

Kenneth W. Jenkins
County Executive

May 30, 2025

Westchester County Board of Legislators
800 Michaelian Office Building
White Plains, NY 10601

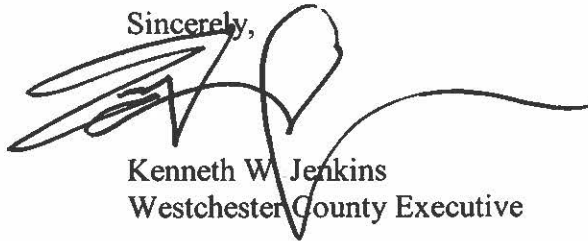
Dear Members of the Board of Legislators:

Transmitted herewith for your review is the Westchester County 2025 Westchester County Federal Joint Legislative Package.

Westchester County is facing a number of challenges which can only be met with a strong response from our federal delegation. Thousands of our citizens may be thrown off of Medicaid, millions of dollars may be stripped from crucial programs that feed the hungry and provide shelter for the vulnerable, and millions more may be taken from the hospitals that keep our residents healthy.

I ask that you expeditiously review this package of requests for our federal delegation, so that we may continue our work to support and protect Westchester and its citizens.

Sincerely,

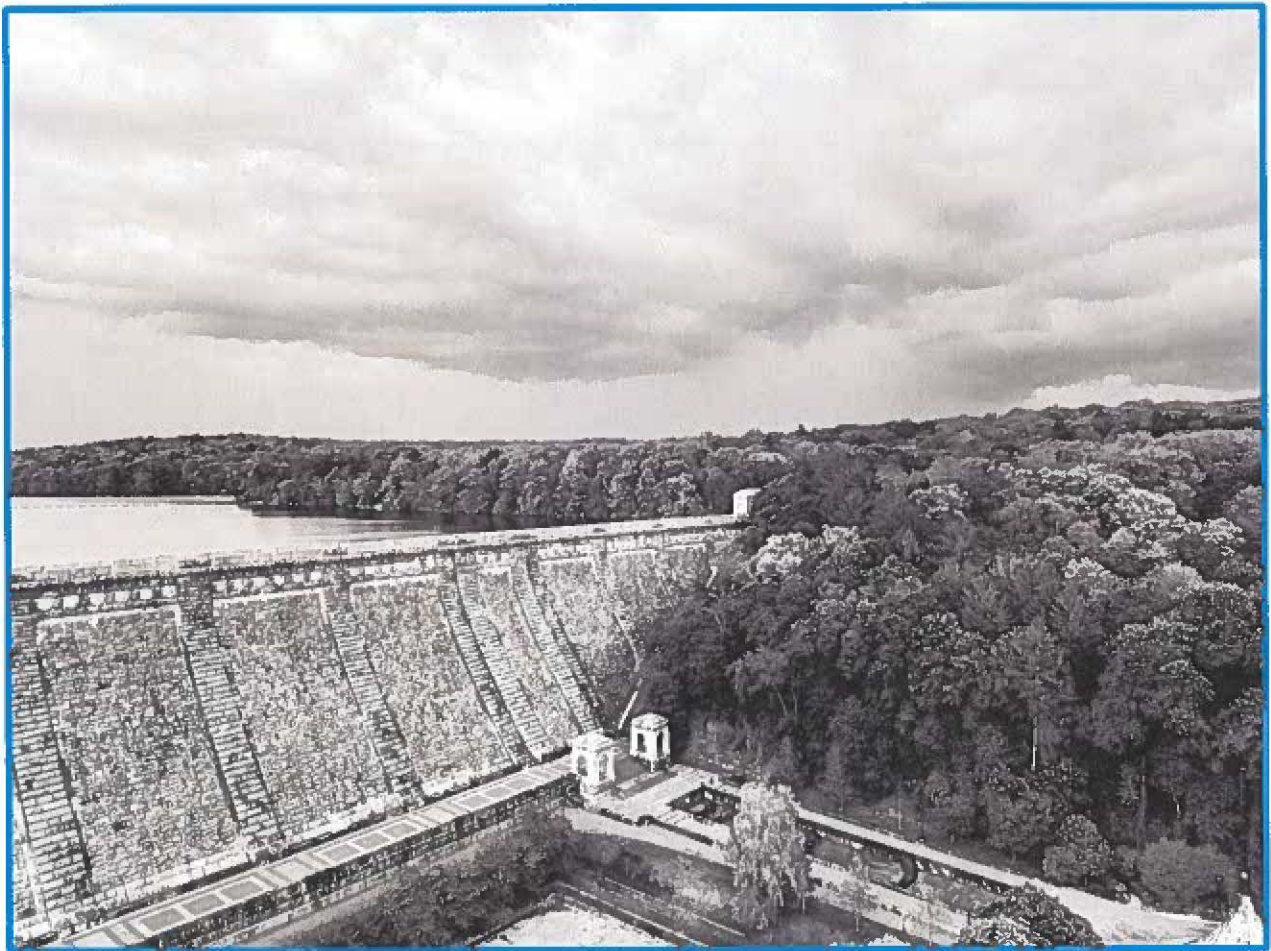
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'KW Jenkins', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kenneth W. Jenkins
Westchester County Executive



