



# Upstate Update

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## Local Government Efficiency

“Both as attorney general and governor, Andrew Cuomo made reducing the number of local governments in New York State a major reform goal. Skeptics have questioned whether achieving this objective would indeed significantly lower local government costs. (Of course, there are other potential benefits, including greater democratic accountability.) Thus far, most efforts at village dissolution under the *Government Reorganization and Citizen Empowerment Act*, championed by Cuomo as Attorney General, have not succeeded. The Local Government Efficiency Program, administered by the Secretary of State, has thus far resulted in cost-saving, inter-local collaborations, but few consolidations or dissolutions.

Questions for the future: Will the recently enacted property tax cap induce greater numbers of local jurisdictions in NYS to consider these options, or is it a disincentive to doing so? Does the Cuomo administration need to reconsider its goals regarding the number of New York local governments? And if it persists in these goals, does the administration have to reconsider the incentives it is offering in support of them?” – *Professor Gerald Benjamin, SUNY New Paltz* (Presenter at State of Upstate New York Conference, June 2011)

## Resources

(titles link to sources on-line)

CaRDI, Research & Policy Brief, July 2011, *Do Upstate New Yorkers Support the Property Tax Cap? It Depends*

Andrew Cuomo, *The New NY Agenda: A Plan for Action* - Chapter 3.

NYS Department of State, *Local Government Efficiency Program Annual Report, 2009-2010*

Lisa K. Parshall, Daemen College, *Village Dissolution in Erie County New York: Another Run at Regionalism*

CaRDI, *Upstate New York in Profile: Trends, Projections, and Community & Economic Development Issues* – pgs. 29-34

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The *Upstate Updates* are monthly highlights of one of the nine topic areas covered in the *State of Upstate New York Initiative*, the Community & Regional Development Institute's (CaRDI) on-going effort to provide up-to-date data, research, and other information to inform dialogue around important community and economic development issues in the Upstate New York region. For access to our statewide network of experts on this month's topic, please contact the individual listed above. For more information on the *State of Upstate New York Initiative*, access to our publication series, news on upcoming trainings, and other resources, please visit the CaRDI website at: [www.cardi.cornell.edu](http://www.cardi.cornell.edu).