



NY INITIATIVE FOR DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

NY IDA Update
6.25.08

The NYS legislature has adjourned its spring session with no resolution on comprehensive IDA reform. The negotiations that were reported in the Associated Press and communicated by NYS AFL-CIO President Denis Hughes over the weekend did not reach a conclusion before the unexpected shift of power within the state Senate majority from Senator Joe Bruno to Senator Dean Skelos of Long Island over the last two days.

The provisions that allow IDAs to fund “civic facilities” projects remain expired. The provisions originally expired in July of 2007 for three weeks before being extended 7 months to allow the legislature and governor time outside of session to reach agreement on a comprehensive reform package. When no compromise was reached, the provisions expired on January 31, 2008. The legislature did not agree on a re-authorization or extender before leaving Albany yesterday.

The NYS Economic Development Council, the lobbying arm of the state’s 115 IDAs, reports that over \$2.5 billion worth of projects statewide are “on hold” due to the IDAs’ lapsed authority to provide low-cost financing for the projects. Many lobbyists for these organizations, for business interests, and for the IDAs were pushing hard in the waning days of session to get an IDA extender without any reform. The lobbyists’ presence in Albany and their media campaign against prevailing wages and other important IDA reforms have increased steadily throughout the session.

Pressure is thus building every day throughout the summer for the legislature to act when they reconvene. It is difficult to predict at this time if a legislative solution is possible this year. The Senate intends to reconvene in Albany briefly this summer and there are many rumors about both houses coming back later in the year to deal with all of the important issues that were left undone in the regular session.

Regardless of when the legislature reconvenes, we know that those who oppose IDA reform will continue their negative media campaign and lobbying efforts as the “civic facilities” expiration impacts new projects across the state. As legislators head home for the summer, the negative efforts will intensify through local media, in-district lobby visits and events. We’ve already seen their efforts expand as opinion pieces and letters are being printed in local papers more regularly and a paid advertisement opposing IDA reform showed up in the *Buffalo News* over the weekend.

Our coalition’s campaign for comprehensive IDA reform has made great progress in this session and it is critical that we keep our united, pro-reform message strong so that we do not lose ground during the legislative off-session and in the face of this negative campaign. We will convene a series of regional coalition meetings in July to assess our work together thus far and discuss next steps for our campaign.

In the meantime, we encourage you to **prepare testimony and mobilize for the Governor’s “Economic Security Town Hall” meetings in order to make sure Governor Paterson’s advisors get the message** that comprehensive IDA reform is an important component of good economic development upstate and down. The attached memo from the Governor’s office has information about the town halls; also included is our recent memo, “Not Just Any Job: Upstate Needs Good Jobs,” which you may find useful in preparing your testimony. Upcoming dates for the Governor’s forums are:

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| June 25 | Finger Lakes Region – Rochester City Hall |
| June 26 | Central NY Region – Onondaga Community College |
| July 1 | Southern Tier Region - Broome Community College |
| July 7 | Mohawk Valley Region - Mohawk Valley Community College |
| July 16 | North Country Region – Jefferson Community College & Clinton Community College |
| July 24 | Mid-Hudson Region – Orange County Community College-Newburgh Campus |
| July 28 | New York City Region – Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. State Office Building & Brooklyn Borough Hall |
| July 30 | Long Island Region – Farmingdale State College |
| July 31 | New York City Region – York College/CUNY |

If you encounter your local legislators in the next few weeks, make sure they know how disappointed you are that IDA reform remains unresolved. As Albany's political landscape settles and particularly **as the state Senate's position on IDA reform develops under new leadership and leading into the November elections, we will be in touch with further updates.**

We have all done great work across the state to elevate the issue of IDAs' failure to provide quality jobs for New Yorkers and to advocate for economic development reform generally. **Albany now knows this issue and this coalition will stand strong and united until reforms are enacted, and we look forward to working with many of you in July to plan our next steps** and celebrate our efforts together thus far. Until then, check out the clips below for all the latest IDA info, keep us informed of local efforts and enjoy a little of the summer sunshine!

