



Resolution Calling On Greene County Residents And Business Owners To Adopt The "Think Differently" Initiative To Assist Individuals With Special Needs And Their Families

WHEREAS, the "Think Differently" initiative is about promoting awareness and acceptance of all people, and advocating for the inclusion of all individuals living on the Autism Spectrum and with special needs; and

WHEREAS, our state and communities are stronger because of our diversity and differences; and

WHEREAS, according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) over 55 million people, or approximately 19% of Americans, have a type of disability or special need; and

WHEREAS, for some people with special needs, the very things that make them unique can also keep them on the sidelines, separate from those who might not understand their differences or uniqueness; and

WHEREAS, it is important to promote and provide guidance to those with special needs on how to access publically supported services available to them in the community; and

WHEREAS, it is important to encourage and educate the community and businesses on ways they can make facilities and services more accessible and on how to train staff to welcome and support special needs customers and co-workers; and

WHEREAS, the goal of this initiative is to provide a supportive and inclusive environment for individuals of all abilities by supporting community events that expand family friendly opportunities for people with special needs and their families; and

WHEREAS, adopting the "Think Differently" initiative is an important statement that our Greene County officials, business owners and residents can make to show their support for the differently-abled children and adults with special needs and their families.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Greene County Legislature calls upon all Greene County residents and business owners to adopt the "Think Differently" initiative so that all are better prepared to communicate with, provide for, and support those living on the Autism Spectrum and with special needs.

(10,000)

Ayes 14 Noes 0 Absent 0

ATTACHMENTS:

- backup to res. (PDF)

HISTORY:

03/19/18 Health Services MOVED FOR ADOPTION

Committee Chairperson O'Connor stated: "So, moving right ahead to the proposed Agenda Item that Legislator Luvera brought to our attention, is Number 1" and he read out loud the title to the Resolution. Committee Chairperson O'Connor stated that he knows Legislator Luvera would like to move this and he seconded the resolution himself and then asked Legislator Luvera if he wanted to present this Item. Legislator Luvera stated: "Well, I sent everyone an e-mail with some suggestions. This actually came from the Dutchess County Executive, Marc

Molinaro. He started it in Dutchess County and really it's an initiative which looks to foster a more inclusive community for children with special needs and some of the ideas that they have done in Dutchess County, I'm hoping that we can mirror some of those same ideas here in Greene County. I'm attending a forum in April and he's going to be speaking at the College, Columbia-Greene Community College and I'm going with Maggie Graham and Kira. They're both on board with this and hoping that you know we can at least get our community members to start thinking differently and starting to be more inclusive to our students, our special education students. So I'm happy to make that motion." Committee Chairperson O'Connor took the vote and then stated that he believes this went out to towns too but he suggested that all Legislators bring it to the attention of their town. He noted that the Town of Durham had a great discussion about this last week and he believes the Town of Durham will be passing this tomorrow night as well. He added that the more towns and more counties that build upon it, the more inclusive we will be. Legislator Torgersen asked how this was distributed to the Towns. Committee Chairperson O'Connor replied that he thought it was done by e-mail. Legislator Luvera said he was not sure if it went to the towns; Committee Chairperson O'Connor said he knows it went to Durham because they had a discussion on it. Legislator Luvera said that he was going to wait to see what happens at this Forum in April, get some more ideas and then the county with Maggie and Kira can talk about some other ideas that come from that Forum. He added that this will be an ongoing discussion. Legislator H. Lennon asked if this resolution could be pushed out to the towns after that and Legislator Luvera replied that he thought the towns receive copies of the County's resolutions. They asked the stenographer to be sure all the towns receive a copy of this resolution. Committee Chairperson O'Connor thanked Legislator Luvera for bringing this to the Health Committee's attention.

RESULT:	MOVED FOR ADOPTION [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Matthew F. Luvera, Legislator
SECONDER:	Aidan O'Connor, Chairperson
AYES:	O'Connor, Gardner, Torgersen, Luvera, Hobart, Palmateer, Lewis, Lawrence