

## NEWS

# RENSSELAER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Office of the Minority

**Flora Fasoldt 270-2892**

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### **Democratic Legislators Push for Rensselaer County to Upgrade a Prescription Discount Plan for County Residents**

**Troy**—Democratic Minority legislators have requested that the county terminate its current prescription discount program contract with Caremark and consider participation in another discount program offered by ProAct Inc. Counsel for Minority Democrats sent the request after hearing from the County Attorney that the County Executive will not consider other options for residents until July 2010.

The New York State Association of Counties has endorsed ProAct's discount drug card. This special program is provided at no cost to the participating county or its taxpayers. Any resident of the participating county regardless of age is eligible to receive savings. County residents simply present the ProAct card at the time of purchase at any participating pharmacy.

Legislator Flora Fasoldt (D-Sand Lake, Schodack, Nassau) spearheaded the initiative to upgrade and enhance the prescription discount plan offered to residents. She and Minority Leader Ginny O'Brien met with Chairman Neil Kelleher to discuss the advantages of the ProAct program, notably free direct mailing of discount cards to all county residents and monthly reports on the program's value.

"With our county residents feeling the pinch of the economic downturn combined with the high cost of prescription drugs, it's incomprehensible that there would be any hesitation to take a good look at options out there to help control drug costs for people," commented Legislator Fasoldt. "A February 2009 report shows that North Country residents who have a ProAct county prescription drug discount card have saved \$5.7 million since the cards were introduced in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties in 2006." Over 13 counties are now participating with ProAct including neighboring Schenectady County which reported 1,500 cards were used in the first month the program started.

"We had a great deal of difficulty finding anyone who actually knew about the county's current discount card program. Apparently cards are out there somewhere, but since the county has to pay for any reports about usage of the cards, there's really no way of knowing how successful the current program is. Partisan politics shouldn't stand in the way of this beneficial healthcare-related program," remarked Legislator Ginny O'Brien (D-East Greenbush, North Greenbush, Poestenkill).

Last month, Legislator Fasoldt sponsored a resolution requesting that the county consider the ProAct program for residents. "We have a window of opportunity here to offer a better program – our focus should be on service and savings for our residents," Fasoldt remarked.