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IDA REFORM

Buffalo News (Tom Precious, June 25, 2008): [State Legislature ends wild, bizarre session](#)

Key measures affecting the upstate economy died Tuesday as Gov. David A. Paterson and legislative leaders ended this year's legislative session, one of the more bizarre periods highlighted by the departure of its two biggest power brokers. Left undone was an effort to lift what in a week will be a ban for hundreds of non-union companies from bidding on government construction projects. In the Senate, Bruno addressed an emotional, packed chamber Tuesday, breaking down in tears. An hour later, Skelos was elected majority leader. The session turned out to be a major victory for labor unions. They pushed back an attempt to cap property taxes and on Tuesday dealt a final blow to two measures that set up a divisive fight between organized labor and business interests. They won passage of a new binding arbitration bill for court employees, additional rights for workers when a factory or plant closes, and a permanent law requiring nonunion government employees to pay union dues. Screaming loudest, though, were not-for-profit and civic groups, who were caught in the crossfire between business and labor. At issue was extension of a law that expired Jan. 31 giving access to lower-cost financing through local industrial development agencies to D'Youville and other schools, nursing homes, housing groups and other not-for-profits. The groups were seen as a bargaining chip for a union-backed bill by Assemblyman Sam Hoyt, D-Buffalo, requiring such IDA projects to pay prevailing wage rates to construction workers, which critics say would have sharply driven up development costs by as much as 30 percent.

Buffalo News (Lou Jean Fleron, June 25, 2008): [Reform will hold IDAs accountable and help Buffalo](#)

Those votes need to be translated into the passage of Assemblyman Sam Hoyt's IDA reform legislation that will establish job standards, accountability measures, transparency procedures and environmental standards in exchange for public subsidies to private businesses. Across New York, local IDAs deal with our money, handing out more than \$400 million per year in tax breaks, too often providing subsidies that fail to promote real economic development and do not deliver the jobs they promise. Here in the Queen City, the second poorest city in America, nearly 29 percent of us live in poverty. Good jobs with health care, benefits and pensions continue to disappear. Auto workers are forced to take "buy downs" to gradually lower their standard of living to satisfy the insatiable greed of global capital markets.

Poverty, joblessness and inequality are the reasons we have economic development policies. We cannot afford to continue to perpetuate these conditions by continuing to subsidize failure. Upstate New Yorkers need good jobs, not just any jobs, as a return on our investment in business development. In this celebrated and proud blue-collar town, people spontaneously support wages that allow families to live self-sufficiently, educate their children, buy their homes and contribute to their communities. When we give up tax revenues needed for schools, roads, parks, libraries, public safety and public health, we expect to receive in exchange living wage jobs.

Buffalo News (Bernard Carr, June 25, 2008): [If wages prevail, affordable housing won't](#)

A perfect storm is gathering, threatening to sink the development of affordable housing. It involves a conflict between two positive objectives — more affordable housing and higher construction wages. The conflict is embedded in the Industrial Development Agency legislation now being discussed in Albany, which would require prevailing wages on affordable housing built with IDA financing. Prevailing wages are set by government- issued schedules that largely correspond with union rates. The fundamental issue is: Should developers of affordable housing who receive government subsidies be required to pay prevailing wages to construction workers, thus significantly increasing the cost of building? Gaining higher wages is an understandable goal of organized labor. But the money has to come from somewhere, and funding sources for affordable housing are scarce. For more than 30 years, the affordable housing industry has rebuilt communities by providing high-quality, low-cost housing for tens of thousands of low and moderate income residents. Construction workers earn good wages. Non-union skilled trades, such as plumbers and electricians, can earn in excess of \$58,000 annually, while laborers can earn \$40,000 and more. These jobs represent important opportunities for workers who live in the communities in which the housing is built. Prevailing wages would push labor costs up to union scale, to between \$100,000 to \$125,000, and the jobs would likely go to workers who live outside these neighborhoods. Of course, this assumes that more taxpayer dollars will be available to make up the difference. Otherwise, the result will be fewer or no jobs for anyone, since the projects would be scaled back or not built at all. Affordable housing often leads the way for further economic development, creating well-paying jobs and opportunities for local residents and minority-and women-owned firms. Impose prevailing wages and these promising businesses could well be forced to close, while the neighborhood jobs that they could create would never materialize.

