

New York State Assembly

Annual 2024 Report

Committee on
Local Governments



Speaker Carl E. Heastie
Fred W. Thiele, Jr., Chair



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

COMMITTEES
Ways and Means
Environmental Conservation
Oversight, Analysis and Investigation
Transportation

FRED W. THIELE, JR.
Assemblyman 1st District

CHAIR
Committee on
Local Governments

December 15, 2024

Honorable Carl E. Heastie
Legislative Office Building, Room 932
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Speaker Heastie:

I am pleased to submit to you the 2024 Annual Report of the Assembly Standing Committee on Local Governments.

Throughout the year, the Committee addressed many significant issues including, at the local level, parkland alienation, as well as statewide issues related to Industrial Development Agencies (IDAs) and municipal transparency. In this report you will find descriptions of the legislation and important issues considered by the Committee during the 2024 legislative session. Additionally, this report highlights goals of the Committee, which emphasize the ongoing need to support the municipalities of this State.

I share with you an appreciation for the important role local governments play in providing essential services to their residents and commend you for the support and leadership you have provided the Local Governments Committee in its pursuit to address issues facing New York's municipalities. With your assistance, the Committee will continue to focus on the needs of local governments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fred Thiele, Jr." in a cursive script.

Fred W. Thiele, Jr., Chairman
Assembly Standing Committee on
Local Governments

2024 ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Fred W. Thiele, Jr., Chairman

Committee Members

Phil Ramos
Steven Otis
Carrie Woerner
Jonathan G. Jacobson
Taylor Darling
Sarah Clark
William Conrad
Jonathan Rivera
Jennifer Lunsford
Dana Levenberg
MaryJane C. Shimsky
Sarahana Shrestha
Christopher W. Eachus

Eric G. Brown
Christopher S. Friend
Brian Manktelow
Jeff Gallahan
Matthew Simpson
Anil R. Beephan

Staff

Michelle Milot, Assistant Secretary for Program and Counsel
Michael Canavan, Associate Counsel
Joseph Creamer, Legislative Analyst
Amy Karlnoski, Committee Clerk

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. MAJOR ISSUES AND LEGISLATION OF 2024.....	2
A. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AID – ENACTED BUDGET.....	2
B. MUNICIPAL FINANCES.....	3
C. MUNICIPAL OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES	5
D. MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS	6
E. EMERGENCY SERVICES.....	8
III. PARKLAND ALIENATION LEGISLATION	11
IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS.....	15
V. OUTLOOK FOR 2025.....	16
APPENDIX A	17
APPENDIX B	18
APPENDIX C	23

I. INTRODUCTION

The Assembly Standing Committee on Local Governments considers the legislative needs of New York State's local governments, including counties, cities, towns, villages, school districts, fire districts, and various other special districts and local agencies. The Committee monitors the needs of local governments and strives to develop legislative remedies to meet those needs. The Committee also explores new proposals and ideas that will enable local governments to better serve the citizens of New York State. The Committee endeavors to enact laws that will further improve local governments' abilities to address their unique problems. The Committee is also interested in assisting local governments by considering legislation that will provide flexibility in municipal finances and considers other legislative solutions to help local governments remain financially solvent.

The Committee considers legislation that proposes to amend the General Municipal, Municipal Home Rule, Local Finance, County, Town, Village, Volunteer Firefighters' Benefit, and Volunteer Ambulance Workers' Benefit Laws. Since the structure, powers and scope of local governments is broad, the Committee's concerns cover a wide range of issues. Home Rule legislation is also addressed, which deal with issues specific to a certain local government's jurisdiction and are intended to remedy a specific local concern. Through the use of home rule legislation to solve individual local needs, the Committee has helped resolve many unique situations and has enabled local governments all over the State to serve their citizens better.

II. MAJOR ISSUES AND LEGISLATION OF 2024

A. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AID – ENACTED BUDGET

The State Budget for the State Fiscal Year (SFY) of 2024-2025 continues funding for local governments in the form of unrestricted aid and grants to help local governments achieve efficiencies and share municipal services.

Aid and Incentives to Municipalities

Aid and Incentives to Municipalities (AIM) funding is direct general-purpose aid provided to towns, villages, and cities. AIM funding for the State Fiscal Year 2024-2025 totaled \$758.2 million. This represents a one-time \$50 million increase in AIM funding over SFY 2023-2024.

