 730 to better reflect current legal and mental health best practices.

NYS Opportunity Promise Scholarship: Honor the State's Commitment

NYSAC supports the New York State Opportunity Promise Scholarship program and the Executive Budget's $12.5 million expansion to additional high-demand fields and students with prior degrees pursuing nursing degrees. This is an important workforce development initiative that helps adults aged 25-55 return to school for high-demand careers.

However, we must raise a serious concern about program financing. When this initiative was first proposed, DOB indicated there would be no tuition-related costs for counties. It has now been confirmed that counties will have to pay tuition charges for county residents and chargebacks to other counties under the existing community college funding formulas. This will cost counties tens of millions of dollars and will likely increase as the program ramps up. The impact will be felt unevenly based on the community college curriculum and the way the chargeback system works.

Counties supported this proposal and worked in good faith based on initial communications that there would be no local cost. We ask the Legislature to ensure that the NYS Opportunity Promise Scholarship is fully funded with state resources, not shifted to county property taxpayers. The state should honor its original commitment to fund this program without creating a new mandate for counties.

Fix Cannabis Tax Disbursement

The current cannabis tax distribution system is failing counties and municipalities due to fundamental structural problems that require legislative intervention. Under Cannabis Law, the Department of Tax and Finance (DTF) collects adult-use cannabis taxes and sends them to the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC), which distributes funds to counties. Counties must then allocate these funds to the host municipalities within 30 days, retaining just 25 percent despite their central role in tax distribution, public safety, substance use disorder services, and public health.

This process relies on sales data from the Office of Cannabis Management's (OCM) Seed to Sale system, which creates a critical problem: when dispensaries make late tax payments, counties cannot accurately allocate funds to municipalities based on sales data alone. Counties receive large lump-sum payments from OSC with no corresponding tax payment data explaining which municipalities generated the revenue or in which quarter the sales occurred. Many counties default to using the prior quarter's distribution formula, which may shortchange municipalities that should receive larger shares.

NYSAC supports amending the Cannabis Law to consolidate cannabis tax distribution authority with DTF, streamlining the process and eliminating the multi-agency coordination that creates delays and errors. This reform must include adequate staffing and resources for DTF to handle the expanded responsibilities. A single-agency model would ensure accurate, timely distributions that allow counties to meet their statutory obligations to municipalities while reducing administrative burden on all parties.

Early Intervention Retroactive Payments

For decades, counties have provided Early Intervention (EI) and preschool special education services for children from birth through age five. These services include speech, occupational, and physical therapy; nutrition counseling; and social work for developmentally delayed and physically handicapped children.

The state owes counties approximately $400 million in retroactive Medicaid payments for Early Intervention services provided between 2013 and 2025 ($170 million for 2013-2018 and $230 million for 2019-2025). These are services that counties have already delivered and paid for—services that produced measurable developmental gains for children and reduced long-term state costs by addressing needs early, when intervention is most effective.

We urge the Legislature to direct DOB to expedite the release of these retroactive Medicaid payments. The state must also resume regular processing of waivered EI claims to ensure appropriate Medicaid reimbursement for services to children with complex disabilities.

Separately, counties are owed $20 million in Covered Lives funds that have been withheld since the implementation of the Covered Lives Assessment. Under the Cuomo administration, the Division of Budget decided to hold back $5 million annually and redirect it to Health Care Reimbursement Account (HCRA) payments rather than disbursing the full amount to counties as intended. Additionally, the state has failed to establish a regular disbursement schedule for Covered Lives funding, creating significant local accounting and reporting challenges. Absent timely and predictable disbursement, counties are effectively forced to carry the cost of state obligations through local property taxes, We urge the Legislature to direct the immediate release of the $20 million owed to counties and establish a predictable disbursement process that provides counties with their 49% share at the beginning of the state fiscal year to reduce upfront escrow costs.

Restore Safety Net Cost Sharing to 50/50

In 2011, the state reduced its share of Safety Net assistance from 50% to 29%, shifting billions in poverty assistance costs onto county property taxpayers. Since this change, counties have absorbed a cumulative cost shift of more than $6.1 billion.

Safety Net provides temporary assistance to individuals and families who are in crisis but do not qualify for federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits. Counties help these families access emergency housing, food assistance, and other critical services. This is fundamentally a state and federal responsibility.