Plattsburgh Press Herald (Dan Heath, June 25, 2008): [Prevailing-wage proposal would further damage state's ability to compete: Local IDA head fears 'union level' will inhibit work](#)

A local economic-development specialist says prevailing-wage requirements for IDA -funded projects could drive businesses elsewhere. County of Clinton Industrial Development Agency Executive Director Adore Flynn Kurtz said the State Legislature has been under intense pressure to enact reform of the 110 IDAs in New York. One push is that all projects that receive funding from an IDA would have to pay prevailing wage, rather than market wage, for construction. Kurtz said that in the face of that pending legislation, the New York State Economic Development Council asked the Center for Governmental Research to produce a report on the impact of a prevailing-wage requirement on construction projects in New York state. The first (finding) is that market-wage construction labor costs are an average of 9 percent more in the upstate communities (Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Albany) than the out-of-state areas. Prevailing-wage construction labor costs are an average of 57 percent more in those communities. For downstate (Poughkeepsie, New York City and Long Island), market-wage construction labor costs were 33 percent higher, and prevailing wages were 154 percent higher. Upstate, total project costs are 4 percent more at market wages and 28 percent more under prevailing wages, the report concluded. Downstate, those figures are 16 percent more with market wages and 76

percent more with prevailing wages. The report can be found on the Center for Governmental Research Web site at www.cgr.org. Kurtz said that if prevailing wages were required for projects that receive IDA funding, the businesses would be more likely to locate in states that don't require prevailing wage, such as North Carolina and Florida. That likelihood increases when the high cost of doing business in New York is included, she said. The state has the second highest such cost, which includes wages, tax burden, electricity and industrial and office rent. It also has the highest per-capita state and local tax burden in the nation.

Bond Buyer (Ted Philips, June 25, 2008): [Public Authority Reform Deadlocks in N.Y.](#)

Public authority reform in New York appeared to be dead yesterday, at least in the current legislative session which extended by one day in both chambers. At press time yesterday many legislative issues were unresolved. While the Senate was not planning to return to session today, the Assembly was expected to do so. The Senate majority conference was planning to meet last night to discuss the leadership of the chamber following the announcement Monday night that Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, R-Brunswick, would not be seeking reelection this fall. It was not clear yesterday whether Bruno, the most powerful Republican in the state, would step down or would stay on in his leadership role until the end of his term. It appeared yesterday that a compromise would not be in place yesterday to allow the state's industrial development agencies to resume selling bonds for civic facilities on behalf of nonprofits. A bill that would have made it easier for municipalities to do tax increment financing also appeared to be stalled after the Assembly amended a bill that had already passed the Senate.

Buffalo News (Richard Lipsitz, June 24, 2008): [State needs to approve IDA reform legislation](#)

Critics of a comprehensive industrial development agency reform continue to repeat misinformed views about the costs of the proposed IDA reforms. These opinions, however, reflect little understanding of the construction industry, and ignore considerable research by construction economists. In fact, wage and benefit costs are only about one-third of overall construction costs, and research shows that skilled construction workers who receive higher wages are more productive and, in turn, lead to lower unit costs. Providing good jobs with decent wages is good economic development. Poverty-wage jobs only further the cycle of economic insecurity as evidenced by the trends toward growing poverty and decreasing wages. IDAs were created to promote economic prosperity, but the prosperity generated by these subsidies seems to be benefiting only a few, mostly the businesses and corporations. The Assembly has passed a comprehensive reform bill that would add transparency to how IDA funds are spent and require companies that receive assistance to deliver on their job creation promises and pay a decent wage. It's time that the Senate did its part. The revitalization of our upstate communities is at stake.