Citizen Empowerment Tax Credits (CETC) and Citizens Reorganization Empowerment Grants

The Citizen Empowerment Tax Credits provide a financial incentive for municipalities to consolidate, or dissolve, and to cover costs associated with studies, plans, and implementation efforts. The Citizen Empowerment Tax Credits were funded at \$35 million, unchanged from SFY 2023-2024.

Local Government Performance and Efficiency Program

The Local Government Performance and Efficiency Program received \$8 million in the SFY 2024-2025 Budget to pay for the costs associated with local government efficiency projects, municipal consolidation, and/or shared services. This funding represents an increase of \$4 million over SFY 2023-2024.

Small Government Assistance

The SFY 2024-2025 Budget provided \$217,300 for the counties of Essex, Franklin, and Hamilton to help offset the Adirondack Park property tax exemptions.

Financial Restructuring Board

The Financial Restructuring Board provides a comprehensive review of eligible municipalities' finances and operations. The Board received \$2.5 million to make recommendations on improving eligible municipalities' fiscal stability and to provide financial assistance for undertaking certain fiscal recommendations. This is unchanged from SFY 2023-2024.

County-Wide Shared Services

The County Wide Shared Services Initiative (CWSSI), enacted in SFY 2018, required that each county convene panels to develop a county-wide shared services property tax savings plan and provided State matching funds for actual and demonstrable savings realized by implementation of such plans. The SFY 2024-2025 Budget removed the requirement that counties convene county-wide shared services panels and eliminated future State matching funds. Plans that were submitted as of January 31, 2024, will continue to be able to access State matching for savings achieved during their designated implementation period, supported by a \$225 million reappropriation from SFY 2018-2019.

Video Lottery Terminal (VLT) Aid

Video Lottery Terminal (VLT) Aid included \$28.9 million for eligible municipalities that host video lottery gaming facilities. This funding remains unchanged from SFY 2023-2024.

B. MUNICIPAL FINANCES

Municipal Food Procurement

(A.7264-A Peoples-Stokes; Veto Memo 133)

Current procurement guidelines for municipal food purchasing require that purchase contracts be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder. This legislation would authorize local governments to purchase food contracts vendors other than the lowest bidder if the price is within 10% of the lowest bid and fulfills one or more “values-based procurement standards,” including supporting the local economy, environmental sustainability, racial equity, valued workforces, nutrition, and animal welfare.

Suffolk County Water Restoration Act

(A.8993 Thiele; Chapter 118 of the Laws of 2024)

As a part of the SFY 2023-2024 Budget, the Legislature passed the Suffolk County Water Restoration Water Act, which authorized Suffolk County to create a wastewater management district and a water quality restoration fund supported by an additional one eighth of one percent sales tax. This law revises the apportionment of the funds generated from the sales taxes supporting the new water quality restoration fund and county drinking water protection program.

Erie County Bonds

(A.9066 Peoples-Stokes; Chapter 156 of the Laws of 2024)

This law extends the authorization for the private sale of municipal bonds by Erie County for an additional year, until June 30, 2025.

Village of Washingtonville Deficit Financing Extension
(A.9690-A Maher; Chapter 276 of the Laws of 2024)

In 2023, the Legislature passed the Village of Washingtonville Deficit Financing Act, which authorized the Village of Washingtonville to issue serial bonds for the purpose of liquidating their accumulated deficit of \$4.5 million. This law extends the time frame in which the Village can issue the bonds until June 30, 2025.

Peconic Bay Region Community Preservation Fund
(A.9943-A Thiele; Chapter 666 of the Laws of 2024)

In 1998, the Legislature established the Peconic Bay Region Community Preservation Fund. This law makes improvements to the operation of the fund by expanding the types of water quality improvement projects that may be funded, allowing for the year-to-year roll over of funds, and providing that 10% of the funds annually be used for disadvantaged communities as defined under the Environmental Conservation Law.

Expansion of the Open Auction Public Bond Sale Pilot Program
(A.10173-A Thiele; Chapter 497 of the Laws of 2024)

In 2019, the Legislature established a pilot program to allow certain larger municipalities to use an open auction style bidding process for the sale of municipal bonds. This law expand participation in the pilot program to all cities and towns that have issued a certain amount of bonds.

