

The Honorable Eliot Spitzer  
New York State Governor  
State of New York  
State Capital  
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Spitzer:

We are writing to express our strong support for a legislative initiative being proposed by the County Executives from the seven downstate suburban Counties of Suffolk, Nassau, Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Orange and Dutchess, designed to promote good planning, economic development and workforce homes – The Downstate Suburban Workforce Housing for Economic Sustainability Act (the “Act”).

We enthusiastically support this proposal for several reasons:

First, it embraces a “bottom-up” planning approach that establishes local housing goals and motivates local governments to meet these goals by providing significant economic incentives as well as technical assistance to these towns and villages.

Second, it takes the key negative perceptions which often block the creation of workforce homes off the table. Fear of increased traffic flow? The bill provides no cost infrastructure loans to municipalities. Fear of burden to local school districts? This bill keeps school districts fiscally whole if increased enrollments are attributable to workforce housing.

Third, it represents the culmination of many months of bi-partisan collaboration among experts and advocates in the seven high cost downstate suburban counties.

Fourth, for the first time as part of a New York State legislative initiative, it links the concepts of economic development, smart growth planning and the need for workforce housing.

The reality is that no single approach will solve the housing crisis we face in our high-cost downstate suburban counties. As advocates and experts in the areas of housing and planning, we strongly believe that the sound planning and the incentives to towns and villages promoted by the Act are the best and most effective ways to stimulate the real housing growth needed to sustain our suburbs as the economic engines for all of New York State.

We urge your support for this important legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,