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Sept. 15, 2022

## **County Legislators & Executive Work To Eliminate Residential Energy Sales Tax**

### *Move Will Save Taxpayers \$10 Million Or More Annually*

**New City, NY** - Rockland County residents will save about \$10 million in energy sales taxes after the County Executive and County Legislature launched actions to end the tax.

The move comes prior to the arrival of colder temperatures and is expected to save taxpayers about \$4 million in just the winter months alone, and about \$10 million or more annually going forward.

“It’s been more than a decade since we were forced to increase taxes and add new ones to help us address a fiscal crisis, moves supported by the State Comptroller and the credit rating agencies,” Rockland County Legislator Michael Grant said. “I am thrilled that we have gotten to the point where we can continue reversing many of those actions for the benefit of our taxpayers.”

The Budget & Finance Committee voted unanimously to adopt the resolution. It goes to the full Legislature on Sept. 20 and then to County Executive Ed Day for approval before being sent to the New York state Department of Taxation.

“It has been a hallmark of this administration to run our government as efficiently and fiscally prudent as possible,” County Executive Day said. “That commitment continues to bear fruit as evidenced by the elimination of this residential energy sales tax, which I am pleased to say is the latest effort to bring relief to our residents.”

This action fulfills the commitment made by the county Legislature and the Executive last year when the 2022 County Budget was amended, adopted and signed. The residential energy sales tax was put in place in 2012 and was to expire in 2025 after being extended due to the covid crisis.

Its termination now is the latest effort to bring meaningful tax relief:

- It follows a zero percent county property tax increase for 2022.
- It follows the elimination of the county motor vehicle registration tax in 2022.
- It follows the reduction of the county’s portion of sales tax on motor fuel purchases, capping the tax charged to the first \$2 of a gasoline purchase. It is in effect through February of 2023.

Rockland County Legislator Alden Wolfe said despite the tax cuts, County government continues to maintain the vital services our residents and businesses rely on.

“These past few years have been difficult and the challenges ever-changing, but we’ve been able to put meaningful tax cuts in place while continuing to provide public safety, road maintenance, child care

assistance, and much more,” Legislator Wolfe said. “We committed to cutting the residential energy sales tax and in a few weeks, we’ll have met that goal. It will bring relief to our residents and I’m humbled and grateful to play a role in the effort.”

Rockland County Legislature Chairman Jay Hood Jr. said finding ways to cut taxes is difficult, but through the work of both the legislature and executive’s office, reductions have been carefully identified.

“I appreciate the efforts of both the Legislature and the County Executive’s office in getting this relief accomplished for our taxpayers,” Legislator Hood said. “Collectively, these reductions can help reduce the burden and I hope we can identify further actions for 2023.”

The tax reduction actions follow due diligence to make sure the County’s fiscal position remains strong. Top credit rating agencies have continued to boost the County’s credit scores as the County’s deficit was eliminated and its final payments on a bond taken out to assist the deficit-reduction effort are set to end in 2024.

The County’s current credit ratings are AA from S&P Global, Aa1 from Moody’s, and A+ from Fitch Ratings. Importantly, all three also issued “positive” outlooks for the County’s ongoing creditworthiness.

“Families are all feeling the pinch in this challenging economy, and they shouldn’t have to worry about whether they can afford the sales tax on heat once winter gets here,” said Rockland County Legislator Aron Wieder, chair of the Budget & Finance Committee.

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