Local Government Mandate Relief Extender
(A.10282 Santabarbara; Chapter 167 of the Laws of 2024)

Currently, municipalities have the temporary authority to: pay their first installment on an issue of serial bonds two years after the date of issuance, or two years after the date of the first bond anticipation note, whichever is sooner; redeem bonds prior to maturity in such amount and manner as may be determined by the finance board; issue variable rate bonds and notes; and, suspend the five percent down payment requirement in certain circumstances. Additionally, municipalities may lease-finance certain public works, issue variable rate obligations, and issue discount bonds. This law extends certain expiring sections of the Local Finance Law relating to local government borrowing practices and mandate relief for three additional years, until July 15, 2027.

Local Government Purchasing
(A.10283 Conrad; Chapter 164 of the Laws of 2024)

This law extends, until July 31, 2029, the authority of local governments to make purchases from federal General Services Administration supply schedules, and State agencies, and make purchases or contract for services through county contracts, a process known as “piggybacking.”

C. MUNICIPAL OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

Southold Park District Treasurer

(A.8585 Thiele; Chapter 319 of the Laws of 2024)

The Southold Park District was established in 1907, with the treasurer established as a position elected by district residents. Due to difficulty recruiting candidates to run for the position, the role has been increasingly hard to fill, and its responsibilities have been undertaken by the district's secretary. This law changes the office of treasurer of the Southold Park District in Suffolk County from an elected position to a position appointed by the three elected park commissioners and removes the position's three-year term of office.

Residency Requirement Exemptions

It can be difficult for municipalities to find people interested in holding public office who are also residents of the municipality, as required by law. The Committee considers legislation that would provide flexibility in filling these offices through an exemption to the residency requirement. The following are the public officer residency exemptions granted in 2024:

Village Clerk/Treasurer of Portville

(A.6404-C Giglio JM; Chapter 268 of the Laws of 2024)

Assistant Public Defender of Essex County

(A.6812-C Simpson; Chapter 267 of the Laws of 2024)

Village Justice/Associate Justice of Cayuga Heights

(A.8090 Kelles; Chapter 86 of the Laws of 2024)

Fire Department Officers in the Village of Handcock

(A.4039 Angelino; Chapter 380 of the Laws of 2024)

D. MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS

Municipal Websites

(A. 2852-A Zebrowski; Chapter 609 of the Laws of 2024)

There are currently no standard requirements for municipalities to have and maintain a publicly accessible website, leading to confusion and potentially an inability for citizens to easily access verified municipal information. This law requires that all municipal corporations maintain and regularly update an official website with a “.gov” domain name. The website must contain information including notice of all municipal elections, the agenda and minutes from any municipal meetings, an up-to-date version or link to the municipal code and laws, and any recent financial reports.

Adopt-A-Municipal Park Program

(A.4563 Stirpe; Chapter 651 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes local governments to include lakes in the types of areas eligible to participate in municipal adopt-a-park programs. These programs allow volunteers and groups to “adopt” certain parks, shorelines, and roadways, and to aid municipalities with park maintenance and upkeep.

IDA Childcare

(A.5248-A Hunter; Chapter 646 of the Laws of 2024)

Lack of childcare has been a major concern for families and new parents who would like to remain in the workforce. In order to facilitate greater availability of childcare and reduce costs for working parents, this law requires Industrial Development Agencies (IDAs) to consider the extent to which a project provides on-site child day care when adopting its uniform tax exemption policy.

School Board and Labor Representation on IDA Boards

(A.7532-B Solages; Veto Memo 117)

Actions taken by IDAs related to economic development incentives can often have substantial impacts on local workers, taxpayers, and school districts. In an effort to include these groups in the decision-making process, this legislation would modify the composition of IDA boards to require that each IDA board have at least a representative from a local labor organization and either a representative of a school board or a superintendent of a local school district. To accommodate this requirement, the legislation allows IDA boards to temporarily increase the number of members, provided that the members decrease to seven or fewer as non-mandatory members seats become vacant.

Regional Planning Grant Eligibility

(A.8374 McDonald; Chapter 479 of the Laws of 2024)

Currently, Regional Planning Councils may not be able to directly secure funding from State and federal grants, despite their role in coordinating projects between local governments. This law defines Regional Planning Councils as municipal agencies for the purpose of eligibility for State and federal grants.

Village Incorporation

Requirements for Incorporation of New Villages

(A.8572 Thiele; Chapter 10 of the Laws of 2024)

This law is a chapter amendment to Chapter 774 of 2023, which updated the requirements for incorporation of new villages. The amendment decreases the minimum population requirement from 2,000 to 1,500 and clarifies the timing and implementation of Chapter 774 of 2023.

