

NEWS RENSSELAER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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WICKS LAW REFORM NEEDED

Members of the Democratic Minority of the Rensselaer County Legislature support reform of the Wicks Law, a costly burden to municipalities. According to Deputy Minority Leader Keith Hammond, "The Wicks Law was adopted back in 1964 and is woefully outdated. It's time for the New York State Senate to move forward on removing this costly burden from local governments."

The Wicks Law requires four separate specifications and contracts for certain public work contracts over \$50,000. "In four decades, the costs of projects have risen dramatically but the laws have not been updated to reflect those increased costs to local government," noted Hammond.

County Legislator Flora Fasoldt, a former member of the Sand Lake Town Board, noted, "This antiquated law saddles school districts and local governments with cumbersome paperwork and regulations. Reforming the law would ease this unfair burden and, ultimately, give relief to local taxpayers. "

Governor Spitzer, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno had reached agreement on Wicks Law reform in June but the NYS Senate has yet to act. According to Minority Leader Ginny O'Brien, "Since that agreement, state government has screeched to a halt and this hold-up costs us dearly."

At the January meeting of the Rensselaer County Legislature, the GOP majority would not agree to urge the State Senate to act on Wicks Law Reform. Commenting after the Republicans' defeat of the resolution, O'Brien said, "I'm surprised that the Republican Majority of the Rensselaer County Legislature is comfortable with 1960s regulations and not willing to relieve the burden on localities. The GOP complains about mandates, but aren't willing to bring relief when given the opportunity," she noted.