Although the Senate and Assembly were out of town last week, NYCOM staff continued working hard to ensure that you and every member of the State Legislature are aware of our state budget priorities. We highlighted these issues in a letter that was sent to each member of the Senate and Assembly earlier this week. In addition, NYCOM is circulating a sign-on letter in support of increasing the reimbursement rate for state arterial maintenance undertaken by certain cities, as well as a sign-on letter in opposition to the small wireless facilities language included in the Executive Budget. We encourage you to review all of these documents so that you are aware of the issues and the details surrounding them.

Renewable Energy Siting Language Added to the State Budget
In other state budget news, late last week the Governor issued his 30-day amendments to his Executive Budget. Included as part of this package, a new proposal was advanced entitled The Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act. NYCOM is opposed to this new language which would establish a new Office of Renewable Energy Siting under the New York State Division of Economic Development to review siting applications for certain renewable energy projects. While we are still assessing the impacts, three provisions to which we strongly object are:

- **Default Approval Via "Fast Track"** - Would replace the Siting Board and the current “Article 10” siting review process for certain renewable energy facilities and would deem a renewable energy project granted if not acted on within one year of a completed application;

- **Bypasses Home Rule** - Would eliminate local zoning authority and the review of local environmental and economic impacts in siting renewable energy power plants, storage facilities, and transmission lines; and

- **Limitations on PILOTS** - Would significantly constrain local governments’ ability to negotiate PILOTS and obtain an equitable return for hosting renewable energy facilities.

Ensuring energy resiliency and expanding renewable energy sources are important and necessary goals shared by cities and village across New York State. Since 2011, the siting of large energy plants has been controlled by the Article 10 Siting Board, which was created to facilitate the enormous and complicated process of siting electric generating facilities in New York State. Although the process is not perfect, project developers, local governments, judges, intervenor groups, and the Siting Board have worked diligently to create a regulatory and legal framework that facilitates the State’s energy goals while identifying and mitigating local siting impacts. This newly proposed alternative eliminates any meaningful role for local governments as the representatives of their communities and their taxpayers. NYCOM is strongly opposed to the use of this new "fast track" siting
process which is really just a way around local governments and their communities' concerns. We are conveying our opposition to the Governor and the State Legislature and we encourage you to do the same.

Local Government Lobby Day
In an effort to drive home our position on key state budget issues that we have been and will continue to advocate for in the upcoming weeks, we encourage you to join us at Local Government Lobby Day, Monday, March 23 at the Renaissance Hotel in Albany. NYCOM and the Association of Towns (AOT) are joining forces to ensure that our state budget priorities are at the forefront of the State Legislature’s mind during the final days prior to the Budget’s adoption.

The day will begin with a discussion led by NYCOM and AOT staff updating you on the status of those issues of greatest importance to you and your communities. Following that we will hold a news conference at the State Capitol, after which you will have the opportunity to meet with your Senate and Assembly representatives to reiterate our position on these initiatives. (Talking points will be made available for you to use to facilitate your discussions.) We strongly encourage you to begin scheduling those meetings now and to coordinate with other city, town and village officials in your region.

There is no fee for this event but we do ask that you register by March 18. Continental breakfast and a box lunch is included. There will also be an informal gathering for those local officials coming into town on Sunday night (more details to follow).

We believe that combining the voices of cities, towns and villages will help effect change that is beneficial not just to local governments, but to all New Yorkers. We look forward to having you join us on March 23rd.