Changes to the Village Incorporation Commission

(A.8573 Thiele; Chapter 7 of the Laws of 2024)

This law is a chapter amendment to Chapter 773 of 2023, which established a statewide commission to oversee and make decisions on village incorporations. The amendment clarifies the structure and duties of the commission, the elements of the required studies, and further clarifies the timing for implementation of Chapter 773 of 2023.

Community Gardens

(A.9403-A Santabarbara; Chapter 355 of the Laws of 2024)

Currently, local governments are authorized to rank priorities for the uses of real property conveyed by a land bank. This law adds community gardens to the potential uses of the land a local government may prioritize, providing the ability for land banks to participate in, and promote, urban agriculture.

Village Elections

(A.9991 Otis; Chapter 219 of the Laws of 2024)

In 2019, the Legislature enacted a law requiring referendum proposals to be submitted to the Board of Elections three months prior to the November general election. This law resolves a timing conflict in certain provisions of the Village Law by clarifying the procedures for mandatory and permissive referenda for villages that have chosen to hold their elections on the same day as the general election.

Urban Development Action Area Extender
(A.10404 Bichotte-Hermelyn; Chapter 166 of the Laws of 2024)

This law extends, until June 30, 2027, provisions of law that authorize an expedited land use review process for Urban Development Action Area projects for low-income seniors and/or disabled housing projects that are funded by the federal government on former municipal-owned property.

E. EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Assembly has worked consistently to ensure the State's policies regarding volunteer firefighters and volunteer ambulance workers are effective and sufficiently protective of both public safety and individual volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers. We appreciate the diligence, dedication to service and efforts put forward by the thousands of New Yorkers who generously dedicate their time as volunteer firefighters and volunteer ambulance workers. This session, the Committee passed a variety of volunteer firefighter and volunteer ambulance workers legislation.

Deer Park Volunteer and Exempt Firemen's Benevolent Association
(A.7418-A Brown, K; Chapter 415 of the Laws of 2024)

This law updates the purposes and uses of fire insurance premium tax monies by the Deer Park Benevolent Association to include the ability to provide relief, aid, and assistance to volunteer members of such corporation who are disabled or injured in the performance of their duties, as well as to promote and safeguard the welfare of their members and families.

Valhalla Volunteer and Exempt Firemen's Benevolent Association
(A.8842 Shimsky; Chapter 351 of the Laws of 2024)

This law updates the purposes and uses of fire insurance premium tax monies by the Valhalla Fire Benevolent Association to include the ability to provide relief, aid, and assistance to volunteer members of such corporation who are disabled or injured in the performance of their duties, as well as to promote and safeguard the welfare of their members and families.

Bedford Hills Fire Department Benevolent Association
(A.9125 Burdick; Chapter 352 of the Laws of 2024)

This law incorporates the Bedford Hills Fire Department Benevolent Association, a not-for-profit corporation, for the purpose of providing relief, aid, and assistance to volunteer members of such corporation who are disabled or injured in the performance of their duties, as well as to promote and safeguard the welfare of their members and families, and authorizes the corporation to use fire insurance tax premium monies for such purpose.

Varna Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. Residency Cap Exemption
(A.9345 Kelles; Chapter 354 of the Laws of 2024)

This law improves the ability for the Varna Volunteer Fire Company, Inc., located in Tompkins County, to recruit volunteer members by providing an exemption from the statutory 45% limit on non-resident members.

Hasting-on-Hudson Firefighters' Benevolent Association
(A.9573 Shimsky; Chapter 359 of the Laws of 2024)

This law updates the purposes and uses of fire insurance premium tax monies by the Hasting-on-Hudson Inc. Fire Benevolent Association to include the ability to provide relief, aid, and assistance to volunteer members of such corporation who are disabled or injured in the performance of their duties, as well as to promote and safeguard the welfare of their members and families.

Millwood Volunteer and Exempt Firemen's Benevolent Association
(A.10070 Burdick; Chapter 364 of the Laws of 2024)

This law updates the purposes and uses of fire insurance premium tax monies by the Millwood Fire Benevolent Association to include the ability to provide relief, aid, and assistance to volunteer members of such corporation who are disabled or injured in the performance of their duties, as well as to promote and safeguard the welfare of their members and families.

