



Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak with you today about what transpired with Mayor Eric Adams and his efforts to house migrants in a local hotel in Orangetown, N.Y. I am here today as the Town Supervisor of Orangetown, a suburban community approximately 30 miles north of New York City, to give you some insight into what is happening around the country as a result of the migration crisis at the southern border.

It is important to note at the onset that what is happening in Orangetown is not unique; it is playing out throughout communities all over our country as major cities are reaching capacity for migrant housing and they are sending them to other communities, without any regard for whether they have the resources or capabilities to handle them.

Orangetown's story began at 11 am on Friday, May 5, 2023, when NYC Mayor Eric Adams called to tell me about a PILOT program he was implementing as part of his "decompression strategy." The plan, he explained, was to relocate migrants from NYC and to house them in hotels all across NYS. His call was to let me know that a hotel in Orangetown had been identified as a possible location. Mayor Adams downplayed the plan, telling me that there was a chance that no one would be housed in Orangetown, and he implied that it was weeks from happening. When pressed for specifics, he told me that a member of his team would get back to me later that day with the details.

At 1:30 pm that day, I received a call from a member of the Mayor's staff. That's when I learned that the plan was to house single, adult males in a local hotel and that the buses would be arriving "imminently." In fact, it was within hours of that call that I received a photo of hundreds of mattresses stacked outside the Armoni Inn and Suites Hotel. It was evident that this plan had been in the works for quite some time, and that it included giving local elected officials little advance notice as a means to thwart legal challenges.

Throughout the following days, it became clear that NYC intended to house 340 men at the Armoni Inn and Suites Hotel, a hotel located in Orangeburg, a small hamlet of just over 3 square miles and a population of approximately 4,500 people. The hotel is situated less than a mile from two college campuses, two senior citizen

housing complexes and a high school. It is located at the intersection of NYS Route 303, one of the most dangerous highways in Rockland County, and Kings Hwy, a street of mostly single-family residential homes. It was during this time that I obtained a copy of a pamphlet, which I have shared with the committee, and was told that it was being handed out to the migrants as they arrived in NYC.

Mayor Adams' plan was simple: convert the hotel in Orangetown into a housing facility for long-term residence. Or, in other words, to open a NYC homeless shelter in Orangetown, which is a clear violation of our local zoning standards. So, based upon the information that was garnered from the phone calls and observations of medical supplies and other shelter items by Town Officials who inspected the property, the Town issued the hotel a Notice of Violation on Sunday, May 7, 2023, giving them notice that the intended use was not consistent with the definition of a "Hotel" as set forth in the Town Code.

Despite the issuance of the Notice of Violation, on Tuesday, May 9, 2023, NYC officials scheduled a 4:30 pm "debriefing call" with elected officials from Rockland and Orange Counties. The purpose of the call was to tell us that buses would start arriving sometime the following day. During this call, they also described conditions consistent with a shelter, in that there would be on-site staff available 24 hours a day/7 day a week, including 1 social worker and 1 case worker per 30 migrants, and that NYC would cover the cost of 3 meals, laundry service, and housekeeping, for up to four months, and medical and legal consultations. We were also introduced to staff from "DocGo," a company that NYC had contracted with which specializes in providing medical related services to shelters.

By the time of this call, the Town had already filed legal papers in the Rockland County Supreme Court seeking a Temporary Restraining Order to enjoin the use of the hotel in Orangeburg for the long-term housing of individuals under the care of New York City. The Court granted the requested relief at 6:01 pm on Tuesday, May 9, 2023, effectively preventing the use of the hotel as a shelter and the arrival of any migrants from NYC the next day. This matter is scheduled to be back in court on May 31, 2023.

The County of Rockland also brought a separate legal action, based on the failure of NYC to possess the requisite license to operate such a facility, as is required by the Laws of Rockland County. The Court granted a Temporary Restraining Order, and that matter is back in court on May 30, 2023.

To be very clear, for our purposes the immigration status of the individuals is irrelevant to the Town's decision to seek legal recourse. The Town sought legal action to ensure the integrity of local zoning regulations and the protection of those who would be housed in the hotel on a long-term basis as a shelter, as well as the community at large.

I also want to outright reject charges being made against County Executive Ed Day and me that our actions are anti-immigration. Rockland County is home to a vibrant immigrant population. In fact, I am married to one. But, over the last two years, there has been a steady increase of migrants finding their way to Rockland County and settling in with the support of family, friends and local community groups. This has already started to put a strain on Rockland County and the Rockland County Department of Social Services.

So much so that, just over two months ago, Congressman Mike Lawler and County Executive Ed Day held a press conference and, standing beside a number of nonprofits, food pantries and immigrant services organizations, sounded the alarm of what was to come if action was not taken to address the crisis at the southern border. It was disclosed that over the last six months, the impacts have included food pantries running out of food, necessitating Rockland County investing another \$1 million to help them, as well as the addition of 1,000 children enrolled in local school districts and a 35% increase in children in foster care, with nearly one-third being undocumented migrants.