WESTCHESTER COUNTY FEDERAL PACKAGE

Identifying the Legislative, Appropriative and Agency-related Priorities of
Westchester County



APRIL 7, 2025
WESTCHESTER COUNTY

Priorities for Federal Legislation and FY26 Appropriations Westchester County

Westchester County and its residents are facing significant challenges brought on by the executive branch of the federal government.

Costs of all daily necessities – gas, eggs, produce, housing, energy, consumer goods – are rising steadily as a consequence of new tariffs. Businesses are unable to conduct long term planning due to unpredictable policy changes upending generations of American policy. Critical safety net programs and government supports utilized by our residents are being eliminated overnight, hazarding the financial backbone of seniors and defunding the infrastructure improvements necessary to keep our residents safe – leaving local taxpayers with new and costly bills. Meanwhile, our residents continue to pay double taxes to Washington, as cuts to services they've paid into for generations are discussed openly.

Meanwhile, the cost of living escalates. New tariffs have increased the cost to build new developments by increasing the cost of raw materials and rattling existing supply lines. Renters are already paying, on average, more than half of their take home pay in rent; homeowners, meanwhile, will face increased property taxes if the federal government shifts the cost of services and infrastructure improvements to local governments by eliminating previously allocated funding, blocking existing grants and programs and cutting services. Worse, homeowners are even more vulnerable to severe weather events when federal infrastructure support is cut.

Legal residents without criminal accusations are arrested and shipped to foreign prisons without due process. Westchester's residents are afraid – nearly 25% of the County's taxpaying residents are lawful permanent residents or have secured citizenship. The federal government is now threatening to find new, unprecedented ways to revoke their rights. Beyond the moral and humanitarian costs of this path, the fear generated even by the discussion of this topic is enough to drive talented engineers, academics, business owners and investors out of America.

Enclosed, you will find information regarding items which will directly impact the Government of Westchester County, our local economy, regional Fortune 500 companies, and residents. We ask that you, the 119th Congress, take decisive action on these topics to protect the people of Westchester from overreach by the federal executive branch.

Please do not hesitate to contact us here in Westchester government if we can be of any support. We thank you for your consideration, and for the tireless efforts you put into representing our County.

Sincerely,

Kenneth W. Jenkins,
Westchester County Executive

Vedat Gashi,
Chair, Westchester County Board of Legislators

**Priorities for Federal Legislation and FY26 Appropriations
Westchester County**

Priorities for Federal Legislation and FY26 Appropriations Westchester County

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Overview | Page 3 |
| Ensure Medicaid/Medicare Benefits Remain at Current Levels | Page 3 |
| Prevent Social Security Payment Delays and Reopen a White Plains Office | Page 3-4 |
| Oppose Cuts to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) | Page 4 |
| Oppose Cuts to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) | Page 4-5 |
| Reopen the Montrose Hudson Valley Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospital Quickly | Page 5 |
| Restore the State and Local Tax Deduction (SALT) and End Double Taxation | Page 5 |
| Pass a Middle Class Tax Cut | Page 5 |
| Protect Childcare & Free School Lunches | Page 6 |
| Fund a Child Tax Credit | Page 6 |
| End the Trade War & End New Tariffs | Page 6-7 |
| End Unlawful Circumvention of Due Process | Page 7-8 |
| Oppose Education Cuts (High Schools & Colleges) | Page 8 |
| Block Any Cuts to Section 8 Vouchers or Federal Housing Programs | Page 8 |
| Data Protection and the Misuse of Artificial Intelligence | Page 9 |
| Oppose Cuts to SNAP Benefits | Page 9 |
| Oppose Cuts to Environmental Remediation Programs | Page 9 |

