



JAMES SKOUFIS
Member of Assembly
99th District

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November 15, 2018

Orange County IDA
4 Crotty Lane, Suite 100
New Windsor, NY 12553

Dear Board Members:

It has been brought to my attention that a number of hotel developers have submitted applications to the Orange County IDA seeking payments-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOTs) as well as mortgage and sales tax exemptions in the Assembly District I represent. I write to you with broad, significant concerns regarding these proposals.

The hotel industry in Orange County is booming, particularly given the major tourist attractions located here or planned for the near future: Woodbury Common Premium Outlets, West Point, Storm King Arts Center, and Legoland, to name a few. Increased passenger traffic at New York Stewart International Airport is also contributing to the high demand for rooms. For these reasons, the hotel industry is a lucrative one in Orange County, further evidenced by the sheer number of proposals looking to take part in the favorable environment; in the Village of Woodbury alone, five hotels have been proposed in just the past year.

In my opinion, any hotel applications before the IDA - particularly PILOT requests - should be viewed with considerable skepticism. In fact, given the local circumstances, I do not believe any hotel in eastern or central Orange County ought to receive a PILOT. If a hotel developer claims they cannot proceed without a PILOT, so be it: there are many more proposals in the pipeline that can.

I strongly encourage the Orange County IDA and its board to reject the two pending hotel PILOTs as well as any future hotel PILOTs in eastern or central Orange County. These subsidies are unnecessary, provide an unfair competitive advantage, and would only act to pad the profits of hotel owners. Our local taxpayers should not be subsidizing this sort of greed-driven behavior.

Thank you for considering my request as well as your service to our county.

Sincerely,

James Skoufis
Member of Assembly