Great Neck Alert Volunteer and Exempt Firefighter's Benevolent Association
(A.10071 Sillitti; Chapter 365 of the Laws of 2024)

This law updates the purposes and uses of fire insurance premium tax monies by the Great Neck Alerts Fire Benevolent Association to include the ability to provide relief, aid, and assistance to volunteer members of such corporation who are disabled or injured in the performance of their duties, as well as to promote and safeguard the welfare of their members and families.

Election of Fire District Officials
(A.10118 Clark; Chapter 401 of the Laws of 2024)

The current law related to the process for the first election for the fire commissioners in a newly created fire district has been perceived as ambiguous in relation to the number of votes each voter may cast in the election. This law clarifies the procedure for filling vacancies at the first annual election of fire officials within a newly established fire district by explicitly stating that each fire district voter is entitled to one vote for each vacant position on the board.

Mount Kisco Firefighter's Benevolent Association
(A.10273 Burdick; Chapter 411 of the Laws of 2024)

This law updates the purposes and uses of fire insurance premium tax monies by the Mount Kisco Fire Benevolent Association to include the ability to provide relief, aid, and assistance to volunteer members of such corporation who are disabled or injured in the performance of their duties, as well as to promote and safeguard the welfare of their members and families.

III. PARKLAND ALIENATION LEGISLATION

The issue of parkland alienation, or the conversion of parkland for non-park purposes, has been a great concern for the Committee. As a matter of public trust, it is required that any use of public parkland for non-parkland purposes must be authorized by the New York State Legislature.

As part of the Committee's ongoing effort to protect the public trust, as it relates to parkland, and in keeping with the Assembly's policy of preserving open space, the Committee strives to ensure that each proposed parkland alienation complies with alienation guidelines prior to being reported out of Committee. As part of the Committee's ongoing efforts to protect the public trust.

Committee guidelines for authorizing parkland alienation include specifying the number of acres proposed for alienation and requiring that the fair market value of such lands be dedicated for the purchase of replacement parkland of equal to or greater than fair market value, or for capital improvements to existing parkland. The legislation must also include a legal description of the parkland proposed to be alienated, as well as language detailing any land proposed to be dedicated (if replacement land is proposed for the parkland). Finally, a home rule message from the municipality requesting alienation is required prior to the Committee acting on any parkland legislation.

Town of Hempstead

(A.6500-A Curran; Chapter 416 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes the Town of Hempstead, Nassau County, to transfer the ownership of the Guy Lombardo Marina to the Village of Freeport for use as a public park.

Nassau County

(A.6726-A Curran; Chapter 318 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes Nassau County to alienate and sell certain parklands to Lakeside Inn, LLC, for residential improvement purposes.

Town of Putnam Valley

(A.6776-B Slater; Chapter 383 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes the Town of Putnam Valley, Putnam County, to lease sports field fences at Lenord Wagner Memorial Park for advertising purposes.

Town of Greenburgh

(A.9132 Shimsky; Chapter 274 of the Laws of 2024)

This law amends a prior authorization for the Town of Greenburgh, Westchester County, to alienate certain parkland to define the term "tennis facility" and allow a variety of related sports to be offered at such facilities.

Village of Haverstraw
(A.9255-B Zebrowski; Chapter 320 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes the Village of Haverstraw, Rockland County, to alienate and convey certain parklands to the Haverstraw Community Chair Factory, LLC.

Town of Kent
(A.9273-B Slater; Chapter 406 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes the Town of Kent, Putnam County, to lease sports fences at Guglielmo Field for advertising purposes.

Village of Round Lake
(A.9785-A Woerner; Chapter 321 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes the Village of Round Lake, Saratoga County, to extend the lease of parklands between Crown Atlantic Company LCC and the Village of Round Lake for use as a public utility / personal wireless facility for an additional thirty years.

Town of Kinderhook
(A.9847-C Bendett; Chapter 393 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes the Town of Kinderhook, Columbia County, to transfer ownership of certain parkland to the Valatie Volunteer Rescue Squad, Inc, for the purpose of providing emergency medical services.

Town of Brookhaven
(A.9887-A DeStefano; Chapter 395 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes the Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, to alienate and discontinue the use of certain parklands for the purpose of constructing a new wastewater treatment plant.