With federal changes now threatening to increase human services costs even higher, we urge the Legislature to begin restoring the Safety Net cost-sharing ratio back to 50/50. This would provide meaningful property tax relief while ensuring that New York’s most vulnerable residents receive the assistance they need.

Raise the Retiree Earnings Cap

Counties face critical staffing shortages in public health, emergency services, child and family welfare, and other essential areas. The retired employee earnings cap has been frozen at $35,000 for 18 years, making it increasingly difficult for counties to recruit experienced professionals to fill vacancies.

Schools and BOCES already have an exemption from the earnings cap, allowing them to recruit retired teachers and staff without penalty. Counties need the same flexibility to address staffing shortages in essential local government services.

NYSAC supports S.6956-B (Ryan)/A.8720-A (Stirpe) to raise the retiree earnings cap from $35,000 to at least $50,000 for counties and municipalities. This reform would allow local governments to draw on a pool of experienced professionals to maintain critical services while recruiting and training the next generation of public servants.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, temporary suspensions of the earnings cap proved invaluable in maintaining essential services. Permanent reform is needed to provide counties with comparable flexibility in a tight labor market, without penalizing retirees who want to continue serving their communities.

Procurement Modernization
Counties need common sense procurement reforms to save taxpayer dollars while maintaining strong protections for workers:

- **Make piggybacking authority permanent:** This authority expires in June 2026 and must be extended. Piggybacking allows counties to use state and other government contracts to achieve economies of scale and reduce administrative costs.
- **Update bidding thresholds:** Current thresholds were set more than 15 years ago and now force expensive bid processes for routine purchases that would not have required bidding in the past.
- **Clarify piggybacking authority for public works projects:** While maintaining strong labor protections, give counties clear authority to use piggybacking for appropriate public works projects.

These reforms would reduce administrative burden and save taxpayer money without compromising quality or worker protections.

STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

Funding for County Emergency Medical System (EMS) Plans
Last year, New York State enacted Chapter 703 of the Laws of 2025, which requires counties to convene all their municipalities to develop and maintain comprehensive EMS plans. This is critical work—EMS services across the state are in crisis, with volunteer agencies struggling and response times increasing. However, this work requires significant county resources—staff time to convene and coordinate dozens of municipalities, technical expertise to assess service levels and organizational structures, and administrative capacity to develop comprehensive plans that meet state requirements.

We respectfully request that the Legislature appropriate funding to support counties in completing this new requirement. Counties are dealing with unprecedented fiscal pressures from federal changes, and this additional state mandate—while important—should come with state support to cover the costs of convening stakeholders, conducting assessments, and developing comprehensive plans.

Expand County Partnerships Program: Reduce Match to 25%
As noted above, NYSAC strongly supports the County Partnerships Program and appreciates the $50 million appropriation and increased maximum grant award in the Executive Budget. However, to maximize the program's effectiveness, we respectfully request that the Legislature:

- Increase the appropriation from $50 million to $100 million;

- Raise the maximum award from $1.5 million to $2 million per grant; and
- Reduce the local match requirement from 50% to 25%.

A 25% match would unlock transformative projects across all regions of the state. Many smaller counties simply cannot afford to put up 50% match for million-dollar projects, which means they lose access to this important funding. Reducing the match would provide more equitable access and accelerate economic development and housing creation statewide.

This program is targeted to critical local infrastructure needs, with priority placed on housing development. Projects that create housing receive the maximum grant award. With New York facing a housing crisis, we need to make it as easy as possible for counties to leverage state support for housing-enabling infrastructure.

Increase Article 6 State Aid for Public Health and Restore Eliminated Programs

The Executive Budget holds Article 6 state aid for public health flat at prior-year levels while eliminating critical categorical programs, effectively reducing overall support for county health departments. Counties provide essential frontline public health services, including disease surveillance, outbreak response, environmental health protection, maternal and child health programs, and health promotion initiatives that protect all New Yorkers. The Governor's proposal for Article 6 effectively represents a funding cut when factoring in inflation, staffing costs, and increased service demands.

