



## **RESOLUTION 175-19**

*Sponsored by the Committee on Rules:*

### **A RESOLUTION TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING THE FORMER EMPLOYEES OF ST. CLARE'S HOSPITAL DURING THEIR PENSION CRISIS**

**WHEREAS**, St. Clare's Hospital was conceived a century ago with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany purchasing a plot of land for the project in 1917 and a succession of Diocesan Bishops and priests serving as members of the Catholic hospital's board of directors; and

**WHEREAS**, St. Clare's happened to be the smaller of the two city hospitals, primarily serving many uninsured and underinsured patients – thus leading to decades of unpaid bills and the hospital shortening its pension fund deposit as a result; and

**WHEREAS**, in the 1990s, St. Clare's took advantage of a religious exemption in federal law that allowed it to not pay insurance on its pension fund, saving the hospital money but ultimately leaving its future retirees with no prospect of a bailout from the Federal Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp., in the case of insolvency; and

**WHEREAS**, the state Attorney General's Office has now found that the board overseeing the former St. Clare's Hospital pension plan had voted in October 2017 to buy federal pension insurance to protect the fund from a \$35 million shortfall - but the coverage was inexplicably never obtained before the fund collapsed last year; and

**WHEREAS**, The AG's Charities Bureau is investigating St. Clare's Corp., the entity that oversees the pension, and also fighting efforts by the corporation to dissolve itself in state Supreme Court; and

**WHEREAS**, one year ago, on November 13, 2019, the Schenectady County Legislature adopted Resolution 164-18 calling “on the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, which has at least a moral obligation to the plan participants, and the State of New York, which ordered the closure of St. Clare’s Hospital and inadequately funded the hospital’s plan, as well as other stakeholders in the community, to collaborate in good faith to identify strategies and funding sources that will restore pension benefits for the former St. Clare’s Hospital Employees”, however an agreement among the stakeholders has still not been reached, now therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Schenectady County Legislature renews its commitment to standing in solidarity with the former employees of St. Clare’s Hospital whom will no longer receive their pension benefits, and supports the lawsuit put forth by the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, the AARP and the St. Clare’s pensioners, as well as New York State Attorney General James’ efforts to ensure that those who lost their pensions have a seat the table and are able to recoup what is rightfully theirs; now therefore be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Clerk of the Schenectady County Legislature is hereby directed to send certified copies of this resolution to Archbishop of New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, Bishop Edward Scharfenberger of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, Governor Andrew Cuomo, New York State Senator James Tedisco, New York State Senator George Amedore, New York State Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara, New York State Assemblyman Philip Steck, New York State Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh, New York State Attorney General Letitia James and New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli.