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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Thursday, Jan. 15, 2009

Picente: Schumer Plan for Medicaid Payments Would Benefit Oneida County Taxpayers

Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente, Jr., today voiced strong support for a proposal by Senator Charles Schumer to have county governments in New York State receive direct funding from the federal government as part of additional Medicaid funding for New York that will be included in the upcoming federal stimulus package.

“Getting this funding directly from the federal government would help Oneida County, and all of our counties, as we deal with the ever-increasing obligations we face to provide services that are in increasingly high demand,” Picente said. “State government’s Medicaid “cap” has ended huge spikes in costs, but Oneida County’s Medicaid costs are still increasing by 3% every year – and 3% of \$50 million is a substantial amount of money.”

Picente said that money from the stimulus package would help Oneida County continue to provide services, and allow the county to lower its costs to provide those services. “The bottom line of this proposal is that increasing the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) brings more money to Oneida County at a time when taxpayers cannot be expected to keep pace with all of the mandated programs and services that are putting such tremendous pressures on county governments. This funding represents the fiscal cavalry coming to help county governments at a time when we need resources.”

Picente said that the Schumer package of aid will help county governments, but only for so long. “There is a tremendous gap in New York State between what counties can afford to do in carrying out state mandates and what we are expected and required to do,” Picente said. “Senator Schumer’s efforts will result in giving counties and the state the time to put together a long-term, affordable plan that realigns services, costs and mandates so that we can develop a more affordable solution.”