

## Erie County Charter Revision Commission

Good evening. I have four recommendations for your consideration.

1. The public should be allowed to speak at meetings of the Erie County Legislature. Perhaps 30 minutes total, with each person allowed 3 minutes to speak. Every town allows public comments; the county legislature should too.
2. Term limits – Term limits are very popular among voters. In 2024 in West Seneca 80% of voters voted for term limits. In Grand Island, 65% of voters voted in favor of modifying their term limit law. Tonawanda and Amherst have term limits. I recommend terms of something like two four-year terms for the county executive and five two-year terms for members of the legislature.
3. Citizen Initiatives to allow residents to put issues on the ballot – Close to half of the states, as diverse as California and Florida, and many cities allow some form of citizen ballot initiatives. Probably a higher threshold than in Suffolk County, 2.5% of the votes cast in each of the ten towns in the county. Probably should hold them only on even-years. This would require action by the state, but it could be put in the charter in anticipation of state action.

Finally

4. Nothing in the charter that has already been voted on by the public. This refers to last year's referendum on sales tax. This was decisively defeated by 11 points county-wide, and was defeated in both blue and red towns, so that should have settled the issue.