



Timothy M. Kennedy

Erie County Legislator, District #2

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KENNEDY SUPPORTS REDUCTION OF ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

As an Erie County Legislator, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee, and simply as an elected public official, I would like to take this opportunity to emphatically embrace the 21st Century Commissions recommendations on reducing the size of the Legislature.

On Tuesday, May 26, 2009, the 21st Century Commission issued its report which, among other recommendations, proposed downsizing the Legislature from 15 to 11 seats, effective in 2011 after a referendum vote this November. This recommendation just makes sense, given that the need for change has never been greater. It is essential that the Legislature recognize that the people we represent are clamoring for reform. We must take the bull by the horns, follow this recommendation, and downsize.

Over the last eight months, the 21st Century Commission has painstakingly analyzed data using strict research methods. It is clear that their recommendation to downsize by 4 seats is the result of serious study and inquiry. The Commission also surveyed and interviewed current and former legislators in addition to obtaining input through a Public Forum. The finding of this Commission is therefore not arbitrary or random; rather, this recommendation should be accepted as the best resolution to fit our changing demographics in Erie County.

The result of this reduction would create a leaner, more effective and efficient government which would still be able to provide necessary services yet reduce costs to the taxpayers. Although the Commission estimates the potential savings to be \$250,000

Tim Kennedy for N.Y. State Senator



BRINGING CHANGE TO ALBANY

annually, I believe they are probably much greater when rent for district offices, salaries for those who run them, and the legislator's own \$42,588 salaries, are totaled. In fact, I estimate the potential savings to be \$4 million over the next ten years.

With savings such as these, it is imperative that the Legislature lead by example and swiftly embrace the Commission's call to downsize. Given skyrocketing costs to government, businesses and taxpayers alike, and the shaky ground upon which the economy stands, the Legislature must demonstrate leadership and good will to the people of Western New York and New York State. Voting to place this referendum on the ballot in November will ensure a strong challenge to the status quo and will illustrate that we are serious about turning this region's economy around.