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Turn county legislators into part-time workers

It's great to see that Kevin Gaughan has stimulated the citizenry to downsize local elected government bodies. I'm not so sure this effort will be as effective as his original mission to regionalize governments. His current efforts still keep in power the many local bodies that overlap and duplicate one another's efforts.

The talk to further downsize the Erie County Legislature, last downsized under then County Executive Joel Giambra, is most encouraging. However, the current plans do not go far enough. The legislative seats should be part-time positions earning part-time pay. If one looks to the Erie County charter, the only duty of the legislative body is to pass a budget. The legislators have manipulated themselves into the micromanagement of county affairs over the years, which has created a very hostile political culture. Most of the legislators already have full-time jobs. I challenge the legislators to justify the full-time status and pay they receive now.

And for heaven's sake, please do not give the legislators four-year terms. A part-time status will further encourage many more qualified candidates from the private sector and discourage the current lifetime politician.

Victor M. Getz

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