

**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

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June 1, 2023

Hon. Kathy Hochul, Governor  
State of New York  
NYS Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

On behalf of my residents, I am imploring you, as Governor, to do just that and govern the whole State of New York beginning with listening to the people across the State who are overwhelmingly opposed to the City of New York's uncoordinated decompression strategy.

There's a famous saying that goes "failing to plan is planning to fail," which is exactly what has happened in the City of New York, which did not prepare for a crisis they knew was coming.

Instead of reaching out to municipalities months ago, the City is – with little notice – attempting to turn hotels into homeless shelters across New York, with Rockland County eyed to be among the first. The fact that the largest city in the entire country believes shifting their Sanctuary City duty to the smallest county in the State is a good idea just underscores how absurd this plan is. Totally ignoring the fact that we are dealing with our own migrant crisis here in Rockland in a planned, concise, and humane manner utilizing partnerships with local not-for-profits and immigration advocates.

Rockland faces a well-known housing crisis which required your administration to unprecedentedly deputize my administration to assume Building and Fire Uniform Code enforcement in the Village of Spring Valley. Just this March, we lost 5 lives in a house fire in the Village; the home had 18 people living inside.

A countywide Housing Needs Assessment additionally found from 2018-2022:

- 177% increase in low-income/subsidized rental housing calls
- 160% increase in rental payment assistance calls
- 63% increase in students experiencing homelessness

But Mayor Eric Adams continues to lie and deceive local municipalities, blindside leaders with plans, ignore State of Emergency declarations, break local and state laws, and ignore requests by many, including this administration, to see the agreement between the City and hotel operators for full transparency.

In essence, he is acting as President of New York State while you sit on the sidelines and allow him to do as he will. Rather than try to understand why more than half of the counties in the state enacted emergency declarations, you label us as bigoted and applaud the Mayor for attempting to dictate what happens outside of the city limits in a home rule state.

New York City's current population is down roughly half a million since April 2020, over 20,000 hotel rooms are unoccupied, and more than 2,000 of the City's supportive housing units – which are meant for homeless individuals – are available.

For this Sanctuary City to claim they do not have the space is false, with this poorly planned decompression strategy even drawing criticism from Adams' own New York City Council.

Instead of criticizing local governments exercising home rule powers to safeguard current and future residents, we recommend you direct that frustration to the source of the issue – our broken immigration system.

We encourage you to watch a video we made in which we interviewed only a handful of the migrants in our County. The repercussions of the incentivized illegal immigration issue forces them to pay upwards of \$20,000 to get here, leaving many in debt and unable to even apply for asylum when they arrive. Others either don't know how to apply or are ineligible and denied, leaving them forever working off the books for low wages, barely able to make ends meet. In other words, the briefings you are receiving have only a passing relationship to these realities and more.

This is a far cry from the American Dream, is quite frankly inhumane, and the people attempting to come here deserve better than a life of poverty due to our broken immigration system.

Again, I implore you to speak with our Federal lawmakers and President of the United States and fix the immigration issue once and for all.

Sincerely,



Edwin J. Day  
County Executive

CC: Senator Chuck Schumer, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Congressman Mike Lawler, NYS Senator Bill Weber, NYS Senator Pete Harckham, NYS Assemblyman Ken Zebrowski, NYS Assemblyman John McGowan, NYS Assemblyman Chris Eachus, NYS Assemblyman Karl Brabanec.