Priorities for Federal Legislation and FY26 Appropriations Westchester County

- **Overview**

- Prevent Cuts to Safety Net Programs
- The House passed a budget resolution calling for \$4 trillion of spending cuts. Discussions have centered on cutting programs crucial to Westchester County, including Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, FEMA, HHS, and many others.
- Cuts mean increased costs to taxpayers – who must foot the bill to keep their schools funded, their homes safe, or their infrastructure up to date, if Congress and the federal government decline to provide these services as they have for generations.
- The House’s budget resolution cuts taxes for high earners and corporate beneficiaries and adds unsustainable, fiscally irresponsible spending. It also continues the policy of double taxation implemented by the 2017 TCJA, but raises the cap to \$30,000.
- As such, the House’s budget resolution takes more taxes from Westchester’s working class families while promising to reduce the services they will receive from the federal government. Westchester asks that its delegation work to prevent cuts to services its residents rely on, and that its delegation work to protect the safety net.

- **Ensure Medicaid/Medicare Benefits Remain at Current Levels**

- On February 25th, the House passed CR H818-823, which calls for \$4.5 trillion in tax cuts, partially offset through cuts to Medicaid and food assistance.
- Over 173,000 Westchester residents are enrolled in Medicare Advantage.
- Over 241,000 Westchester residents are enrolled in Medicaid.
- Cuts will deny access to critical care and coverage, putting our residents’ lives at risk and worsening the condition of those with serious medical issues.
- The federal government provides 50% of funding for Medicaid health-care service. The loss of this funding would force County taxpayers to cover that expense, while increasing the cost, demand and complexity of service, as federal economies of scale and technologies are not available to local government.
- Cutting Medicaid or Medicare will force hospitals to cut staff, reduce services and in some cases close, leaving patients without care.
- Westchester asks that its delegation prevent any Medicaid or Medicare cuts or reductions in benefits, and restore any that are made to ensure that funding remain as it is currently.

- **Prevent Social Security Payment Delays and Reopen a White Plains Office**

- Food insecurity tripled since the coronavirus pandemic; inflation and tariffs have since raised prices further, and daily essentials are now too expensive. If the Social Security Administration (SSA) misses a payment, Westchester’s seniors face eviction, the denial of medical care, the exacerbation of illness, going hungry, and may become homeless.
- The SSA also determined that it will be closing its White Plains hearing office. This is the only SSA hearing office in the Hudson Valley. Westchester residents

Priorities for Federal Legislation and FY26 Appropriations Westchester County

will face hours of travel to New York City or the Capital region to secure benefits they've earned.

- When the SSA misses a payment, a senior must manage a two hour wait on the phone, then wait a month for their appointment, and now, travel to an office 60 miles away – all without money they need for food or rent.
- Congressman George Latimer and County Executive Ken Jenkins offered to collocate the Office on County-owned property. The SSA refused this offer.
- The White Plains office conducts hundreds of hearings in a year; its closure will slow down the processing cases by shifting them to other, already burdened offices. This hearing office alone already had a backlog of over 2,000 cases.
- Westchester urges that action be taken to roll back SSA cuts, and asks that its delegation secure a new office in White Plains, restore that office to sufficient levels of staffing, and prevent any delays in payment.
- **Oppose Cuts to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**
 - FEMA cut the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program, ending \$325 million in work to protect New York State and Westchester County from severe storm damage and flooding.
 - In Westchester, the \$731,000 Upper Minkel Dam Decommissioning and Riparian Corridor Restoration – a critical project to protect against flooding – was cancelled by this federal action.
 - 200 employees have been fired from FEMA, and hundreds of others have been targeted for having worked on 'climate related projects'. Analyzing climate is inevitable in preparation for severe weather or disasters.
 - Cuts to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) are damaging federal tools that Westchester County relies on in order to prepare for and respond to serious storms. Employees responsible for tracking and responding to hurricanes have been fired, and more than 600 workers responsible for public safety research and disaster response were also fired.
 - Shifting the costs for FEMA or the NOAA to New York State or Westchester County will tremendously increase the tax burden to Westchester's residents, who are already subject to double taxation under the House's budget resolution.
 - Westchester asks that its delegation prevent any further cuts to FEMA, prevent any cost shifting onto local residents, and restore all cuts made to FEMA.
- **Oppose Cuts to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)**
 - The executive branch has fired over 20,000 employees at HHS.
 - With these deep cuts to HHS, food and drug tests will be less rigorous; the cost of prescription drugs will increase; the rate of approval for generic alternatives to crucial medication will be slowed, costs will continue to rise for our residents.
 - Vaccine clinics have been closed as measles spreads through the country.
 - The Division of Environmental Health Science and Practice, a team working on cancer studies and mitigating childhood lead exposure, was disbanded. This team recently found lead in applesauce packaging, leading to a widespread recall.

