

TO: HONORABLE BOARD OF LEGISLATORS  
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

Your Committee recommends adoption of “An Act adopting the Westchester County Police Reform Plan developed by the Westchester County Police Reform and Reimagining Task Force.”

Your Committee is advised that the Westchester County Executive created the “Police Training Task Force” on June 1, 2020 in response to the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. The Task Force was renamed the “Westchester County Police Reform and Reimagining Task Force” following the issuance of Executive Order 203 by the New York State Governor, two weeks later. Executive Order 203 concluded that “...urgent and immediate action is needed to eliminate racial inequities in policing, to modify and modernize policing strategies, policies, procedures, and to develop practices to better address the particular needs of communities of color to promote public safety, improve community engagement, and foster trust.” The Executive Order created a collaborative process requiring all local governments and police departments in New York State to develop plans to modernize their policing strategies and strengthen relationships with their communities. These plans must be completed and certified by April 1, 2021 and failure to complete this process will result in loss of State funding.

Your Committee is further advised that the Executive Order required the County to perform a comprehensive review of current County police policies, procedures, and practices, and to develop a plan to improve such police policies, procedures, and practices, and promote

community engagement to foster trust and fairness, and address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color.

Your Committee notes that the Executive Order required the County to consult with stakeholders, including the Commissioner of the County Department of Public Safety, members of the community, interested non-profit and faith based community groups, the County District Attorney's Office and local elected officials to create a plan to adopt and implement the recommendations resulting from such plan. Such plan was to include any modifications, modernizations, and innovations to County policing deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, tailored to the specific needs of the Westchester community and to seek to promote improved police agency and community relationships based on trust, fairness, accountability and transparency, and to reduce any racial disparities in policing in the County.

Your Committee is advised that the Executive Order also required that the final plan consider policing strategies including but not limited to: "...use of force policies, procedural justice; any studies addressing systemic racial bias or racial justice in policing; implicit bias awareness training; de-escalation training and practices; law enforcement assisted diversion programs; restorative justice practices; community-based outreach and conflict resolution; problem-oriented policing; hot spots policing; focused deterrence; crime prevention through environmental design; violence prevention and reduction interventions; model policies and guidelines promulgated by the New York State Municipal Police Training Council; and standards promulgated by the New York State Law Enforcement Accreditation Program."

Your Committee notes that the Westchester County Police Reform and Reimagining Task Force was tasked with developing a document in response to Executive Order 203 following the Order's issuance on June 12, 2020 by the Westchester County Executive. The Task Force is comprised of thirty-eight members, which include County and local law enforcement professionals, clergy representatives, criminal justice and police reform advocates, human rights professionals, the Executive Director of the Westchester County Youth Bureau, the Executive Director of the Westchester County Human Rights Commission, the Westchester County Department of Public Safety Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, representatives from the Westchester County District Attorney's office, three Westchester County Legislators, and other public servants. The Westchester County Executive additionally attached six staff liaisons to the Task Force in order to ensure that the group had access to all available resources and assistance.

Your Committee is aware that the County Executive's Task Force deliberated for seven months through the six working groups it formed: Community Engagement, Qualification and Recruitment, Training and Equipment, Policies and Procedures, Accountability and Transparency.

Your Committee further notes that in addition to requiring the establishment of the task force, Executive Order No. 203 required that Westchester County conduct a series of public

forums to solicit comments from residents regarding policing and reform. The County Executive's Task Force held three public forums and four public information sessions. These sessions were recorded and are available through Westchester County's website. The Task Force allowed the public to comment through open online meetings and five physical locations, which were held in public when possible during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The public were able to submit email, comment through video conferencing software, comment through the telephone, or by submitting written comments through email or postal mail. The Task Force received written comment from over 80 members of the Westchester County community. In addition, your Committee conducted one public forum during its review of the Task Force's plan, and held nine public committee meetings to discuss the Task Force and its findings. The minutes of the Committee meetings as well as the comments received by members of the public have been added to the report in order to best inform the public.

