



Town of Independence

887 Marietta Ave., P.O. Box 38, Whitesville, NY 14897

Phone: (607) 356-3608 Fax: (607) 356-3600

Email: town.independence@gmail.com

Website: independenceny.org

August 25, 2026

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
New York State Governor
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Honorable Governor Hochul:

The Town of Independence Board members in Allegany County are respectfully urging you to sign S.7635B/A.9162A into law. The legislation has passed both houses of the New York State Legislature, including a unanimous 60-0 vote in the Senate, and is now awaiting your signature. This bill would offer eligible workers a fair 25-year retirement choice when their public employer elects to participate. Allegany County has followed through with their commitment to support this bill, we urge you to now support emergency communication professionals.

Residents of the Town of Independence depend on Allegany County's 911 dispatchers every day. These dispatchers answer calls during the worst moments of people's lives and provide lifesaving instructions to those in need. They coordinate police, fire and medical responses and carry the cumulative mental and emotional weight of those responses long after the radio is quiet. They are listening to fear, violence and grief in real time and sending help as well as keeping callers calm. Staffing shortages, disrupted sleep, mandatory overtime and repeated exposure to trauma make this an exceptionally difficult career to sustain for decades.

Support for this legislation extends far beyond dispatch centers and labor organizations. It affects communities served by public safety professionals. They are always there when our community calls for help. Twenty-five years of service is long enough in a position where repeated trauma is the norm.

Thank you for considering this warranted and long-overdue request and supporting public safety professionals who are always there when needed.

Respectfully,

Jeri Reichman, Town Supervisor

Board Members:

Kimberly Howe
Duane Brubaker
Thomas Bissett
Danielle Saunders