Priorities for Federal Legislation and FY26 Appropriations Westchester County

- Experts in the CDC's asthma control program have been fired, despite success in cutting the asthma death rate by 44% over the last 15 years
- Funding for HIV vaccine trials was suspended, even though the country was closer to a vaccine than ever before
- The administration seeks to eliminate \$11.4 billion in grants related to addiction and other mental health programs. This is in addition to the administration's shuttering of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Westchester urges its delegation to halt any further cuts to HHS and restore any cuts made to the Department, to keep our residents and children safe and healthy.
- **Reopen the Montrose Hudson Valley Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospital Quickly**
 - In early February, the Department of Veterans Affairs closed the Castle Point E2 unit in Montrose. The Castle Point VA Medical Center (VAMC) provides care for 7,000 Hudson Valley Veterans; particularly those struggling with addiction.
 - The VAMC makes recovery more likely for its patients by offering continuous care within one system, resulting in faster treatment than at non-VA facilities.
 - This closure occurred without consulting local partners and without determining an alternate site for these services. The closure is expected to last for 120 days.
 - The closure is reported as being the product of insufficient staffing levels. Westchester urges its delegation to increase staffing levels at this site to ensure that our veterans receive the exceptional care their service warrants, and establish an interim care unit to cover the remainder of the E2 site's closure.
- **Restore the State and Local Tax Deduction (SALT) and End Double Taxation**
 - The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act established a limit of \$10,000 on state and local taxes that can be deducted from federal income tax; this has resulted in drastically increasing the taxation of all of Westchester County's homeowners.
 - Prior to 2017, 70% of Westchester's middle income families itemized their federal tax deductions for an average of \$36,000 in savings: \$47,000 in 2025 dollars, after 8 years of inflation.
 - Residents have been double taxed by \$26,000/year for the last 8 years for a total of \$208,000.
 - The House budget resolution raises the cap to \$30,000. This continues double taxation, hurting the limited finances of Westchester's working families already under pressure from runaway prices brought about by inflation and tariffs.
 - Westchester supports the original 2021-2022 SALT Deductibility Act, or any action to restore the full SALT deduction.
- **Pass a Middle Class Tax Cut**
 - The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) largely benefitted big businesses. Most employees saw about \$1,000 in additional wages over a year, while the most affluent Americans received roughly 65% of the tax benefit. It also began double taxation in Westchester.