The problem with Mr. Adams' plan is that he does not have one. That became evident when, during the debriefing call, a member of his staff was asked about what would happen with the migrants at the end of four months. The response was that they expected most of them to integrate into the community by that time.

But that raises the obvious question: How are these men with no family support, no working papers and with limited to no English language skills going to be able to integrate into our community? Especially when the Town of Orangetown, like all of NYS, is in the midst of a housing affordability crisis. My college educated adult children, with full-time employment, had to live at home for almost two years after graduation to be able to afford suitable housing. When the Mayor's staff was questioned about this, the response was that the migrants are "resourceful" and they will find work "off the books." This is not a plan; it is a recipe for disaster.

Let me tell you what will happen. These individuals will end up working for unlivable wages and renting in overcrowded homes, that are often unsafe, from

unscrupulous landlords. I know because it is already happening in Orangetown and throughout Rockland County. Just this past March, there was a tragic house fire in Rockland that killed five undocumented immigrants, including two children, with five others being hospitalized. Orangetown and Rockland County just do not have the resources or staffing levels to investigate and remedy these types of situations on a wide scale basis.

I know that Rockland County continues to work diligently with their partner nonprofits to ensure basic human services are maintained, but it is not prepared to take in hundreds of more people in a short period of time. And, if Mayor Adams is permitted to open shelters wherever and whenever he wants, with a complete disregard for local zoning laws or the suitability of the location for the migrants or the community, that number can easily swell into the thousands in Rockland County. Unlike NYC, which received \$1.0 billion from NYS and \$30 million from the Federal Government, Rockland County did not receive a single dollar of funding to assist with this problem.

While I certainly empathize with Mayor Adams and the situation he finds himself in, it is the result of bad policies at both NYC and the federal level. And my heart breaks when I hear about unaccompanied children at the border and the human trafficking that is taking place, as well as the violence, abuse and death of migrants looking for a better life. This is now a humanitarian crisis and something more sustainable needs to be done. From the President down, every elected official has known that this crisis was coming.

Without the Federal Government acting to stem the flow of migrants at the border, it was only a matter of time before it impacted all our neighborhoods. While it is Orangetown today, it will be yours tomorrow.

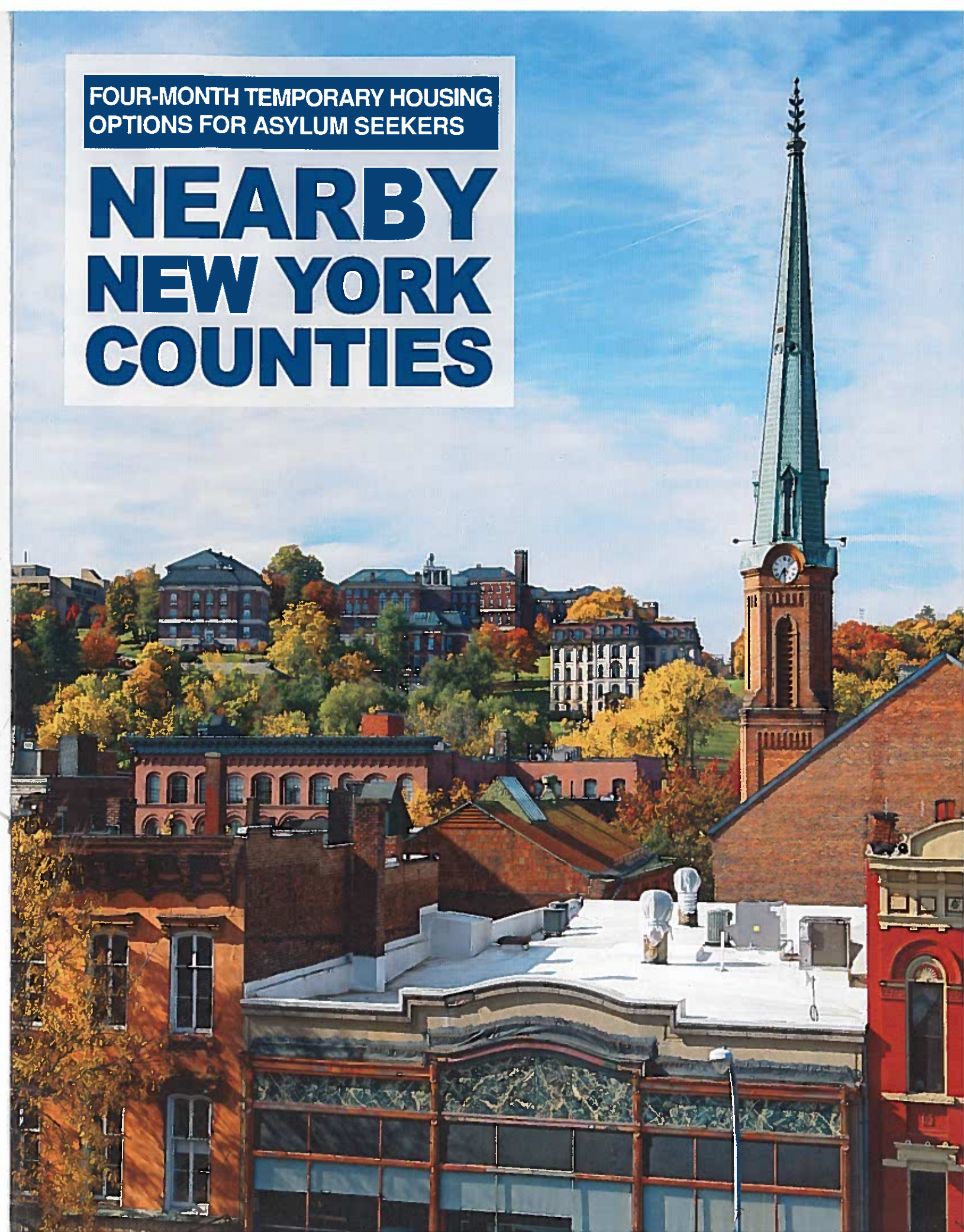
This situation requires solutions on the Federal level, and I sincerely hope the lawmakers in D.C., both Democrats and Republicans, can come together to find a solution to fix this broken and unsustainable system.

