



May 21, 2009

**BINGHAMTON MAYORAL CANDIDATE RICH DAVID TODAY EXPRESSED HIS
SUPPORT FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL ANDREW CUOMO'S
GOVERNMENT CONSOLIDATION LEGISLATION**
-DAVID HIGHLIGHTS BI-PARTISAN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE THAT BREAKS DOWN BARRIERS-

(CITY OF BINGHAMTON, NY) Binghamton Mayoral Candidate Rich David today expressed his support for New York State Attorney General Andrew Cuomo's Government Consolidation Legislation, which he unveiled earlier today.

The legislation is entitled the "*New N.Y. Government Reorganization and Citizen Empowerment Act*". In short, the legislation would give communities across the state the power to reform local governments. The news release is available on the Attorney General's website at www.oag.state.ny.us.

"In order to pursue consolidation at the local level it is vital that Albany not only assists localities in navigating a complex process, but more importantly in knocking down existing barriers," said David. "If you look around the state, and specifically the Southern Tier, you see many communities who are all facing common fiscal challenges attempting or exploring consolidation in various forms, but hitting countless roadblocks which often frustrate and inhibit consolidation efforts altogether. Attorney General Cuomo is presenting a comprehensive consolidation package at the state level that will simplify the process, thereby making consolidation at the local level more feasible. The fact that the Attorney General's legislation has garnered bipartisan support is very encouraging."

Among the reforms David supports are:

- (1) The Act establishes "uniformed, simplified and streamlined procedures"
- (2) The Act empowers governing bodies to initiate consolidation and dissolution processes for all covered local government entities
- (3) The Act empowers citizens to place consolidation or dissolution on a popular ballot
- (4) The Act clarifies and defines the petition process
- (5) The Act establishes a uniform signature requirement across New York
- (6) The Act authorizes counties to abolish entire units of local government

"The primary reasons to consolidate are to save money and improve the level of service," continued David. "Ideally consolidation results in both. With 10,500 government entities and a rapidly declining local, regional and national economy it is vital that we look at ways to reduce expenses and increase efficiencies and consolidation is that vehicle. Unfortunately consolidation of governmental entities is an extremely complex and technical process with very few resources available at the state level to offer guidance and assistance."

"This legislation is among the first comprehensive package that recognizes that multiple layers of duplicative government are contributing to New York having the highest local taxes in the nation," continued David. "The legislation identifies problematic barriers and offers remedies that for the first time arms local governments with viable tools to implement consolidation. This legislation is a step in the right direction and I am hopeful that our state leaders will embrace this legislative package and pass it during the next legislative session."