Priorities for Federal Legislation and FY26 Appropriations Westchester County

- As such, Westchester asks that its representatives work to pass a legitimate middle class tax cut, that delivers real relief to middle class taxpayers and real value on the taxes those taxpayers already pay.
- **Protect Childcare & Free School Lunches**
 - The federal administration announced that 18% of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) staff responsible for child care, early childhood development and Head Start programs will be cut.
 - The House's budget resolution cuts Head Start by \$750 million.
 - These cuts will reduce literacy rates, worsen our students' education, and burden all parents in Westchester County with higher education costs.
 - The USDA also cut \$1 billion from programs helping supply food banks and school lunch programs.
 - Free school lunch is the backbone of children's education: It ensures kids are healthy, study hard, and score highly when tested. These programs are valuable many times beyond their cost, and are relied on throughout Westchester County. Cutting this program will ensure that Westchester children will go hungry.
 - As such, Westchester County asks that its delegation work to secure relief for working parents: Please work to restore funding to cut school lunch and breakfast programming, and to restore any cut funding (and prevent any further cuts) to Head Start and other crucial childcare programming.
- **Fund a Child Tax Credit**
 - The Child Tax Credit (CTC) was the singular most effective public assistance program in decades. It cut child poverty to the lowest rate in American history.
 - Parents spent payments on necessities: Clothing, food, housing, utilities, and childcare.
 - The expansion lapsed at the end of FY 2021 and child poverty doubled by the end of 2022. Many families again experienced food insecurity, eviction, foreclosure, bankruptcy, and homelessness.
 - At the end of 2025, the tax credit will be further reduced when the 2017 expansion sunsets. Payments will decrease to \$1,000, with income eligibility limits narrowed to \$75,000 – barring many families from receiving this service in Westchester due to the high cost of living.
 - The negative outlook for growth and price increases resulting from the current administration's tariff policy will exacerbate child poverty and food insecurity when this tax increase takes effect. A permanent tax credit expansion is the only solution. Westchester County urges its delegation to secure the full renewal of the 2021 CTC expansion as a refundable, permanent program.
- **End the Trade War & End New Tariffs**
 - The federal administration's policy of tariffs, tax cuts, and reduction of government service while increasing spending has caused the cost of regular household goods like groceries to increase significantly over the last 4 months.

Priorities for Federal Legislation and FY26 Appropriations Westchester County

- The House shut down a vote to end these abrupt, arbitrary and damaging tariffs after providing the federal administration with the authority to set these tariffs by authorizing an emergency declaration under the National Emergencies Act.
- Significant changes to supply and demand are also anticipated, as consumer behavior will likely change significantly to adapt to a new high cost world. This is likely to result in cascading inflation and faltering growth.
- Fortune 500 & Westchester Impact
 - Fortune 500 companies in Westchester County, such as Regeneron, Pepsico, Mastercard, IBM, and Morgan Stanley, say that the tariff policy is impacting their ability to plan long term, and will prevent new hiring and growth.
 - Companies involved in construction or development are pulling back from settling contracts, as cost escalation may commit them to work where the cost of materials could fluctuate making settled contracts unsustainable.
 - Retail companies could face enormous losses on goods previously purchased at a fraction of the price and committed to consumers at drastically lower costs.
- Medical Impact
 - Proposed tariffs will allegedly target pharmaceuticals, and life-saving or life-sustaining devices, long exempt from taxation to ensure our medical system has access to these crucial technologies.
 - Production of high demand medication is often complex and extremely technical. In some cases, there may be only one or two firms on the planet capable of making these drugs. New tariffs will increase the cost of accessing these lifesaving drugs.
 - Early assessments estimate that the average U.S. household will pay \$600 more per year for medication – this is likely to increase insurance premiums and direct out of pocket costs.
- Increased Electricity Costs from Canada
 - ConEd and NYPA both buy hydroelectric energy from Canada to transmit to Westchester's residents. The recent 10% tax on Canadian energy imports will increase energy costs on all of Westchester's residents.
 - Should Canada restrict access to its crucial hydroelectric power, consumer energy costs will rise further.
- As such, Westchester County asks that its delegation work to revoke the federal government's authority to set tariffs and restore all tariffs to pre-2025 levels in order to provide our businesses, researchers, and all of our residents with financial stability.
- **End Unlawful Circumvention of Due Process**
 - The federal government has empowered Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to detain lawful residents, and visitors who had expressed views critical of the federal government on social media, and to deport legal residents with no

Priorities for Federal Legislation and FY26 Appropriations Westchester County

criminal record to violent prisons beyond the borders of the U.S. without due process.

