

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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County Sales Tax Rate Resolution Amended by Executive Edwards

Mayville: -- After thorough deliberation, County Executive Gregory J. Edwards has announced that he has revised his plan regarding Chautauqua County's Sales Tax rate.

"I am well aware of the level of conversation that has taken place since late March over my proposal to increase the County's current Sales Tax rate of 7.75% to the rate that existed in 2006 of 8.25%," Edwards said.

In March, Edwards filed a home rule request resolution seeking State authorization to raise the County Sales Tax to 8.25% as part of an overall plan to help deal with an estimated \$18 Million budget gap in the 2011 budget, driven in large part by increased mandates from New York State.

"Dealing with the Sales Tax rate is just one of the steps that I am taking to help close out the projected budget gap for 2011," Edwards said. "I have already eliminated raises for my senior staff this year and next, and I have asked my union leaders to re-open their contracts and help find any and all savings possible."

Since the March meeting of the Legislature, Edwards has been contacted by State representatives, who have said that the prospects of having the Sales Tax rate change approved in both the Assembly and the Senate were not likely.

"While I still believe that raising the Sales Tax rate is a better choice than to raise property taxes to help us deal with our budget issues, which are the result of mandates handed down by New York State, I have filed new home rule legislation today to at least keep the Sales Tax at its current rate of 7.75%," Edwards said. "The County's Sales Tax rate is scheduled to drop from 7.75% to 7.5% later this year."

"I would hope that the resolution would make it to the floor, and ultimately be passed by the full Legislature at their April 28th meeting," Edwards said.

Edwards went on to assure the residents of Chautauqua County that he will not rest until every other reasonable option is exhausted before he is forced to increase property taxes as part of next year's budget.

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