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For Immediate Release

Members of Westchester’s Leading Business Organization Call Proposed Pay Increase for Chairman of County Board of Legislators “Too High”

Vast Majority in Survey Also Disapprove of Planned Double Digit Stipend Increases for Individual Legislators

WHITE PLAINS, NY (December 13, 2007) – Eighty percent of members of The Westchester County Association (WCA)—the area’s preeminent business membership organization—indicated in a survey conducted this week that the proposed 87.5% stipend increase for William Ryan, Chairman of the County Board of Legislators, was ‘too high.’ In addition, the vast majority of the members indicated that the plan by the county’s lawmakers to boost their stipends by double digit increases was not appropriate.

The electronic survey of the county’s business leaders was conducted after the legislators postponed the vote for their huge increases until December 17. WCA President William M. Mooney, Jr. said that the business community’s message to the lawmakers was very clear: “It’s time to put an end to this unrealistic standard of compensation and overly generous benefits for these elected officials. It’s another example of how the public sector is utterly out of sync with economic realities. It’s also a type of spending that adds to the

county's already high property tax burden that is making it difficult to attract and retain businesses.”

He added: “The business community plays a vital role in Westchester’s economy. Our Association strongly urges Chairman Ryan and the 17 legislators not to proceed with this ill advised plan next Monday.”

In the survey, members were invited to submit comments. Among those received were:

- “The...legislators are exhibiting very little in the way of leadership by this 11th hour, back door behavior. They should be placing emphasis on the appropriate usage of the existing tax base and eliminating the...inefficiencies in the Westchester County budget.”
- “When is the Board going to get the message?”
- “I am so angry with their collective behavior...They do not represent the residents of Westchester.”
- “Elect new people who care about the County, not their own bank accounts.”

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The Westchester County Association (www.westchester.org) is the preeminent business membership organization in Westchester County. The Association is committed to business advocacy, economic vitality and to providing a strong and clear voice for the interests of businesses on the regional, national and international levels. Its key objectives are: promoting positive economic development in the region; fostering business development; and providing its members with access and interaction with key public and private sector individuals, agencies and organizations.