- Westchester residents are now threatened by tools their nation originally built to keep them safe.
- This is blatantly authoritarian, blatantly unconstitutional, and against everything America stands for or has ever stood for. The federal supreme court has even ruled against this practice, yet the federal administration promises to continue this policy.
- Westchester urges its delegation to take legislative action to end the federal government's circumvention of due process, oppose any funding measure that would enhance or expand ICE operations or other forms of immigration enforcement, halt use of the alien enemies act to deport migrants
- **Oppose Education Cuts (High Schools & Colleges)**
 - The federal administration fired over 1,300 employees of the Department of Education (DOE), terminated millions in grant funding, and signed an Executive Order directing the closure of the Department of Education. The Secretary of Education has indicated that over 50% of the DOE workforce will be fired.
 - The Secretary of Education is seeking to eliminate \$1 billion in federal grants to local school districts that has funded the hiring of mental health professionals, including counselors and social workers.
 - Beyond the lawless termination of congressionally authorized spending, eliminating these entities will generate enormous new cost for all schools in Westchester, and all of the County's taxpayers.
 - The Department of Education funds infrastructure improvements, pays for residents' elementary and high school public education, provides Pell grants to subsidize the cost of higher education and much more. Without this funding, the federal government is taking the tax dollars of Westchester's residents and denying them education – for their children, for other members of their communities, and for themselves – that they've paid for over decades.
 - Westchester asks that its delegation work to prevent any cuts to education funding, and that it work to restore any funding cut by the federal administration towards all education programming.
- **Block Any Cuts to Section 8 Vouchers or Federal Housing Programs**
 - The federal administration has proposed cutting housing vouchers for FY2026.
 - 10,800 Section 8 vouchers are utilized by Westchester's residents.
 - Cutting these vouchers – even by a relatively small amount – will empty thousands of our residents into the streets, exacerbating the already short supply of housing which New York State has been fighting for years.
 - This dramatic increase in homelessness will cascade into an increase in crime, an increase in the utilization of social services, an increase in food insecurity, increased need of medical support, and much more as these newly evicted populations struggle to survive in an economy they cannot afford.

Priorities for Federal Legislation and FY26 Appropriations Westchester County

- Rescinding any previously issued federal funding for housing will result in cascading impacts; as such, Westchester asks that its delegation work to block any cuts to Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers or cuts to federal housing assistance.
- **Data Protection and the Misuse of Artificial Intelligence**
 - Enact legislation providing comprehensive framework giving people the right to control their personal data. Must establish enforceable privacy rights, demand transparency, and hold both government and corporate actors accountable
 - Enact legislation to:
 - protect against all forms of AI-driven impersonation and deception including scams, harassment, and synthetic media abuse
 - address biased or unaccountable uses of AI, such as the wrongful arrest cases in St. Louis and Detroit
 - prevent AI platforms from spreading dangerous conspiracy theories, as seen in the recent Grok incident
 - clearly outline privacy protections, so people do not unknowingly violate laws like HIPAA or FERPA just by using public AI tools.
 - Westchester asks that its delegation work to address the issues related to data protection and the misuse of AI.
- **Oppose Cuts to SNAP Benefits**
 - The \$290 billion in proposed cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program will result in higher rates of food insecurity at a time when the cost of groceries are exceptionally high.
 - Additionally, the proposal alters the funding ratio for SNAP requiring the states and counties pay 75% of the programs costs.
 - New work requirements under the proposal would create new administrative burdens for counties with no additional support.
 - Westchester urges its delegation to block these detrimental changes to SNAP benefits.
- **Oppose Cuts to Environmental Remediation Programs**
 - The administration is seeking to cut billions of dollars from programing administered by the Department of Energy, this includes funding to assist communities dealing with nuclear waste or spent nuclear fuel stored at a decommissioned or decommissioning nuclear facility. The land on which decommissioned nuclear facilities are located are unusable as long as they continue to store nuclear waste. The federal government should not withdraw its support to communities, like those in Westchester, dealing with the fallout of nuclear facility closures.
 - The administration is seeking to cut as much as 55% of the EPA's funding, jeopardizing critical agency functions including the Brownfields Program. Brownfield sites — which can be former industrial complexes, older public buildings or even smaller properties, such as former gas stations — present land use challenges which negatively affect property values, but if redeveloped, provides counties with an opportunity to revitalize their economies and communities.

**Priorities for Federal Legislation and FY26 Appropriations
Westchester County**

- Westchester asks that its delegation work to prevent any cuts to environmental remediation programs.

Resolution No. -2025

**TO THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
COUNTY OF WESTCHSETER, NEW YORK**

WHEREAS, these Committees have reviewed the following items for the
2025 Westchester County Federal Joint Legislative Package; **Now Therefore Be It**

RESOLVED, after that considerable deliberation, it is recommended that this Honorable
Board approve these legislative initiatives and that they be presented to and considered
by the Westchester County Federal Delegation during the current federal legislative
session.

Dated: , 2025
 White Plains, New York