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## **NEWS RELEASE**

August 7, 2019

On July 22, 2019, I was presented with a report identifying possible cost-saving measures and ideas between the County of Chemung and the City of Elmira. The report was authored by a temporary committee that was created via Resolution #19-148 and chaired by Chemung County Legislative Vice Chairman John Burin. The remainder of the committee members included Daniel Mandell, City of Elmira Mayor, Joseph Duffy, Elmira Councilman – 3<sup>rd</sup> District, David Vandermark, former Elmira Chamberlain, Christina Sonsire, Chemung County Legislature – 7<sup>th</sup> District, Martin Chalk, Chemung County Legislature – 10<sup>th</sup> District, William McCarthy, Chemung County Legislature – 12<sup>th</sup> District, and Scott Drake, Chemung County Legislature – 13<sup>th</sup> District. Deputy County Executive David Sheen and I would like to thank the committee for their diligent efforts in comprising and reviewing possible recommendations that could assist the City of Elmira during financially stressing times.

While there are multiple recommendations outlined within the report, one that specifically stands out and that could have the most meaningful financial impact for both the city and county is the recommendation to increase and redistribute sales tax revenue based on need rather than population. As I look forward to meeting with city officials in reference to all recommendations being made by the committee, I need to caution the committee members, the full Legislature and the public that the county is also facing fiscal stress in multiple areas of county government, to include:

- A nursing facility that has a structural deficit of six million dollars per year;
- County payroll, which increases approximately \$1.5 million annually due to Collective Bargaining Agreements with various unions, as well as single rate employees;
- A deteriorated county infrastructure involving roads and bridges in need of millions of dollars worth of improvements;
- A sewer system requiring a multi-million dollar upgrade;
- Escalating employee health insurance costs.

These are just some of the major financial issues facing the county, and prior to making a decision such as increasing and redistributing the current sales tax formula, we will need to take a serious look at how we are going to address the aforementioned county issues, not only in 2020 but in years to come. Any proposed increase to the current sales tax may be needed in the future to offset these costs as well as other unforeseen county expenditures.

As we move forward to review these recommendations with the City of Elmira and others who may be impacted, we need to keep in mind that various municipalities throughout the county may also need assistance as they are responsible for providing vital services to their residents.

Again, I would like to thank the committee for their hard work and look forward to meeting with representatives from the City of Elmira to discuss the proposed recommendations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christopher J. Moss', written in a cursive style.

Christopher J. Moss  
Chemung County Executive