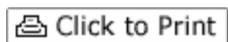


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12/29/08 06:57 AM

Let's seize opportunity to downsize Legislature

The News has reported that Republican attorney Raymond W. Walter of Amherst will be appointed to the Erie County Legislature to represent the 4th District for 2009. The seat becomes vacant when Michael Ranzenhofer leaves for the New York State Senate as a result of his November election victory.

I would venture to guess that the Republicans and Walter, a member of the 21st Century Commission, would use this opportunity to aggressively pursue the downsizing of the County Legislature beginning with the 4th District. It would make sense. The idea would mirror the strategy the Republicans used in a motion made for an Amherst Board reduction, as a result of a vacancy. The Amherst Republicans essentially said, "The Deborah Bucki seat is vacant. Let's eliminate it." That plan was forcefully argued by Republican Town Board Members Barry Weinstein, Guy Marlette and Shelly Schratz. Simple logic says the Republicans must now argue to eliminate the 4th District County Legislature seat at the end of the year.

If Walter is honorable and sincere in his belief in a smaller leaner government, he must recommend the elimination of the seat. If not, then he, like Weinstein, Marlette and Schratz, is acting in nothing more than a politically opportunistic manner. There is no desire to downsize. There is only a desire for media face time and political posturing.

Michael R. Wrona

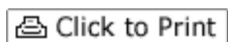
West Amherst

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