AP (Valerie Bauman, June 24, 2008): [NY lawmakers reach agreements on brownfields](#)

Despite the agreements announced Monday, the 2008 session this election year will also be known for what wasn't accomplished. Among them was reforming Albany's notorious public authorities, which were created to be apolitical entities to systems such as New York City transit and the Thruway, but have seen several scandals and criticism of being out of touch with New Yorkers paying their fares and tolls. Also untouched were measures that sought to reduce gasoline and heating fuel prices. Another would have allowed nonprofit groups to again use lower cost, publicly backed financing from industrial development agencies. Unions opposed the measure. In all, Paterson and legislative leaders negotiated 18 agreements in closed-door meetings. "For people who voted in November, 2006, expecting big changes in the way Albany operated, they must be sorely disappointed," Horner said. "There are lot bills getting passed at the last minute and some big ticket items getting kicked down the road."

Bond Buyer (Ted Phillips, June 24, 2008): [N.Y. Legislature Deadline Passes, But Debate on Issues Goes On](#)

With a lot of unfinished business on the table, the New York Legislature was likely to continue past the end of the official legislative session, which was yesterday. A legislative source said that the Assembly would likely to be in session through tomorrow and a Senate spokesman said that body would finish the session last night. Among the issues that appeared to be unfinished yesterday were a resolution to the standoff between the Senate and Assembly over reform proposals for the state's industrial development agencies, public authority reform and tax increment financing. Although Gov. David Paterson mentioned that the IDA issue was still under discussion at a news conference yesterday to announce legislative agreements with Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, R-Brunswick, and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, D-Manhattan, he did not say where the talks were headed.

New York Times (Danny Hakim, June 23, 2008): [Making Progress on Pensions As the Session Draws to a Close](#)

Critics have said that the legislative session has lacked urgency at a time when the state faces a \$5 billion deficit in next year's budget and when citizens continue to shoulder one of the highest state and local tax burdens, according to several studies. In addition, some of the more high-profile issues being negotiated appeared to be far from concluded. Legislation to reauthorize industrial development agencies, which are used by hospitals, private schools and nonprofit organizations to finance construction projects, also appeared to be in jeopardy. Over the weekend, Mr. Paterson kept in contact with both Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Joseph L. Bruno, the Senate majority leader. The Assembly was expected to extend its session beyond Monday, while the Senate was not.

New York Post (Matt Nerzig, June 23, 2008): [Reform IDA](#)

Since 1969, taxpayers have been subsidizing corporations through tax breaks by the Industrial Development Agency in exchange for creating good jobs - or so we thought. Although the state doles out \$400 million a year in tax breaks, we're still seeing a drop in good-paying jobs. Between 2000 and 2005, an alarming 45,000 jobs vanished. Opponents claim reform would hurt small business, when it's actually aimed at mega-companies like JPMorgan and Wal-Mart. The IDA should promote the interests of New Yorkers, not global corporations. But without making companies accountable for the quantity and quality of jobs created, it's failing in its mission. The Assembly has approved a bill to fix the IDA program; the Senate should seize this opportunity and follow suit.

