



Kenneth W. Jenkins
County Executive

Office of the County Attorney

John M. Nonna
County Attorney

January 16, 2026

Westchester County Board of Legislators
County of Westchester
800 Michaelian Office Building
148 Martine Avenue
White Plains, New York 10601

Re: Request for authorization to settle the lawsuit of SYREETA L. JEFFERSON v. WESTCHESTER COUNTY; ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK; ST. CABRINI HOME; MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS; REDEMPTORISTS OF THE BALTIMORE PROVINCE a/k/a THE REDEMPTORISTS; and DOES 1-10, in Supreme Court Westchester County, Index No. 58713/2021, in the amount of \$750,000.00, inclusive of attorney's fees.

Dear Honorable Members of the Board:

Attached for your consideration is an Act, which if enacted by your Board, would authorize the settlement of the lawsuit of SYREETA L. JEFFERSON v. WESTCHESTER COUNTY; ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK; ST. CABRINI HOME; MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS; REDEMPTORISTS OF THE BALTIMORE PROVINCE a/k/a THE REDEMPTORISTS; and DOES 1-10, in Supreme Court Westchester County, Index No. 58713/2021, in the amount of \$750,000.00, inclusive of attorney's fees.

This matter is pending in the Westchester County Supreme Court before the Honorable Doris M. Gonzalez. The lawsuit tentatively settled, pending this Board's approval, for a total amount of \$750,000.00 inclusive of attorney's fees.

Jenny Rossman, Esq. of Herman Law, 475 5th Avenue, 11th Floor, New York, New York 10017, is representing the plaintiff, Syreeta L. Jefferson.


This matter arises in the context of The Child Victim's Act (the "CVA"). The legislation was enacted in 2019 and allowed for victims of childhood sexual abuse to file lawsuits despite expired statutes of limitations. In this case, the plaintiff was placed in the foster home of Bessie Peterson from 1984, when she was about eight years old, and remained there until approximately 1988. She alleges that beginning that first year and continuing for about three years, she was sexually abused by Ms. Peterson's boyfriend. Plaintiff alleges that Ms. Peterson would put a lock

on the refrigerator so Plaintiff could not eat and that the boyfriend would use food to bribe Plaintiff into doing sexual acts. Plaintiff alleges that he forced her to perform oral sex on him and have intercourse. Plaintiff alleges that this ongoing abuse resulted in permanent psychological and emotional damages.

Plaintiff claims that the County had actual notice of the sexual abuse she was suffering because she told her assigned Westchester County caseworker, Ms. Rosario, about the abuse. Plaintiff also alleges that she would run away from the Peterson home and go to the Department of Social Services Yonkers office and tell workers in the office about the abuse. She alleges that someone would always drive her back to the Peterson home. The Department of Social Services denies that they had knowledge of the abuse and denies that they were told about the abuse.

The settlement takes into consideration the uncertainty of litigation and the potential costs of trial, the exposure to a substantial jury verdict, subsequent proceedings and potential appeal. The accompanying Act will authorize settlement of the lawsuit entitled of SYREETA L. JEFFERSON v. WESTCHESTER COUNTY; ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK; ST. CABRINI HOME; MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS; REDEMPTORISTS OF THE BALTIMORE PROVINCE a/k/a THE REDEMPTORISTS; and DOES 1-10, in the amount of \$750,000.00 inclusive of attorney's fees.

Very truly yours,


John M. Nonna
County Attorney

JMN/cmf

BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

Your Committee is in receipt of a proposed Act, which if enacted by your Board, would authorize the settlement of the lawsuit of SYREETA L. JEFFERSON v. WESTCHESTER COUNTY; ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK; ST. CABRINI HOME; MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS; REDEMPTORISTS OF THE BALTIMORE PROVINCE a/k/a THE REDEMPTORISTS; and DOES 1-10, in the amount of \$750,000.00, inclusive of attorney's fees.

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into doing sexual acts. Plaintiff alleges that he forced her to perform oral sex on him and have intercourse. Plaintiff alleges that this ongoing abuse resulted in permanent psychological and emotional damages.

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Your Committee has carefully considered the subject matter, the settlement proposal, the attached Act and recommends authorizing the County Attorney or his designee to settle the lawsuit entitled SYREETA L. JEFFERSON v. WESTCHESTER COUNTY; ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK; ST. CABRINI HOME; MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS; REDEMPTORISTS OF THE BALTIMORE PROVINCE a/k/a THE REDEMPTORISTS; and

Dated: White Plains, New York
 , 2026

COMMITTEE ON

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SUBJECT: Lawsuit Settlement: S.L.J G860202

☐ 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 \$ 750,000

Total Current Year Revenue \$ -

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

☐ Additional Appropriations

☒ Other (explain)

Identify Accounts: 6N Fund: 615 59 0510 1050 4280 04

Potential Related Operating Budget Expenses:

Annual Amount N/A

Describe: Public Official Liability Settlement of Jefferson(S.L.J) G860202 (CVA Claim)

Potential Related Operating Budget Revenues:

Annual Amount N/A

Describe:

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

Current Year: N/A

Next Four Years: N/A

Prepared by: Christine M. Feimer

Title: Senior Assistant County Attorney

Department: Law

Date: January 20, 2026

Reviewed By: 

PH

Budget Director

Date:

1/21/26

ACT NO. -2026

AN ACT authorizing the County Attorney to settle the lawsuit of SYREETA L. JEFFERSON v. WESTCHESTER COUNTY; ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK; ST. CABRINI HOME; MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS; REDEMPTORISTS OF THE BALTIMORE PROVINCE a/k/a THE REDEMPTORISTS; and DOES 1-10, in Supreme Court Westchester County, Index No. 58713/2021, in the amount of \$750,000.00, inclusive of attorney's fees.

BE IT ENACTED by the Board of Legislators of the County of Westchester as follows:

Section 1. The County Attorney is authorized to settle the lawsuit of SYREETA L. JEFFERSON v. WESTCHESTER COUNTY; ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK; ST. CABRINI HOME; MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS; REDEMPTORISTS OF THE BALTIMORE PROVINCE a/k/a THE REDEMPTORISTS; and DOES 1-10, in Supreme Court Westchester County, Index No. 58713/2021, in the amount of \$750,000.00, inclusive of attorney's fees.

Section 2. The County Attorney or his designee is hereby authorized and empowered to execute and deliver all documents and take such actions as the County Attorney deems necessary or desirable to accomplish the purpose of this Act.

Section 3. This Act shall take effect immediately.