

RESOLUTION NO. 411

AMENDING THE 2011 ALBANY COUNTY BUDGET TO CREATE A WINDOW AND ROOF REPAIR BUILDINGS STABILIZATION FUND

Introduced: 10/11/11

By Mr. Higgins:

WHEREAS, There exists a large number of vacant, unoccupied and distressed properties in Albany County, and

WHEREAS, These vacant, unoccupied, and distressed properties contribute to blight, decrease surrounding property values, and expend County funds through both emergency demolitions and reimbursement of municipalities for such demolitions when settling with those municipalities on the purchase of their tax liens, and

WHEREAS, In 2010 the County of Albany levied \$808,694.17 for the cost of demolitions just in the City of Albany, and

WHEREAS, It would benefit Albany County to create a grant program for window and roof repair because (1) the County would realize increased delinquent tax payments prior to foreclosure due to buildings maintaining retaining value due to window and roof repair; (2) the properties participating in this program will have increased value if eventually foreclosed and sold at public auction; (3) there will be an increase in the amounts realized at public auctions because of the decrease in the number of vacant lots as a result of emergency demolitions; (4) there will be a decrease in payments to the City of Albany and other municipalities when settling tax liens as a result of pre-foreclosure emergency demolitions, and

WHEREAS, The County has a history of supporting neighborhood revitalization programs such as extinguishing \$600,000 in County tax liens for the Arbor Hill Neighborhood Plan which resulted in \$19,000,000 being invested in the construction and development of those properties, and

WHEREAS, There is currently budget line item A93650 44071 in the amount of \$500,000.00 for demolition, stabilization, and maintenance costs associated with foreclosed properties of which a portion can be used as startup funds for this program, and

WHEREAS, Future funding for the program can be derived by earmarking a portion of the funds generated by the County auction of foreclosed properties, and

WHEREAS, This roof and window grant program should be restricted to those buildings listed on the municipal vacant building registry (if required by the municipality) within the County of Albany which details the loss of value to taxpayers (i.e. holes in roof, windows open to weather, etc.), and

WHEREAS, The program will require that the property owners be current on their taxes and that the grant would have to be repaid if the property is resold within a three year period, and

WHEREAS, The investment from the grant program will reduce expenses to the County over the long term and will leverage other sources of investment from public and private sectors, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, By the Albany County Legislature that the 2011 Albany County budget is amended as follows:

Decrease Line Item A3650 4 4071 Demolition/Stabilization of Unsafe Buildings by \$75,000

Create and Increase Line Item A3650 4 4078 Window and Roof Repair by \$75,000

and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the funds be made available for roof and window repair to distressed properties and be restricted to those buildings listed on a municipal vacant building registry (in those municipalities where such registration is required), and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the condition of the grant is that the property be residential in nature, owner occupied and that the taxes on the building be current, and, be it further

RESOLVED, That if the property is sold within three (3) years that the grant be repaid, and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the 2012 Albany County Budget include funding in the amount of \$250,000 for this program, and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the creation and operation of the Window and Roof Repair Program be overseen by the Albany County Department of Management and Budget Division of Finance with the assistance of the Department of General Services, and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Albany County Department of Management and Budget, Division of Finance report back to the Legislature on a quarterly basis for evaluation and review of the program, and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the County Legislature is directed to forward certified copies of this resolution to the appropriate County Officials.

Referred to Audit and Finance Committee. 10/11/11