



CONTACT: Amy Allen  
The Westchester County Association, Inc.  
(914) 948-1168  
aallen@westchester.org

*For Immediate Release*

## **Westchester County Association Assails County Legislature's Delay In Approving County Exec's Proposed Healthcare Contribution Plan for Non-Union Employees**

*Calls for Legislature to Send Message to Taxpayers  
By Backing Change Now*

**WHITE PLAINS, NY (February 5, 2010)** – Westchester's leading business membership organization – the Westchester County Association (WCA) — today called on the County Board of Legislators to immediately approve County Executive Astorino's proposal to have all non-union County managers contribute 15% towards their health insurance premiums. County employees currently contribute nothing toward their health coverage. The proposed legislation would affect more than 400 county employees and would save some \$1.2 million a year.

Astorino announced his plan at the WCA's annual breakfast on January 14. Subsequently, the legislature's new chairman, Ken Jenkins, has said that while Astorino could require his own office staff contribute to their health insurance plans, he declined to have the Board of Legislators take action with respect to other non-union county employees pending a "study" of the concept.

The emphatic demand for quick action by the board marked the first action by the WCA's newly formed "Call to Action Committee." The committee includes a broad cross-section of business leaders who are developing a set of principles aimed at holding elected

officials accountable for taking serious steps to control government spending. The committee formed as the result of mounting concerns about out-of-control spending at all levels of government that is forcing businesses to leave or consider leaving Westchester and New York State. One of the most important targets relates to adjusting the compensation structure of public sector employees to reflect today's economic realities.

A recent WCA membership survey found that the extremely high cost of employee health insurance is the number 1 issue they face in their businesses. (Complete survey results available at [www.westchester.org](http://www.westchester.org)). As health insurance premiums have continued to soar, businesses in Westchester and across the nation have asked their employees to increase their contributions to their health insurance premiums. Westchester County employees, on the other hand, have continued to enjoy the costly and luxurious benefit of contributing zero towards their health insurance premiums.

At today's press conference held outside the County Office Building in downtown White Plains, WCA President Bill Mooney challenged the Legislature to act on Astorino's proposal. "Where is the 'epidemic of cooperation' that Westchester's taxpayers were promised by the Legislature's leadership? There is no valid reason to delay approval of the county executive's proposal. His request is modest by the private sector's perspective, but it is an extremely important first step toward bringing reality to the public sector."

Mooney added: "This does not require any further 'study.' The Legislature simply needs to take this action to demonstrate to County taxpayers that they are sincere in their efforts to provide taxpayer relief and that they are willing to be part of the shared sacrifice."

The Westchester County Association ([www.westchester.org](http://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.