



Matt B. Murell
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May 24, 2023

FROM: Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

COUNTY DECLARES MIGRANT/ASYLUM SEEKERS STATE OF EMERGENCY

As of noon today, Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell has issued a State of Emergency in regards to the transfer of migrants and asylum seekers to Columbia County under New York State Executive Law, Article 2-B, to preserve public safety and hereby render all required and available assistance vital to the security, well-being, and health of the citizens of the county.

The County State of Emergency has been declared due to federal policies together with New York City's distribution of migrants and asylum seekers, resulting in New York City planning to relocate many migrants and asylum seekers to counties outside of and nearby New York City.

Columbia County currently has an unusually high number of local homeless for this time of year. As a county with no homeless shelter and being chronically short of hotel/motel space, we have already been required to house some homeless in other counties. Please cross Columbia County off the list of possible migrant transfer destinations as our limited infrastructure, resources and housing options do not allow for an influx of homeless migrants no matter the number. In addition, Columbia County already faces medical care and transportation shortages."

Further, Columbia County has drastically less population and service providers as opposed to New York City, and as such Columbia County is incapable of receiving and sustaining the volume of migrants and/or asylum seekers that New York City may or intends to deliver.

A bipartisan group of county supervisors, the Mayor of Hudson and various county department heads have had ongoing meetings to monitor this issue.



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A DECLARATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, a State of Emergency is herewith declared within the jurisdiction of the County of Columbia, State of New York, effective 12:00pm NOON on the 24th day of May, 2023.

WHEREAS, the State of Emergency has been declared due to Federal Policy(ies) together with New York City's distribution of migrants and asylum seekers to the city, resulting in New York City planning to relocate many migrants and asylum seekers to counties, outside of and nearby New York City; including Columbia County; and

WHEREAS, Columbia County has drastically less population, service providers, housing providers of that of New York City and Columbia County is incapable of receiving and sustaining the volume of migrants and/or asylum seekers that New York City may or intends to deliver; and

WHEREAS, Columbia County is already facing significant shortages in housing, medical care and transportation; together with a growing homeless population.

NOW, THEREFORE, by the power vested in me as Chief Executive of Columbia County, I have exercised the authority given to me under New York State Executive Law, Article 2-B, to preserve Public Safety and hereby render all required and available assistance vital to the security, well-being, and health of the citizens of this community.

Additional local Emergency Orders will be promulgated by the Chairman of the Columbia County Board of Supervisors during this State of Emergency to further protect the life and property and to bring the emergency condition(s) under control.

Dated: May 24, 2023

Matt B. Murell, Chairman
Columbia County Board of Supervisors