



Greene County Prevails with State of Emergency Declaration



On May 17, 2023 the Greene County Legislature declared a State of Emergency due to failed Federal Policy(ies) together with New York City's mismanagement and/or underestimation of the impact of inviting persons without means to the city, resulting in New York City planning to relocate of these individuals and families with children to counties, outside of and nearby New York City; including Greene County.

As part of this declaration, the legislature cited the fact that "Greene County is already facing significant shortages of housing, medical care and transportation; together with a growing homeless population."

New York City filed a lawsuit in June of 2023 in New York Supreme Court against Greene County, twenty-nine (29) other Counties and the Town of Riverhead seeking to nullify the Defendants' State of Emergency Declarations and Emergency Orders.

On July 18, 2023, Edward I. Kaplan, Esq., the Greene County Attorney and Brian Sokoloff, Esq. of the Sokoloff Law Firm argued successfully against the City's lawsuit and obtained Court Orders separating the cases and transferring all cases to their respective venues (Counties). "We knew we had the law on our side", said Kaplan, "while emotions were mixed."

On August 31, 2023, New York City filed a voluntary discontinuance against Greene ending the lawsuit. Greene County's State of Emergency Declaration and Emergency Order remain in place, and continue to prohibit New York City, and its agents, from unlawfully transporting persons in need of temporary assistance and housing to the County.

"We're very pleased that Greene County successfully identified the fact that New York City did not follow the laws and procedures established by New York State for the transportation and housing of homeless people to other counties" notes Patrick Linger –Chairman of the Greene County Legislature. It's also encouraging that our county was successful in beating back a lawsuit made by a city of 8.5 million residents."

"Our residents are certainly concerned about the health and well-being of people coming to New York State" Linger continues. "However, small rural counties like ours simply do not have the housing, educational and service resources to absorb any unplanned influx of families."

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