

LOCAL LAW INTRO NO. 188 - 2023

TO: HONORABLE BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

Your Committee is in receipt of a communication from the County Executive urging the adoption of the attached “LOCAL LAW amending Section 277.421 of the Laws of Westchester County to add a provision to establish a Subcommittee of the Westchester County African-American Advisory Board to study the high rates of asthma in communities of color in the County of Westchester.”

Your Committee is aware that, the New York State 2021 Health Equity Reports—which present data on health outcomes for cities and towns with a 40% or greater non-White population—highlight the prevalence of asthma in communities of color in Westchester County. These reports show that the rates of emergency hospital visits for asthma in Yonkers, Peekskill, and Mt. Vernon typically exceeded both the New York State and Westchester County averages, for all ages of patients. Notably, the rates for patients ages 0-4 years in Yonkers, Peekskill and Mt. Vernon substantially exceeded the state and county averages. Additionally, according to a recent Westchester County Department of Health Community Health Assessment, approximately 10% of adults within the County reported having asthma.

Your Committee understands that asthma is a treatable disease, but that access to healthcare for ethnic minorities and communities of color is often hampered by socioeconomic disparities, shortages of primary care physicians in minority communities, and language and literacy barriers, among other things. Clear disparities have emerged, showing that the burden of asthma falls disproportionately on African American, Black, and Hispanic populations, and especially on children in these communities. In recent years, children have died preventable deaths in the County as a result of untreated asthma.

Your Committee is informed that this Local Law, if adopted, would create a Subcommittee of the African American Advisory Board, to study asthma risk factors for people of color in Westchester County; identify existing barriers to asthma treatment and care among racial and ethnic minorities; develop strategies for addressing the lack of health care in these communities; and launch a County-wide asthma awareness campaign to educate County residents about the disease, its symptoms, and the ability to better manage asthma through prevention and treatment. The subcommittee would be required to consult with the Hispanic Advisory Board and the Asian-American Advisory Board, as well as representatives from other groups that are disproportionately affected by asthma. The subcommittee would also be required to meet with a pulmonologist and any other necessary medical specialists.

Your Committee is informed that the proposed project does not meet the definition of an action under New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) and its implementing regulations 6 NYCRR Part 617. Please refer to the memorandum from the Department of Planning, dated January 12, 2023, which is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Legislators. Your Committee concurs in this conclusion.

Based on the foregoing, your Committee recommends the passage of this Local Law.

Dated: September 6, 2023
White Plains, New York

Arthur S.
David Amico
Cahill AMT
[Signature]

David Amico
Catherine Park
Colin J. AMT
Louis B. Kelly Jr. J.D.
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David Amico
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COMMITTEES ON

Legislation

Health

Appointments

Dated: September 6, 2023
White Plains, New York

The following members attended the meeting remotely and approved this item out of Committee with an affirmative vote. Their electronic signature was authorized and is below.

Committee(s) on:

LEGISLATION
COMMITTEE

Symra D. Brandon

HEALTH
COMMITTEE

APPOINTMENTS
COMMITTEE

Symra D. Brandon

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SUBJECT: To Establish a Subcommittee -Asthma 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: N/A

Potential Related Operating Budget Expenses: Annual Amount N/A

Describe: A local Law amending Section 277.421 of the Laws of Westchester County to add a provision to establish a Subcommittee of the Westchester County African-American Advisory Board to study the high rates of asthma in communities of color in the County of Westchester.

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: Patricia Haggerty

Title: Sr. Budget Analyst

Department: Budget

Date: September 6, 2023

Reviewed By: 

Budget Director

Date: 9/6/23

LOCAL LAW INTRO. NO. 188 - 2023

A LOCAL LAW amending Section 277.421 of the Laws of Westchester County to add a provision to establish a Subcommittee of the Westchester County African-American Advisory Board to study the high rates of asthma in communities of color in the County of Westchester.

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

Section 1. Section 277.421 of the Laws of Westchester County is hereby amended by adding a subsection to subdivision (1) to read as follows:

Sec. 277.421. - Advisory Board established.

1. There shall be a Westchester County African-American Advisory Board which shall consist of an odd number of members of not less than nine, and not more than 45. The members shall have demonstrated their concern for and interest in the African-American population.

a. Members shall be appointed by the County Executive and shall serve for a term of two years, except that of the members first appointed to such board, 60 percent shall be appointed for a term of one year and 40 percent for a term of two years. Upon the expiration of the term of office of any member, his or her successor shall be appointed to membership on such board for a term of two years. Any member subsequently appointed to the board shall be appointed for a two-year term. The Director of the Office of Affirmative Action may serve as an ex officio member at the discretion of the board. Members shall be residents of Westchester County. One

member shall be designated by the County Executive as Chairman. A vacancy in the membership shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

b. Each member shall have the ability and willingness to give the necessary amount of time to the responsibility of being a board member.

c. A Subcommittee shall be established to study the high rates of asthma in minority communities in Westchester County. The County Executive shall appoint five (5) members to such Subcommittee from among Advisory Board members. The County Commissioners of Health, Social Services and Planning or their designees shall serve as Ex-Officio members of such Subcommittee.

The Subcommittee shall be tasked with:

(a) assessing the asthma risk factors for the minority

residents of the County;

(b) identifying existing barriers to quality asthma treatment and care among

racial and ethnic minorities;

(c) developing evidence-based intervention strategies for addressing the lack

of health care in these communities; and

(d) launching a County-wide asthma awareness campaign to educate

County residents about the disease, its symptoms, and the ability to better

manage asthma through prevention and treatment.

The Subcommittee shall consult with representatives of minority and

low-income communities, the Hispanic Advisory Board and the Asian American Advisory Board, health care professionals with knowledge and experience in the prevention and treatment of asthma including but not limited to a Pulmonologist, and community groups that advocate for environmental justice issues. The Subcommittee shall deliver an annual report addressing various asthma program successes, new trends, data and issues surrounding minority populations suffering from asthma to the County Executive and Board of Legislators beginning September 1, 2025, and annually thereafter.

§ 2. This Local Law shall take effect immediately.

STATE OF NEW YORK)
)
) ss.
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER)

I HEREBY CERTIFY that I have compared the foregoing Local Law, Local Law Intro No. 188 - 2023, with the original on file in my office, and that the same is a correct transcript therefrom, and of the whole, of the said original Local Law, which was duly adopted by the County Board of Legislators, of the County of Westchester on October 2, 2023, and approved by the County Executive on October 12, 2023.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Corporate Seal of said County Board of Legislators on this 12th day of October, 2023.



Malika Vanderberg

The Clerk of the Westchester County
Board of Legislators

County of Westchester, New York