The Executive Budget also continues the 2019 cut to New York City's Article 6 reimbursement, maintaining the reduced reimbursement rate of 20% rather than restoring the 36% rate that applies to the rest of the state for expenses above the base grant. This inequity has cost New York City millions in reduced public health funding over the past six years.

NYSAC opposes the elimination of the Healthy Neighborhoods Program ($1.5 million), which provides critical funding for local health departments to address environmental health hazards in homes, particularly lead hazards, mold, pests, and other conditions that contribute to asthma and other chronic diseases. Eliminating this funding would leave vulnerable families without help and could lead to more costly health interventions down the road. NYSAC also strongly opposes the elimination of tickborne disease funding and health promotion funding.

We urge the Legislature to increase Article 6 funding, restore New York City's reimbursement rate to 36 percent consistent with the rest of the state, and reinstate eliminated categorical programs so local health departments have the resources needed to maintain current service levels, respond to emerging public health threats, and protect community health statewide.

Support Farmland Protection and Increase the Farmland Protection Implementation Grant Project Cap

NYSAC strongly supports New York State's farmland protection efforts and continued investment in the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) and the Farmland Protection Implementation Grant (FPIG) program administered by the Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM). Counties have been leaders in preserving working farmland for decades, with some operating the oldest farmland preservation programs in the nation and investing significant local resources to purchase development rights and keep land in agricultural production. These locally driven programs work best when paired with flexible state support that reflects regional land values and development pressures.

However, the current $2 million per-project cap on FPIG awards—established administratively by AGM in 2014—has become a limiting factor in high-cost regions where large, viable farms cannot be adequately protected within that threshold. As the State Comptroller noted in a July 2025 audit of the Farmland Protection Program, this cap disproportionately affects areas with higher land values and intense development pressure, forcing counties to divide projects into multiple applications and reducing efficiency.

NYSAC supports increasing or removing the FPIG project cap, consistent with OSC's recommendation, to give AGM the flexibility to fund projects based on acreage, land value, and development risk. This change would allow counties to preserve substantial agricultural properties—often exceeding 50 acres—rather than spreading limited funds across multiple smaller projects, strengthening the long-term effectiveness of the Farmland Protection Program.

CONCLUSION

The state-county partnership has never been more critical than it is today. Counties deliver the vast majority of state and federal programs. We manage the safety net. We maintain roads and bridges. We protect public health. We provide public safety. We serve the most vulnerable.

We do this work efficiently and effectively, but we cannot do it alone—especially when facing billions in federal cost shifts that are beyond our control.

Our priorities in this testimony reflect a fundamental principle: ensuring affordability for taxpayers while maintaining the quality services New Yorkers deserve and expect. This requires genuine partnership between the state and counties.

We respectfully urge the Legislature to act on these critical priorities:

Immediate Federal Crisis Response:

- Protect counties from SNAP error rate penalties and administrative cost increases, with immediate IT upgrades and additional and recurring training opportunities and funding.
- Secure approval of a federal 1115 Medicaid waiver that includes county jails, allowing pre-release Medicaid/CHIP enrollment to reduce overdose deaths, improve public safety, and lower uncompensated care costs borne by counties.

Modernize Broken Systems:

- Delink Raise the Age from the Property Tax Cap and convert funding to a grant model.
- Appropriate funds for state-operated regional youth detention facilities.
- Enact CPL § 730 reform to address the competency restoration crisis.
- Fully fund the Opportunity Promise Scholarship with state resources.
- Pay $400 million owed to counties for Early Intervention services.
- Begin restoring Safety Net cost sharing to 50/50.
- Raise the retiree earnings cap to at least $50,000.
- Modernize procurement laws.

Strategic Investments:

- Fund mandated county EMS planning.
- Expand the County Partnerships Program to $100 million with a 25% match.
- Streamline cannabis tax distribution.
- Restore public health funding for healthy neighborhoods, tickborne disease, and health promotion.
- Increase flexibility and investment in the Farmland Protection Implementation Grant program by raising or removing the per-project cap to reflect regional land values and development pressure.

We ask the Legislature to stand with counties, support affordability by protecting local property taxpayers, and ensure that federal policy changes do not devastate local budgets or force cuts to essential services.

Thank you for your attention and for your ongoing commitment to county governments and the people we serve. I am happy to answer any questions.