



News from the Office of  
**Adam J. Bello**  
Monroe County Executive



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Monroe County Executive Adam Bello Vetoes Republican County Legislature Majority Referral That Handcuffs County Pandemic Response**

Monroe County Executive Adam J. Bello today vetoed a Republican Legislature Majority referral that requires any purchase, of any size, made from the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), to be approved by the Legislature beforehand. This adds a needless restriction that doesn't exist for any other purchase the County Executive makes.

“At a time when COVID-19 and Delta variant cases are on the rise, schools and colleges are starting, the Republicans decide to play politics with the pandemic,” said Bello. “This referral will make it more difficult for me to purchase rapid COVID-19 test kits than it would to buy office supplies. The Republican referral injects petty partisan politics at the expense of the public good. I won't have it — this referral is hereby vetoed.”

The Monroe County Charter allows the County Executive to enter into professional services contracts of up to \$20,000 without the approval of the legislature. The Republican referral adds the cumbersome extra step of a special meeting of the legislature to enter into any contract and make essential public health purchases.

United States Treasury Department guidance requires that the County spend CARES Act funds by December 31, 2021. In his veto message, County Executive Bello states:

*“With the County facing increased case numbers and a deadline to ensure CARES funds are spent to benefit our community, it defies reason to impose additional barriers to the expenditure of these funds.”*

The County uses CARES Act funds to make purchases such as rapid COVID-19 test kits where often supplies are limited and purchasing flexibility is essential. Just as importantly, the County spends CARES Act funds to enter into site agreements with vaccine and testing locations to compensate them for the costs they incur in hosting a clinic. These small contracts need to be rapidly executed when a new site is identified. These sites are most often located in underserved communities to provide vaccine and tests to hard to reach populations in our community.

“My job is to serve and protect the public health and safety of our citizens. The Republican referral is not about oversight, it's about overreach,” added Bello.

**Media inquiries:**

Gary Walker, Director of Communications

[Garywalker@MonroeCounty.gov](mailto:Garywalker@MonroeCounty.gov)

(585) 410-0935

Meaghan McDermott, Deputy Director of Communications

[MeaghanMcDermott@monroecounty.gov](mailto:MeaghanMcDermott@monroecounty.gov)

(585) 469-4365