Buffalo News (Tom Precious, June 23, 2008): [IDA battle reaches key point in Albany](#)

Before the Legislature goes home this week to end its 2008 session, lawmakers and Gov. David A. Paterson must decide whether a law affecting 117 industrial development agencies scattered around the state will be extended or dies. Private company projects won't be affected. But, since Jan. 31, nonprofit agencies have been barred from using IDAs to help finance their construction projects, and unless a resolution is reached, nearly \$2 billion in projects on the drawing boards will not go forward. In the Senate, Sen. George Maziarz, R-Newfane, introduced Hoyt's bill Friday night, sending shivers up the spines of business lobbyists. The bill, however, is not expected to pass in the Senate and is seen more as a negotiating tactic by the Senate to try to prod the governor's office in the closed-door discussions. Jobs for Justice, a labor-backed group, says one in every five IDA dollars went to failing projects in 2006. Hoyt said there is still room to negotiate a compromise. He said he would be willing to entertain thresholds below which prevailing wage requirements do not apply or issue different standards for wages between public and private projects, or between upstate and downstate projects.

Albany Times Union (Matt Nerzig, June 21, 2008): [Get the state back on track by reforming IDA](#)

What Brian McMahon of the New York State Economic Development Council calls an "artificial wage mandate that makes New York less attractive to employers" is actually one of the best tools we have to turn back the rising tide of low paying jobs that are undermining the lives of hardworking New Yorkers ("Union coalition seeks IDA changes," June 12). There's nothing "artificial" about the need to make a real living wage in order to make ends meet. Just ask one of the thousands of upstate New Yorkers who has lost a job in the past 10 years and has been forced to take a new, lower-paying job. From 2000 to 2005 alone, more than 45,000 jobs with good wages, health care and benefits simply vanished - evidence enough that something is needed to get our upstate economy back on the right track. Reforming the state's 40-year-old IDA program that doles out \$400 million a year in tax breaks to large corporations that don't create good jobs would be a good place to start.

Post Standard (Mark Spadafore, Sadaf Khatri, June 21, 2008): [State Dollars Should Bring Good Jobs](#)

IDA reform would even save the state money, by ensuring that only responsible companies that create good jobs receive taxpayer-funded assistance. IDAs are a significant source of economic development subsidies at the local and county level, providing tax breaks and cheap financing to companies in return for a commitment to create jobs. But the types of jobs subsidized by IDAs -- many of them low-wage -- will not generate economic revitalization Upstate.

Under a current bill passed by the state Assembly, wage standards would be instituted for construction and permanent jobs created by IDA-subsidized projects, to ensure that these jobs respect the prevailing rate. Also included in these reforms will be provisions for regional hiring, and apprenticeship requirements to ensure that development creates jobs and training opportunities for local workers. It is clear that Central New Yorkers need good jobs, not just any jobs. Comprehensive IDA reform is necessary to ensure that we're not using our limited public dollars to create low-quality jobs.

Associated Press (Michael Gormley, June 21, 2008): [Big, private fight in Albany could cost New Yorkers](#)

The AFL-CIO, one of New York's most influential special interests, is pushing for significant changes in industrial development agencies before Monday's scheduled end of the 2008 legislative session. IDAs have been criticized for not delivering on the promised jobs, while providing tax breaks to politically connected companies. "The IDAs over the last 25 years really have not worked," said AFL-CIO President Denis Hughes. But the fight is less over whether IDAs should be reformed. The toughest battle inside those closed doors with lobbyists, lawmakers and their lawyers is whether "prevailing wages" should be required in IDA-backed projects during construction and whether "area wages" should be required for jobs created by the projects. In most cases, prevailing wages and area wages are close or the same as union wages. An element of the IDA law lapsed in January. That meant IDAs could no longer provide tax-subsidized financing to nonprofit agencies in part because, relying on government funding and private donations, they don't pay union-level wages on the projects. Unions are trying to make that lapse permanent, saying taxes shouldn't subsidize poorly paying jobs. Nonprofit agencies are saying they are trying to restore or at least extend the lapsed provision so they can afford to provide essential public services.

