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ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

HON. JOHN J. MILLS
11TH DISTRICT LEGISLATOR
MINORITY LEADER

July 9, 2026

Hon. Timothy J. Meyers
Chairman
Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street – 4th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

RE: Erie County Department of Social Services Hotel Usage

Dear Chairman Meyers:

I am writing to request that the Erie County Legislature conduct a discussion with the Department of Social Services on their usage of area hotels for various programs. It is my understanding that several hotels throughout the county are used to house clients of social services. Changing the use of these buildings from traditional hotels to shelters for homeless and at-risk people has an impact on the community at large that we should explore in greater detail.

I have recently heard from residents and elected officials in the Town of Hamburg who have concerns about our utilization of a local hotel near the new stadium. Their concerns range from hotel rooms being offline for visitors attending events at the new stadium to residents of the hotel causing disturbances in the neighborhood. My colleague Legislator Todaro has heard from several business owners in his district about problems being created from a hotel we are using on Genesee Street. The Cheektowaga Police have informed our caucus that they have responded to hundreds of calls to that hotel and surrounding properties because of our occupancy. On a different note, a constituent of Legislator Greene contacted the Legislature about being a social service client fleeing domestic violence and being temporarily housed in a hotel with clients of different nature that made her feel unsafe.

I understand this issue is complicated and that it exists because of a New York State mandate to provide certain services to certain populations. However, it is apparent to me that the county's usage of hotels for this purpose has created a series of unique problems

that should be discussed, and addressed, by the Erie County Legislature. I personally would like to better understand the mandates that force the county into these arrangements and what flexibility we have in complying with them. Taxpayers paying for hundreds of hotel rooms per night cannot be a long-term solution to problems like homelessness. I feel strongly that we should discuss this soon.

Sincerely,



JOHN J. MILLS

Minority Leader

Legislature, District 11