I thank you all for your time and am happy to answer questions.

Teresa M. Kenny
Town of Orangetown Supervisor

FOUR-MONTH TEMPORARY HOUSING
OPTIONS FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS

NEARBY NEW YORK COUNTIES



NEARBY NEW YORK COUNTIES

FOUR-MONTH TEMPORARY HOUSING OPTIONS FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS

New York has arranged for temporary housing and support services to help you and other asylum seekers. Located near the Hudson Valley, just outside New York City, these shelter options will include a warm environment, nutritious meals, and case workers to help adults over the age of 18 access what you need to care for yourself and transition to a new home.

I TEMPORARY HOUSING

We have secured Double Occupancy Rooms for adults over 18 years old which include clean rooms and private bathrooms, housekeeping and medical consultations with a remote healthcare professional via telehealth for medical conditions. We will be providing you with a room at one of the two following hotels:



NEWBURGH



ORANGEBURG



I MEALS

3 meals served each day - breakfast, lunch, and hot dinner

I LAUNDRY SERVICE

Laundry service will be provided to you every other week. Case workers will coordinate a pickup day and time for your laundry, which will be returned to you in your room.

I ADDITIONAL AMENITIES

Housekeeping, medical consultations with a remote healthcare professional via telehealth for medical conditions, hygiene kits and more.



ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Onsite case workers will be there daily to assist you:

- Arrival/ check in
- Coordinate medical care
- Accessing Legal services
 - The case manager will help identify your needs and connect you to the services, resources, and information you may need.
- Reconnection services
- Introduction to community-based organizations and religious groups
- Hygiene kits including shampoo, soap, deodorant, shaving kit, nail file, antibiotic ointment, toothbrush, toothpaste and more.

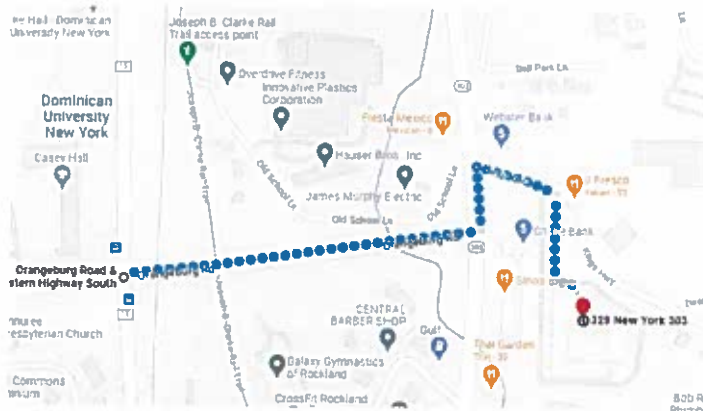


GETTING THERE – SHUTTLE BUSES & PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

A shuttle will take you directly to your temporary housing in Upstate New York.

Public Transportation Options:

The Armoni Hotel in Orangeburg is 0.4 miles away from the Orangeburg Rd and Western Highway South bus stop for train and bus services.



The Crossroads Hotel in Newburgh is 0.5 miles away from the Stewart Industrial Park Bus Station.

Walk 0.5 miles from the hotel to the Short Line Bus Stop on Route 17k. Take the east for 2.8 miles to the Short Line Transportation Center.

