

RESOLUTION NO. ____ – 2021

RESOLVED, that this Board hold a public hearing pursuant to Section 209.141(4) of the Laws of Westchester County on Local Law Intro. No. ____ - 2021, entitled “A LOCAL LAW amending Chapter 836 of the Laws of Westchester County to provide that purchases by the County of Westchester of motor vehicles shall be for plug-in-hybrid, electric or alternative fuel vehicles unless otherwise exempted.” The public hearing will be held at __.m. on the ____ day of _____, 2021 in the Chambers of the Board of Legislators, 8th Floor, Michaelian Office Building, White Plains, New York. The Clerk of the Board shall cause notice of the time and date of such hearing to be published at least once in one or more newspapers published in the County of Westchester and selected by the Clerk of the Board for that purpose in the manner and time required by law.

This proposed Local Law is subject to a permissive referendum pursuant to Section 209.171(2) of the Laws of Westchester County and New York State Municipal Home Rule Law Section 24(2)(b) as this proposed Local Law would change a provision of law relating to public bidding, purchases or contracts.

TO: HONORABLE BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

Your Committee recommends passage of “A LOCAL LAW amending Chapter 836 of the Laws of Westchester County to provide that purchases by the County of Westchester of motor vehicles shall be for plug-in-hybrid, electric or alternative fuel vehicles unless otherwise exempted.”

Your Committee is aware that the most recent amendment to the County motor vehicle purchasing policy was enacted in 2011. Since then, the viability of purchasing plug-in hybrid and electric vehicles has markedly improved. In 2011, the baseline cost of a standard plug-in hybrid was \$32,000. In 2021, that cost has been reduced by nearly \$9,000, adjusting for inflation. Moreover, state and federal incentives have further cut the costs of owning an advanced vehicle for both the average consumer and public entities.

Your Committee has been informed that the transportation sector accounts for the largest portion of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, American transportation generates 1.87 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions each year, 28 percent of the country’s total carbon output. In Westchester County,

transportation comprises an even larger portion of total emissions, at 40 percent with 3.76 million tons of carbon released into the atmosphere annually.

Your Committee is further informed that climate change poses an existential threat to Westchester's nearly one million residents, particularly those in its most vulnerable communities. Unmitigated, sea levels could rise as much as six (6) feet by the end of the century, submerging treasured County locations such as Playland Park, the Yonkers Waterfront District, and almost all of New Rochelle's Glen Island. Moreover, increased incidents of flooding, heat emergencies, and heightened food scarcity threatens devastating effects on economically disadvantaged residents, a disproportionate percentage of whom are Black and Brown.

Your Committee has been advised that plug-in hybrid and battery electric vehicles emit considerably less carbon dioxide than comparable gasoline, diesel and standard hybrid vehicles. Replacing a standard passenger vehicle using a petroleum engine with a plug-in hybrid would reduce fuel consumption by 70%, while replacing it with an electric vehicle would reduce fuel consumption by 98%. Moreover, President Biden's Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad set a mandate for "clean and zero-emission vehicles for Federal, State, local, and Tribal government fleets" by 2035. Ulster County and New York City have already set mandates to convert their entire fleet to advanced vehicles within the next two decades.

Your Committee finds that the proposed Local Law will assist Westchester in its commitment to fulfill the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement by drastically reducing the County's fuel emissions and setting a standard for local entities to follow. It will also affirm the County's leadership position in meeting the standards set forth in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act of 2019 to reduce carbon emissions by 85 percent within the next thirty years.

Your Committee is informed that the attached Local Law would amend Chapter 836 of the Laws of Westchester County by mandating that all purchases by the County of Westchester of motor vehicles shall be for electric vehicles, plug-in hybrid vehicles or alternative fuel vehicles, with limited exemptions. In addition, the proposed legislation eliminates the existing exemption in section 836.42 for "all vehicles of law enforcement purposes."

Your committee is advised that the proposed Local Law would generate significant savings for the County. Switching only the fleet's standard petroleum engine passenger vehicles to plug-in hybrids saves over \$2,500,000 over the course of 5 years; switching to electric vehicles saves over \$2,900,000. Further, the cost to drive 25 miles in either a standard plug-in hybrid or electric vehicle is only \$0.50, less than half the cost of driving the same distance in a hybrid and a less than a fourth of the cost in a standard gas vehicle. Moreover, many County agencies have proactively purchased electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles. The Department of Public Safety, in particular, has purchased a number of advanced vehicles, including several hybrid interceptors intended for law enforcement personnel.

As you know, this Honorable Board must comply with the requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”). Your Committee is advised that the Department of Planning has reviewed the applicable SEQRA regulations, and has concluded that this proposed Local Law constitutes a Type II action which does not require further environmental review. Your Committee concurs with that conclusion.

Your Committee concludes that the adoption of this proposed Local Law which would change a provision of law relating to public bidding, purchases or contracts, is subject to a referendum on petition pursuant to the provisions of Section 209.171(2) of the Laws of Westchester County and Section 24(2)(b) of the New York State Municipal Home Rule Law.

Your Committee, after careful consideration, recommends adoption of this Local Law.

Dated: _____, 2021
White Plains, New York

COMMITTEE ON

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SUBJECT: Vehicle Procurement

NO FISCAL IMPACT PROJECTED

OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT

To Be Completed by Submitting Department and Reviewed by Budget

SECTION A - FUND

GENERAL FUND

AIRPORT FUND

SPECIAL DISTRICTS FUND

SECTION B - EXPENSES AND REVENUES

Total Current Year Expense \$ -

Total Current Year Revenue \$ -

Source of Funds (check one): Current Appropriations Transfer of Existing Appropriations

Additional Appropriations

Other (explain)

Identify Accounts: Equipment acquisition accounts county-wide

Potential Related Operating Budget Expenses: Annual Amount \$ -

Describe: _____

Potential Related Operating Budget Revenues: Annual Amount \$ -

Describe: _____

Anticipated Savings to County and/or Impact on Department Operations:

Current Year: There is no financial impact to the County as the higher vehicle acquisition costs are offset by reduced fuel expenditure over the life of the vehicle.

Next Four Years: The proposed changes to the vehicle acquisition requirements will reduce carbon emissions over the life of a typical passenger vehicle by approximately 4 tons per vehicle replaced.

Prepared by: Gideon Grande

Title: Deputy Director

Department: Budget

Date: April 22, 2021

Reviewed By: 

Budget Director

Date: 4/22/21