



Pete Harckham on the Issues Facing Westchester's Families

Taxes, Spending, Government Reform

As a homeowner and a small business owner, Pete understands that the current property tax levels are crushing our families' ability to stay in Westchester and hampering business's ability to remain competitive. As a fiscal conservative, Pete has a proven record of cutting taxes, reducing spending and shrinking the size of government through consolidation, departmental merger and streamlining, while at the same time maintaining vital services.

- Delivered 2011 budget that reduced County taxes -2.2%, cut spending by \$30 million vs. 2010, and protected vital services in public safety, health and the environment from reckless budget cuts;
- Fitch's rating agency reaffirmed the county's AAA rating based on the final 2011 budget;
- Successfully passed two voluntary separation plans for County employees that reduced the size of the County workforce by 10%, saving taxpayers tens of millions of dollars annually going forward;
- Successfully passed groundbreaking County employee benefits reform package that will save taxpayers millions of dollars;
- Opposed county executive's plan to give \$18,000 raises to two political appointees;
- Slashed \$20 million in spending from the 2010 budget but voted against the 2.9% tax increase because he felt, through more cost savings, the budget could be brought down to a 0% increase;
- 2010 budget ultimately produced \$59 Million Surplus;
- Successfully reduced Board of Legislators (BOL) budget by 11% in '09 and '10;
- Successfully passed term limits legislation limiting the number of terms for legislators and the county executive;
- Supported legislation restricting County's use of Eminent Domain to seize private property for private development;
- Successfully cosponsored legislation granting property tax breaks to volunteer emergency first-responders and veterans;
- Successfully removed Playland from property tax levy support;

- Successfully opposed stipend increases for legislative leadership;
- Successfully opposed pay increases for top County management;
- Coauthored report tightening BOL spending, procurement and personnel policies;
- Voted against increases in filing fees for the county clerk's office;
- Served on BOL Stimulus Task Force, steering over \$50 million in funds to Westchester County.

Water Quality Protection

In representing six towns in the New York City watershed and 55,000 residents who get their drinking water from groundwater sources, **Pete understands that good environmental policy is good fiscal policy.** He has fought hard to secure tens of millions of dollars in federal, state and city funding to offset the costs to homeowners and municipalities of unfunded environmental mandates.

- Former Chair, Committee on Environment & Energy and Founding Chair, Septic Subcommittee;
- Steered nearly \$11 million in EOH water quality protection funds to northeast Westchester, including \$10 million for creation of Peach Lake sewer district;
- Successfully sponsored and passed a resolution calling for a ban on hydrofracking in the New York City watershed;
- Successfully negotiated comprehensive septic management plan with State DEC and northern Westchester municipalities to protect water quality while saving towns hundreds of thousands of dollars in administration costs;
- Created first countywide septic database;
- Successfully passed EOH legislation aiding water quality improvement projects in Somers and Bedford;
- Successfully passed groundbreaking legislation restricting phosphorus in lawn fertilizer to protect fragile watersheds;
- Successfully approved \$100,000 to Somers to study Shenorock Watershed wastewater problems;
- Successfully passed \$235 million bond to protect Long Island Sound from nitrogen discharged by County sewer treatment plants.

Other Environmental Initiatives

- Sponsored and passed legislation expanding recycling in Westchester to include all plastics with recycling numbers 3 through 7;
- Successfully appropriated funding for aircraft noise monitor for Pound Ridge to monitor

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possible impacts of FAA airspace redesign over northern Westchester;

- Successfully passed countywide anti-idling ordinance to improve air quality;
- Advancing bicycle friendly mass transit initiatives in Westchester including bike racks on buses and bicycle lockers at mass transit hubs;
- Created countywide energy efficiency audits to save homeowners money and to spur green job creation in Westchester;
- Successfully used federal grants to purchase electric service vehicles for Westchester County Airport;
- Successfully bonded purchase of new, clean hybrid buses and diesel filter retrofits for the Bee Line bus system;
- Successfully sponsored recertification of the Westchester County Agricultural District in order to preserve open space, protect drinking water and encourage sustainable agriculture;
- Successfully passed Clean Vehicles Legislation requiring County to purchase only high mileage or hybrid vehicles;
- Successfully passed solar energy exemption on County sales tax.

Protecting Our Families

Pete understands that the core mission of any government is to protect the safety and well-being of its residents. As the regional government, county government is crucial to cost-effective solutions for both supporting our local emergency responders and to protecting the people of Westchester. As a two-term member of the Committee on Public Safety & Security, Pete has:

- Successfully sponsored legislation to toughen DWI penalties in Westchester;
- Successfully protected the Department of Emergency Services from reckless budget cuts;
- Successfully passed Social Host legislation to protect underage teens from parties where alcohol is served;
- Successfully passed restrictions on the sale of cough medicine containing DXM to minors;
- Successfully sponsored emergency appropriation for mortgage foreclosure prevention saving hundreds of Westchester families from foreclosure;
- Successfully appropriated \$150,000 in Invest in Kids funding for Boys & Girls Club of northern Westchester for at-risk youth;
- Successfully cosponsored legislation granting property tax breaks to volunteer emergency first-responders and veterans;
- Changed County policy at police firing range to foster shared services and save local municipalities money.