November 10, 2005

STATEMENT

Tuesday's election underscored for all of us how vitally important each vote really is, particularly in local elections.

In the race for District 14 County Legislator, after counting the absentee ballots that had been received by the Board of Elections as of Wednesday, the difference between the leader, Mike Hattery, and myself was but 20 votes. Uncounted were 11 challenged ballots (some challenged by each side), and 19 absentee and military ballots yet to be received and counted, and which may or may not arrive by the statutory cutoff date.

If all 30 of those ballots were validated and counted, I would need to have 26 of them in order to win, while Mike Hattery would need only 6.

In Wednesday's absentee ballot tally, 62 were counted. I received a substantial majority of those votes: 39 to 23, almost a 2 to 1 margin.

If either candidate wishes to have a court decide about the challenged ballots, he has just three days to file an action. Otherwise, the two county election commissioners rule on whether or not to count each ballot. Without court action, it is likely that all valid ballots will be speedily counted.

Having reviewed and considered all of this, and consulted with friends and supporters, I have concluded that it is possible for me to win the election, but it is not probable.

Never before has an election for District 14 Legislator been decided by so very narrow a margin. It is truly razor thin. Nevertheless, the people need to know who their next county legislator will likely be, without waiting for a lengthy post election process.

Accordingly, I am tonight publicly conceding the election to Mike Hattery, and I extend to him my very best wishes.

There are no better people in the world than those who live in Dryden and Freeville. They deserve the highest level of representation on the County Legislature. I, for one, will be watching our new legislator, and will expect nothing less than that he represent all of the people. I fully trust that he will do his best.

Michael E. Lane