Buffalo News (Tom Precious, June 19, 2008): [Legislative meeting leaves issues in limbo](#)

With just two workdays to go until the end of the 2008 legislative session, Wednesday came and went without agreement on a slew of important measures affecting everything from cleaning up abandoned industrial sites to putting new consumer protections into the subprime mortgage lending industry and controlling rising property taxes. There was still no deal to address upstate business groups complaining that a new law enacted in April will ban nonunion companies from bidding on public

construction projects. And nonprofit groups such as nursing homes and others that rely on bonding from a special state program are still in limbo because no deal has been made on changing the program that runs industrial development agencies.

Buffalo News (Thomas Burke, June 18, 2008): [Hoyt is right to sponsor bill seeking IDA reform](#)

The IDA reform bill written by Assemblyman Sam Hoyt has received excessive scrutiny. There have been constant attacks on him, some saying he is beholden to unions. Those people have short memories, or perhaps just use the union card because we are not popular. I see Hoyt representing his constituents with passion even if his stance is controversial. Industrial development agency money has been used in an almost fraudulent fashion and it's time to stop the corporate welfare. We as taxpayers are absorbing the financial burden while CEOs continue getting exorbitant salary increases and working men and women are asked to take concessions. Since these corporations are lining up for free money, they should be required to pay prevailing wages, have claw-back penalties for not reaching their job-growth goals and pay living wages to their new employees.

Buffalo News (Tom Precious, June 18, 2008): [Albany workload heavy in final days](#)

Lawmakers are also considering undoing a law that blocks non-union companies from bidding on many public works construction projects, altering how industrial development agencies are run and greatly expanding leave benefits for people who take up to three months off to care for a baby or a seriously ill family member. Which of those actually happen will be known by Monday, when the Senate is vowing to stick to its schedule to head home and begin campaigning for re-election this fall.

Buffalo News (Andrew J. Rudnick, June 17, 2008): [Hoyt's IDA bill raises costs, delays project](#)

The AFL-CIO's recent television ads support Assemblyman Sam Hoyt's industrial development agency "reform" legislation, particularly its prevailing wage component. But, while everyone wants more money from his employer and higher wages are good for our economy, the devil is in the details of this proposed legislation. It makes infinitely more sense for employers to pay higher wages when the economy around them is strong, and thus they're able to do so, rather than businesses being forced to do so by a state or local government mandate. There's ample evidence to support this juxtaposition. Downstate, tying a prevailing wage to IDA incentives is no big deal. Why? Because employers there are able to pay the higher wages due to a downstate economy that is doing very well. For upstate, it's a very different story. Unfortunately, Hoyt's legislation chooses mandates as the road to higher wages, sacrificing an important upstate business expansion tool — the IDAs — in the process.

IDAS IN THE NEWS

Daily Messenger (Alex Bauer, June 25, 2008): [IDA Report: 6,224 Jobs Created or Retained](#)

Sixty-five companies that get financial benefits from the Ontario County Industrial Development Agency have retained a total of 4,436 jobs over the last 10 years, according to the agency's 2007 annual report. Over the last three years, 21 IDA-backed projects have created 1,788 new jobs, the report stated. IDA benefits include services such as bonding and the establishment of payment in lieu of tax agreements, which allow companies to pay partial taxes on new construction. The payments gradually increase over 10 years until the company is paying full taxes. The report shows that municipalities, including schools, towns and the county, received just over \$2 million in payments in lieu of taxes in 2007. The IDA asked the 65 companies to report wages for jobs retained or created as part of agency programs, though the

state does not require audited information for this. Only 37 of the 65 responded. Of those, the average annual wage was \$49,070.

Albany Times Union (Alan Wechler, June 24, 2008): [Ag incubator farming's future?: Greene County IDA would allow small growers to rent land and share equipment](#)

Continuing its practice of coming up with land-use ideas before outside developers do, the IDA wants to create Hudson Valley's first agricultural incubator. The agency wants to buy a local farm and make it available to small growers. They would be able to rent the land, use shared farming equipment, and consult with agricultural experts. The concept is meant to keep farming sustainable in a place where farmland is rapidly being replaced by housing. The agency wants to buy a local farm and make it available to small growers. They would be able to rent the land, use shared farming equipment, and consult with agricultural experts. The concept is meant to keep farming sustainable in a place where farmland is rapidly being replaced by housing.

Buffalo News (David Robinson, June 21, 2008): [Amherst dentist gets tax breaks from IDA](#)

The Amherst Industrial Development Agency approved \$58,000 in sales tax breaks Friday for a dental practice that plans to renovate a vacant building on Sheridan Drive. The tax breaks for Winning Smiles Pediatric Dentistry sparked a lengthy debate among the agency's board members over the merits of granting incentives for a dental office and how it fits within the agency's policies. "This company is moving from Amherst to Amherst," she (Ayesha F. Nariman, board member) said. "How is it fair to offer incentives to them when there are other dentists who don't get these sales tax incentives?" The sales tax breaks apply to construction materials and the \$250,000 in furniture, fixtures and new equipment, including digital imaging machinery and electronic records capabilities. Amherst Town Board member Shelly Schratz, the board's liaison to the IDA, said she was concerned about the tax breaks for equipment setting a precedent. The dental practice, which now has 14 workers, said it would add four additional employees with average salaries of \$27,000. It currently has an annual payroll of \$639,718, which equates to an average of \$45,694 per job.

Plattsburgh Press-Republican (Dan Heath June 21, 2008): [Contractors again press Nova Bus: 'We want our share of the work at an acceptable rate'](#)

Labor leaders again urged the company that is building the Nova Bus plant to award construction contracts to local contractors. Speaking at a recent County of Clinton Industrial Development Agency public hearing, Plattsburgh-Saranac Lake Building and Construction Trades Council President John Donoghue said he hoped the IDA Board of Directors would consider the council's 3,000 members as it decides on tax breaks and whether to undertake the project. "All the work that has been awarded so far has gone to out-of-town contractors, most from the Syracuse area," he said. While everyone touts the number of jobs that are being created, area contractors who use local laborers are the forgotten part of the story, Donoghue said.

Business First of Buffalo (James Fink, June 20, 2008): [ECIDA mulls Pine Harbor \\$19M plan](#)

The owner of a downtown Buffalo apartment complex is planning a face-lift and, at the same time, will complete a transaction that will keep it as a low-income residence. The Related Cos., based in New York City, is working with the Erie County Industrial Development Agency on an incentive package to help finance renovations to the Pine Harbor Apartments on Seventh Street on Buffalo's lower West Side. The IDA will consider issuing a series of tax-exempt industrial revenue bonds to help finance the \$19 million project. The agency set a July 14 hearing for the package and its board of directors is expected to vote on the project later that day. As part of the deal, the current owner, Harborview Associates - a Related Cos. affiliate - will sell the 208-unit complex to another affiliate. Harborview Preservation L.P.

The deal will allow the complex to maintain its low-income housing tax credits, which are considered essential to the project.

Niagara Gazette (Mark Scheer, June 17,2008): [Majority's vote ousts Wolfgang from college board](#)

The reigning chairperson of the Niagara County Community College Board of Trustees lost her seat at the table Tuesday to a business associate of one of the most influential men in both county politics and government. In a 14-5 vote, members of the Niagara County Legislature cleared the way for longtime NCCC Board Chairwoman Joan Wolfgang to be replaced at the end of the month by Bonnie Gifford, a business associate of Niagara County Industrial Development Agency chairman and regular GOP campaign contributor Henry Sloma. "The vote speaks for itself," said Wolfgang's husband, Jerald, himself a former head of the local GOP. "You can buy anything you want in this wonderful world of politics." Gifford is a former member of the board at the Lewiston-Porter School District who tried unsuccessfully in May to recapture a seat on the board. Her term as college trustee will officially begin July 1.

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