

RESOLUTION NO. 298

REQUIRING A SURVEY OF THE IMPACT OF NEWLY ARRIVED PERSONS ON THE ALBANY COUNTY BUDGET

Introduced: 7/10/23

By Burgdorf, Collins, Drake, Grimm, Lockart, Mauriello, Perlee, Smith, Tunny, Whalen:

[WHEREAS, In early 2021, the Federal Government of the United States ceased enforcing the borders of the United States, and began dismantling prior Department of Homeland Security enforcement measures leading to a dramatic surge of undocumented migrants ignoring legal immigration laws of the United States and surging across the southern border; and

WHEREAS, From 2021 to present, New York State and New York City were popular choices for migrants due their sanctuary status and their rich social services benefits; and

WHEREAS, By May 2023, the City of New York had reached a saturation point to house, feed and provide medical attention for migrants and began to relocate them to suburban and rural counties throughout the State of New York, including Albany County, including some instances where such relocation occurred without any notice or communication to those cities, towns and counties; and

WHEREAS, There is no indication that the flow of undocumented migrants across United States borders to sanctuary New York City will be abated in the coming years, or that New York City will stop exporting migrants across the state unless New York State courts provide relief for communities who are unable to support new migrants; and

WHEREAS, The migrants relocated by the City of New York are a small part of a very large number of individuals who have migrated or received asylum by the United States of America, with 70,000 coming to the City of New York in recent months and 42,000 still under the care of the City; and

WHEREAS, While Albany County is continuing the American heritage of being a home to those complying with our immigration laws in the land of opportunity, practical public administration requires that any influx of new migrants or asylees receive adequate public services and a plan for permanent settlement as their legal status may dictate; and

WHEREAS, The Federal Government of the United States, in both its border policy and administration of social services, has completely failed both localities and the new arrivals themselves, abdicating its responsibility to support local governments and humanely provide for the migrants and asylees; and]

WHEREAS, The [unfolding humanitarian crisis occurring in the City of New York and, consequently, other] ongoing arrival of Newly Arrived Persons in counties, cities, towns and villages within New York State may have [lasting] fiscal impacts on the [provision of] social services' budgets [by] of local governments due to the assumption of responsibility for these persons by local social service districts upon the cessation of the funding of these services by other localities [New York City]; and

WHEREAS, The County Executive is currently coordinating measures with other municipalities to ensure Newly Arrived Persons are receiving adequate care and programming from those municipalities and involved non-governmental agencies; and

WHEREAS, It is incumbent on the leaders of Albany County to take proactive steps to [ensure that the] track the cost impact of the Newly Arrived Persons [on the County budget is considered at the beginning, rather than in the midst, of their stay in the County] in the event that the County is responsible for assuming responsibility of providing social services and other public services to the Newly Arrived Persons; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, For the purposes of this resolution, the term “Newly Arrived Person” shall mean a migrant, asylee, refugee, or any other non-citizen person or homeless person: 1. Contracted to be placed by the City of New York at any hotel, motel, or commercial lodging facility located within Albany County, or; 2. Placed by the State of New York within any dormitory facility of the State University of New York or any other facility within Albany County after May 29, 2023 and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the County Executive, in consultation with [the County Comptroller and] all Departments serving Newly Arrived Persons, shall prepare an initial report, which shall be subsequently updated, to the Albany County Legislature regarding the fiscal and housing impact of Newly Arrived Persons in Albany County, and that such reports shall include:

1. The potential timeline of when any Newly Arrived Persons shall become the responsibility of Albany County for the provision of any mandated or voluntary social service programs as operated by the County or funded through other non-governmental organizations, including but not limited to those organizations which contract with the County for the provision of social services;
2. The potential 2023, 2024, and 2025 budgetary costs to the Department of Social Services, Department of Health, Department of Mental Health, Department of Children, Youth, and Families, Department of Aging, and any other Department with possible budgetary implications identified by the Commissioner of Management and Budget for the assumption of mandated responsibility for Newly Arrived Persons based on the results of reporting on a potential timeline for assuming responsibility;
3. The geographic distribution of any Newly Arrived Persons by municipality; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the report required by this resolution shall be made to the best of the ability of the County Executive and Albany County Departments with the highest degree of information possible in compliance with any personal privacy laws or any other applicable provision of law; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the report required [under] by this resolution shall include any information provided by New York City or any other municipality as required by an Executive Order promulgated by the County Executive on May 23rd, 2023 and subsequently renewed; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That [such] the report required by this resolution shall be first submitted to the County Legislature within 90 days of the adoption of this resolution by the Legislature and then at 120, 150 and 180 days, and thereafter on a quarterly basis to be used for budget planning purposes through December 31st, 2025; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Albany County Executive, [the Albany County Comptroller,] and the Commissioner of Management and Budget.