



Westchester
County Association

CONTACT: Amy Allen
The Westchester County Association, Inc.
(914) 948-6444
aallen@westchester.org

For Immediate Release

NY State Senate Requests Input from Westchester County Association's Meeting with Real Estate Leaders Before Voting on Commercial Assessment Ratio Bill

White Plains, NY (June 2, 2009) The Westchester County Association (WCA)—the area's preeminent business membership advocacy group— today said that the New York State Senate will hold consideration of the Commercial Assessment Ratio Bill (A.4588A-Bradley/S.1706-AOppenheimer) until it receives input from a special private meeting that the WCA will have with representatives from the county's commercial real estate industry on Wednesday.

The bill, which passed the New York State Assembly last week, applies only to Westchester and affects commercial property as well as many multi-family residential properties in the County. Al DeBello, WCA Chair, stated, "It would increase the tax burden to many business properties, which will add to the already fragile business climate in the County. If businesses are unable to remain viable, their exodus will have major negative consequences for all taxpayers."

William M. Mooney, Jr., WCA President, noted "Over the last several days, our office has received numerous calls from business leaders seeking the WCA's assistance in stopping this measure from passing. If it becomes law, it will cost commercial real estate owners and their tenants hundreds of millions of dollars in additional property taxes

which will have a devastating impact on our economic vitality, something we can ill afford, especially in this climate.”

He said that there will be a meeting of the key area’s developers, corporate facility managers, property owners and a wide spectrum of others in the commercial real estate industry on Wednesday morning at the WCA offices. The delay in voting by the Senate will give the WCA an opportunity to convey the message from this meeting to the Westchester delegation.

Mooney continued: “We are deeply disappointed by the hasty vote in the Assembly and are appreciative of the Senate willingness to wait so that Westchester’s commercial real estate can be fully heard on a matter of this magnitude. Minimally, we would have thought the Assembly would have come to us and enabled us to give the commercial real estate industry an opportunity to be fully heard. We look forward to quickly sharing the recommendations with the Senate that will result from this meeting. We are hopeful that the Senate will not follow in the footsteps of the Assembly and defeat this ill conceived bill that singles out our county with an onerous tax burden.”

Al DelBello added, “The WCA is continuing its strong advocacy role on behalf of the Westchester businesses and taxpayers. We took strong exception to the punitive MTA payroll tax recently passed and seriously hope that our elected officials in the Senate will take this opportunity to listen to what the taxpayers are saying and not pass this current legislation.”

The Westchester County Association 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.