Village of Ballston Spa
(A.10037-A Walsh; Chapter 408 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes the transfer of the Woods Hollow Nature Preserve in the Village of Ballston Spa, Saratoga County, to the Town of Milton, provided that the Town shall continue to provide access to all Village residents and not enact any fees or charges that are higher for Village residents who are not residents of the Town.

Monroe County

(A.10129-A Bronson; Chapter 257 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes Monroe County to grant an easement over certain parklands to EH Henrietta Solar 1 LLC and EH Henrietta Solar 2 LLC for the purposes of installing and maintaining an access road for ingress and egress and installing, operating, and maintaining a subsurface cable to provide facility interconnection.

Town of Oyster Bay

(A.10139-A Blumencranz; Chapter 330 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes the Town of Oyster Bay, Nassau County, to convey certain town parkland to the Department of Environmental Conservation, for the purpose of providing public access to such parkland.

Town of Yorktown

(A.10161-A Slater; Chapter 405 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes the Town of Yorktown, Westchester County, to alienate and discontinue the use of certain parklands for the use of a cell tower.

Town of Brookhaven

(A.10172-A Flood; Chapter 407 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes the Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, to grant an easement over certain parklands to West Ferry Office, LLC for the construction of sub-surface sewer lines under such parkland.

Town of New Windsor

(A.10318 Eachus; Chapter 262 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes the Town of New Windsor, Orange County, to discontinue certain parklands for the purpose of construction and expansion of the Town's new sewer treatments plant.

Town of East Hampton

(A.10413-A Thiele; Chapter 194 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes the Town of East Hampton, Suffolk County, to discontinue and alienate certain parklands to Suffolk County for the purposes of a roadway improvement project along Three Mile Harbor Road.

Town of Islip
(A.10562 Ramos; Chapter 417 of the Laws of 2024)

This law authorizes the Town of Islip, Suffolk County, to alienate certain parklands for the purpose of a proposed residential development. Additionally, the law requires the Commissioner of General Services to remove the restrictions on the permissible uses of the parcel provided in the original conveyance of parklands for the State to the Town in order to facilitate the proposed development.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Veterans' Benefit Claims Representation

On December 18th, the Assembly held a public hearing to examine the quality and effectiveness of veterans' benefit claims representation before the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The hearing was conducted by the Assembly Standing Committees on Veterans' Affairs and Local Governments.

The purpose of the hearing was to examine the role of state and local government in assisting veterans in the VA benefits claims process and the quality and effectiveness of VA benefit claims representation available to veterans in the state; the impact of unaccredited individuals and companies that target veterans and engage in predatory and deceptive practices; and potential actions that the Legislature could undertake to better aid and protect veterans pursuing their benefit claims. Various veteran advocacy groups, as well as representatives from State and local veterans' services agencies attended and provided testimony.

V. OUTLOOK FOR 2025

The Committee recognizes the difficult economic outlook that municipalities and citizens of New York State have faced and will continue to face in the year to come. The Committee will build on the progress made during the 2024 legislative session, continuing to find solutions to reduce costs to local governments and keep New Yorkers safe. The Committee will continue to try to help lessen burdens placed on local governments and consider legislation that proposes solutions for municipal workers and increase assistance for volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers.

In addition, the Committee will also continue to advocate for the fair and equitable distribution of local government aid and work to promote solutions to the issues faced this year. Local governments rely on a stable and predictable revenue stream from the State, which is also a critical aspect to forming balanced local budgets.

The Committee also plans to continue to try to facilitate economic growth in local governments through examinations into the role that IDAs and other local economic development agencies play in New York State's economic development. The Committee is interested in ensuring that these local agencies are transparent and accountable, with records that are easy to obtain and to understand, that they are creating good jobs, and that they are providing a decent return on the taxpayer-funded investments being made. The Committee will continue to examine legislative options to address these concerns.

The Committee will continue to work with local governments to address the needs of municipalities by examining home rule legislation that provides communities with a remedy to their locally specific situations. The Committee will also continue to examine legislation relating to Home Rule to empower and uphold the powers of local governments. In addition, the Committee will explore options for affordable housing and ways to achieve a safer New York. The Committee looks forward to continuing to work with the Governor, the Senate, the State Comptroller, the Attorney General, and all local governments to improve the outlook for municipalities going forward.

