



PAUL M. WENDEL, JR.  
County Executive

## CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Gerace Office Building – 3 N. Erie St. – Mayville, NY 14757-1007  
(716) 753-4211 – FAX (716) 753-4756 – [wendelp@chqgov.com](mailto:wendelp@chqgov.com)  
<https://chqgov.com/>

June 9, 2024

Hon. Letitia James  
Attorney General of the State of New York  
Office of the Attorney General  
The Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224-0341

Hon. Joel Violanti  
United States Attorney  
Western District of New York  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
138 Delaware Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Re: Chautauqua County Motor Fuel Prices

Dear Attorney General James and U.S. Attorney Violanti:

I write to you today on behalf of the residents of Chautauqua County to express deep concern regarding the disproportionately high cost of gasoline in our community and to respectfully request your offices review this matter to determine whether legal or regulatory remedies are appropriate.

As of June 9, 2025, data from the American Automobile Association (AAA) shows the average cost of regular gasoline in Chautauqua County is \$3.289 per gallon. This is significantly higher than the New York State average of \$3.104 and the national average of \$3.124. More troubling, Chautauqua County's prices are consistently higher than those in neighboring counties across Western New York and the Southern Tier:

Allegany County: \$3.115

Broome County: \$3.020

Cattaraugus County: \$3.219

Chemung County: \$2.974

Erie County: \$3.079

Genesee County: \$3.143

Livingston County: \$3.128

Niagara County: \$3.063

Orleans County: \$3.179

Steuben County: \$3.051

Tioga County: \$3.046

Wyoming County: \$3.106

This persistent price disparity raises serious questions, particularly given that Chautauqua County ranks among the more economically vulnerable counties in the state. According to the most recent U.S. Census data, 16.7% of our residents live below the poverty level. High motor fuel costs impose a disproportionate burden on working families, commuters, and small businesses that are already struggling to stay afloat.

If anti-competitive practices or fuel pricing manipulation are contributing to these inflated costs, I respectfully request the U.S. Attorney's Office investigate whether any violations of federal law have occurred in the fuel market within Chautauqua County. If our residents are being subjected to consumer abuse, I ask that the New York State Attorney General's Office evaluate whether there have been any breaches of state consumer protection laws.

The New York State Attorney General's Office has long been a champion of consumer rights, and your continued vigilance in protecting residents from economic exploitation is greatly appreciated. Similarly, the integrity and oversight provided by the United States Attorney's Office is vital to maintaining fair market practices.

Our residents deserve transparency, fairness, and relief. I thank you both for your continued service and respectfully ask that your offices explore whether action may be warranted in this matter. If you would like to discuss this further or require additional data, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (716) 753-4211.

Thank you for your attention and your steadfast commitment to justice.

Sincerely,

Paul M. Wendel, Jr.  
Chautauqua County Executive