



December 20, 2017

The Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce's Board of Directors are writing this letter to show our support of passage of Broome County's resolution to accept \$2.7 million in state funding to go towards Syracuse Behavioral Health's addiction treatment services.

Broome County is facing a drug addiction crisis, especially with Opioid drug usage. Last year 76 Broome County residents died from drug overdoses, and there have been over 600 overdoses so far in 2017. Each 911 emergency call attributed to an overdose, requires a response from multiple emergency responders. Each one of these calls costs thousands of dollars.

Broome County Jail is at, or near, capacity. Drug abuse and addiction has caused an increase to recidivism of incarcerated individuals directly attributed to possession, sale and property crimes related to usage and addiction. These individuals are not getting the treatment they require, so they end up in the exact same situation that brought them to jail in the first place.

Employers across the county are having an increasingly more difficult time hiring and maintaining employees. A major contributing factor to this can be contributed to drug testing failures. Drug abuse is also costing employers and the county direct funds with having to send their employees for substance abuse treatment outside the region. Local businesses have reported that they spent over \$125 thousand per month and Broome County spent \$750 thousand on substance abuse treatment last year for their employees.

Concerns about the community assessment and discussion process with local providers, and possible effects of opening a drug addiction clinic locally, have been voiced and considered by the Chamber's Board of Directors. Many clinicians dealing with our growing opiate and drug addiction crisis have voiced concern about the extensive recovery time and resources this addiction requires. This \$2.7 million in state funding guarantees that no costs associated with operating this clinic will be paid for on the backs of Broome County taxpayers. We have received the commitment from the County Executive that local tax payer funds will not be used to support this facility. We appreciate that the County Legislature has taken time to consider the potential risks to this facility. The Chamber believes that the benefit of opening this clinic outweighs the risk.

These overdoses have not only cost the County and employers a significant amount of money, it also has cost lives, families, and societal capital. For these reasons, the Chamber's Board of Directors overwhelmingly supports the passage of Broome County's resolution to accept \$2.7 million in state funding to go towards Syracuse Behavioral Health's addiction treatment services.

**WE'RE HERE  
TO BUILD A  
GREATER  
BINGHAMTON**

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