APPENDIX A

**2024 SUMMARY OF ACTION ON ALL BILLS REFERRED TO
THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

<u>Final Disposition</u>	<u>Assembly Bills</u>	<u>Senate Bills</u>	<u>Total</u>
Bills Reported:			
To Codes	0	0	0
To Judiciary	0	0	0
To Ways and Means	32	0	32
To Rules	6	0	6
To Floor	3	0	3
TOTAL	41	0	41
Bills Having Enacting Clauses Stricken	11	0	11
Bills Having Committee Referenced Change	17	0	17
Bills Held in Committee	3	0	3
Remaining in Committee	190	29	219
TOTAL NUMBER OF MEETNGS HELD		8	

APPENDIX B

Bills that Passed Both Houses

<u>Bill #</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Status</u>
A.2852-A	Zebrowski	Requires municipalities to maintain and regularly update an official “.gov” website.	Chapter 609
A.4039	Angelino	Exempts certain Village of Hancock Fire Department officers from the New York State residency requirement.	Chapter 380
A.4563	Stirpe	Includes lakes in adopt-a-municipal park, shoreline, or roadway programs.	Chapter 651
A.5248-A	Hunter	Requires IDAs to consider the extent of on-site daycare facilities when evaluating PILOT project proposals for tax exemptions.	Chapter 646
A.6404-C	Giglio JM	Modifies the local residency requirements for the village clerk and treasurer in the Village of Portville.	Chapter 268
A.6500-A	Curran	Authorizes the Town of Hempstead, Nassau County, to transfer ownership of Guy Lombardo Marina to the Village of Freeport.	Chapter 416
A.6726-A	Curran	Authorizes Nassau County to alienate and sell parklands to Lakeside Inn, Inc.	Chapter 318
A.6776-B	Slater	Authorizes the Town of Putnam Valley, Putnam County, to lease certain sports field fences for advertisements.	Chapter 383
A.6812-C	Simpson	Modifies the residency requirement for the position of assistant public defender in Essex County.	Chapter 267
A.7058	Santabarbara	Revises the membership of the Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation.	Chapter 506
A.7264-A	Peoples-Stokes	Authorizes local governments to purchase food from other than the lowest bidder if the price is within 10% and follows “values-based procurement standards.”	Veto Memo 133

A.7418-A	Brown, K	Expands the use of the foreign fire insurance premium tax monies collected by the Deer Park Volunteer Exempt Firemen's Benevolent Association to be used in furtherance of its stated purposes.	Chapter 415
A.7532-B	Solages	Requires that IDA board membership include a representative from a local labor organization and either a representative of a school board or a superintendent from a school district.	Veto Memo 117
A.8090	Kelles	Modifies the local residency requirements for the village justice and associate justice in the Village of Cayuga Heights.	Chapter 86
A.8374	McDonald	Defines Regional Planning Councils as municipal agencies for the purposes of state and federal grant eligibility.	Chapter 479
A.8585	Thiele	Changes the office of treasurer of the Southold Park District from an elected to an appointed position.	Chapter 319
A.8572	Thiele	Provides technical amendments to Chapter 774 of the Laws of 2023, which updated the requirements for incorporation of new villages.	Chapter 10
A.8573	Thiele	Provides technical amendments to Chapter 773 of the Laws of 2023, which established a state commission to oversee the process of incorporating new villages.	Chapter 7
A.8842-A	Shimsky	Updates the purposes and uses of fire insurance premium tax monies by the Valhalla Fire Benevolent Association.	Chapter 351
A.8993	Thiele	Amends the Suffolk County Water Restoration Act of 2023 to revise the apportionment of funds raised from county sales taxes.	Chapter 118
A.9066	Peoples-Stokes	Extends the authorization for Erie County to sell bonds at private sale.	Chapter 156
A.9125	Burdick	Incorporates the Bedford Hills Fire Department Benevolent Association.	Chapter 352
A.9132	Shimsky	Revises a prior authorization to alienate parkland in the Town of Greenburg, Westchester County, on the condition that such parklands be used for "tennis facilities," to allow other sports on such facilities.	Chapter 274

