



PRESS RELEASE – DECEMBER 3, 2025

**For media inquiries, please contact:**

Jason J. Kovacs  
845-616-2719 (cell)  
jason.j.kovacs@gmail.com

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Ulster County Legislator Jason J. Kovacs released the following statement regarding his vote against the 2026 Ulster County Budget.**

**Kovacs: “We are adding programs faster than we can monitor them.”**

“The 2026 budget spends nearly \$491 million, relying heavily on fund balance and optimistic revenue projections at a time when retirement costs, healthcare premiums, and Social Services mandates are all rising sharply. This is a year that demanded discipline, yet the budget expands government in multiple directions without a sustainable plan. We all support strong services, but the question is whether they are effective. Progress isn’t measured by how fast government grows — it’s measured by whether our investments actually improve outcomes for residents.”

**Findings from the 2025 Quality Report Raise Alarms About Oversight Capacity**

Kovacs pointed to the Comptroller’s Ulster County Quality Report 2025 as clear evidence that the County lacks the administrative systems to oversee the programs it already funds.

“The Comptroller’s report documented serious weaknesses in our contract oversight,” Kovacs said. “Vendors failed to submit required reports, outcome measures were left blank, and in some cases departments rewrote vendor data themselves. The conclusion was unmistakable: Ulster County does not currently have the capacity to evaluate the effectiveness or value of many of our existing vendor contracts. Until we fix those systems, expanding programs is not responsible.”

**Economic Development Leadership Vacancy Adds to Structural Concerns**

Kovacs also cited recent leadership instability in the Office of Economic Development.

“With the resignation of Economic Development Director Kevin Lynch, the department responsible for job creation, business attraction, and expanding our tax base is without stable leadership,” Kovacs said. “It is extremely difficult to justify expanding spending at this scale when the very office that drives economic growth is in transition. That is a structural red flag for a county our size.”

**A Call for Sustainable, Accountable Budgeting**

“Announcing new initiatives is easy,” Kovacs added. “Running programs well — and ensuring accountability — is the hard part. When every issue is labeled a crisis, nothing receives the attention it deserves. We need to prioritize wisely and build programs on stable foundations.”

“I did not vote no out of ideology. I voted no because this budget is not structurally sound. The combination of rising mandates, new long-term obligations, leadership instability, and inadequate oversight systems poses real risks for Ulster County’s fiscal health. We owe our residents a government that is sustainable, accountable, and built to last.”