

Oneida Land Claim Negotiations Must Continue

A Message from Ralph J. Eannace, Jr.

Oneida County Executive

Dear Neighbors,

The announcement Friday that land claim negotiations have reached an impasse is disappointing to all of us, but I firmly believe that too much has been accomplished for it to end now.

Over the last year we have tackled many extremely complex issues. While it is true that some are yet to be resolved, each of the negotiating parties has brought solutions and compromise proposals to the table. Governor Pataki and the federal government have put \$250 million each on the table for a settlement. The Oneida Nation has reduced its original demands and has agreed to resolve many aspects of land and sovereignty issues. In Oneida County, we have conducted a broad-based public outreach program to gather input from the community, and have faithfully represented the rights of landowners in negotiations. This includes achieving consensus among the parties that a settlement must include the following:

- A limitation on Oneida "Indian Country" to land which is purchased from willing sellers, with a cap of 25,000 acres.
- A fund at least sufficient to repay local governments for property tax losses on currently owned and newly acquired Oneida lands.
- A resolution of the sales tax issue that will provide fair reimbursement to local governments and create a level playing field for local businesses.
- A fair resolution of other jurisdictional issues including environmental concerns, zoning, and law enforcement.

While there is more work to be done, we believe that much has been accomplished toward building consensus around the above points.

Oneida County will continue to appeal to Judge McCurn to reverse his decision and allow negotiations to continue. I also urge you to register your support for the negotiation process by signing and mailing in the coupon below.

We understand how much the citizens of this county wish to resolve, on fair terms, the land claim issue and we will continue to work toward that goal.

Sincerely,



Ralph J. Eannace, Jr.
Oneida County Executive



Please sign and mail this coupon today to:

County Executive's Office, County Office Building, 800 Park Avenue, Utica, NY 13501.

Or, e-mail your message to landclaim@co.oneida.ny.us.

TO: Dean Ronald Riccio, Settlement Master

We appeal to you to help the Oneida Land Claim talks to continue. We strongly believe that a negotiated settlement will be the quickest and fairest way to resolve these issues and allow our community to move forward in peace and prosperity.

Name _____ Date _____