A.9255-B	Zebrowski	Authorizes the Village of Haverstraw, Rockland County, to alienate and convey certain parklands to the Haverstraw Community Chair Factory, LLC.	Chapter 320
A.9273-B	Slater	Authorizes the Town of Kent, Putnam County, to lease certain sports field fences for advertisements.	Chapter 406
A.9345	Kelles	Provides an exemption from the forty-five percent limit on nonresident members by the Varna Volunteer Fire Company, Inc.	Chapter 354
A.9403-A	Santabarbara	Includes community gardens among the uses of land that local governments may prioritize to be conveyed by lands banks.	Chapter 355
A.9573	Shimsky	Updates the purposes and uses of fire insurance tax premium monies by the Hasting-on-Hudson Fire Benevolent Association.	Chapter 359
A.9690-A	Maher	Extends the initial time frames for the issuance of deficit financing bonds by the Village of Washingtonville.	Chapter 276
A.9785-A	Woerner	Authorizes the Village of Round Lake, Saratoga County, to extend the lease of certain parklands for an additional thirty-years.	Chapter 321
A.9847-C	Bendett	Authorizes the Town of Kinderhook, Columbia County, to transfer ownership of certain parklands to the Valatie Volunteer Rescue Squad, Inc. for the purpose of providing emergency medical services.	Chapter 393
A.9887-A	DeStefano	Authorizes the Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, to alienate and discontinue the use of certain parklands for the purposes of constructing a wastewater treatment plant.	Chapter 395
A.9943-A	Thiele	Revises the operation of the Peconic Bay Region Community Preservation Fund.	Chapter 666
A.9991	Otis	Clarifies the procedures for referenda in villages that have opted to hold their elections on the same day as the general election.	Chapter 219
A.10037-A	Walsh	Authorizes the Village of Ballston Spa, Saratoga County, to transfer the Woods Hollow Nature Preserve to the Town of Milton.	Chapter 408

A.10070	Burdick	Updates the purposes and uses of fire insurance tax premium monies for the Millwood Volunteer Firefighters Benevolent Association.	Chapter 364
A.10071	Sillitti	Updates the purposes and uses of fire insurance tax premium monies for the Great Neck Alerts Firefighters Benevolent Association.	Chapter 365
A.10118	Clark	Clarifies the procedures for filling vacancies at the first annual election of fire district officials.	Chapter 401
A.10129-A	Bronson	Authorizes Monroe County to grant an easement over certain parkland for the purpose of installing and maintaining an access road for ingress and egress and installing, operating, and maintaining a subsurface cable to facilitate grid interconnection.	Chapter 257
A.10139-A	Blumencranz (Rules)	Authorizes the Town of Oyster Bay, Nassau County, to discontinue and convey certain lands to the Department of Environmental Conservation for the purpose of providing public access to the parkland.	Chapter 330
A.10161-A	Slater (Rules)	Authorizes the Town of Yorktown, Westchester County, to alienate lands for use of a cell tower.	Chapter 405
A.10172-A	Flood (Rules)	Authorizes the Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, to grant an easement to West Ferry Office, LLC, for the purpose of constructing below surface sewer lines.	Chapter 407
A.10173-A	Thiele (Rules)	Expands the current eligibility criteria to allow more municipalities to participate in the electronic open auction public bond sale pilot program.	Chapter 497
A.10273	Burdick (Rules)	Updates the purposes and uses of fire insurance tax premium monies for the Mount Kisco Firefighter's Benevolent Association.	Chapter 411
A.10282	Santabarbara (Rules)	Extends the authorization for certain local government borrowing practices and mandate relief through July 15, 2027.	Chapter 167
A.10283	Conrad (Rules)	Extends the authority of local governments to purchase off federal, county, and state agency contracts, until July 31, 2029.	Chapter 164

A.10318	Eachus (Rules)	Authorizes the Town of New Windsor, Orange County, to alienate certain parklands for use as a sewer treatment plant.	Chapter 262
A.10404	Bichotte-Hermelyn (Rules)	Extends the authorization for an expedited land use review process for certain affordable housing projects in areas classified as urban development action areas until June 30, 2027.	Chapter 166
A.10413-A	Thiele (Rules)	Authorizes the Town of East Hampton, Suffolk County, to alienate and convey certain parklands for the purposes of a roadway improvement project.	Chapter 194
A.10562	Ramos (Rules)	Authorizes the Town of Islip, Suffolk County, to alienate certain parklands for the purpose of residential development.	Chapter 417

APPENDIX C

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILLS THAT PASSED THE ASSEMBLY ONLY

<u>Bill #</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Description</u>
A.892	Jacobson	Revises the definition of “population” as it pertains to redistricting of local legislative bodies.
A.10050-A	Barclay	Re-establishes the office of coroner in the County of Oswego.
A.1514-A	Giglio JM	Provides a residency exemption for the town justice of the Town of Rushford.