On considering the expressions of the public and after diligent review, the Westchester County Police Reform & Reimagining Task Force's report is now presented to this Honorable Board for certification through Act. This Committee finds that the recommendations of this report provide the valuable framework of a multi-faceted plan for equitable policing.

Adoption of this plan must be accomplished by April 1, 2021 in order to comply with the Governor of New York State's Executive Order. The Westchester County Police Reform & Reimagining Task Force's report contains fifty-one (51) recommendations developed by the County Executive's Task Force through the course of its efforts from June 2020 to January 2021, which if implemented, will promote equitable policing in Westchester County.

Your Committee also notes that additional information has been received from the Westchester County Department of Public Safety that details the recommendations made by the Task Force that the Department is in the process of implementing. The document provided by the Department has been added to the report to reflect that the County is already working to implement change.

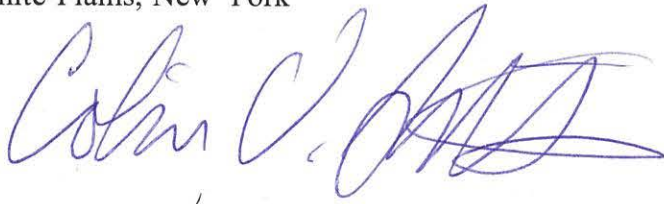
Your Committee has added one additional recommendation, developed by the Board of Legislators, to the report. Your Committee's recommendation, included within the report, is that the Westchester County Department of Public Safety implement a more stringent and explicit policy of screening police officers during recruitment and throughout their employment to prevent members of hate groups, such as hate groups with white supremacist affiliations, from becoming or remaining members of our law enforcement.

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 Act is not an action which requires any environmental review. Your Committee concurs with that conclusion.

In light of all the foregoing, your Committee recommends the adoption of this Act.

Dated: March 22, 2021

White Plains, New York







COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

MAM-3/22/21

Dated: March 22, 2021  
White Plains, New York

***The following members attended the meeting remotely, as per Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 202.1 and approved this item out of Committee with an affirmative vote. Their electronic signature was authorized and is below.***

Committee(s) on:

**Public Safety**

*Margaret A. Conzio*

*Nancy E. Barr*

*Cheryl*

*Mary Jane Skimsky*

ACT NO.

-2021

An Act adopting the  
Westchester County Police  
Reform Plan developed by  
the Westchester County  
Police Reform and  
Reimagining Task Force.

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

**Section 1.** The Westchester County Executive directed the Westchester County Police Reform and Reimagining Task Force to develop a Plan pursuant to the issuance of Executive Order No. 203, on June 12, 2020, by the New York State Governor. The Task Force begin work on a Plan which comprehensively reviewed current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices and would serve as a plan to improve such operations, for the purposes of addressing the particular needs of communities served by the Westchester County Department of Public Safety and promoted community engagement in order to foster trust, fairness and legitimacy among members of the public, and addresses racial bias and the disproportionate policing of communities of color. The Task Force is a thirty-eight (38) member panel of a diverse group of professionals including County and local law enforcement professionals, clergy representatives, criminal justice and police reform advocates, human rights professionals, leaders of the LGBTQ community, the Executive Director of the Westchester County Youth Bureau, the Executive Director of the Westchester County Human Rights Commission, the Westchester



County Department of Public Safety Commissioner & Deputy Commissioner, representatives from the Westchester County District Attorney's office, three Westchester County Legislators, and other public servants. Six (6) staff liaisons serve to support the Task Force's efforts. Deliberation has occurred for seven (7) months through the six (6) Working Groups formed by the Task Force: Community Engagement, Qualification and Recruitment, Training and Equipment, Policies and Procedures, Accountability, and Transparency.

**Section 2.** The Westchester County Police Reform Task Force's Plan contains fifty-one (51) recommendations developed by the Westchester County Police Reform and Reimagining Task Force following seven (7) months of deliberation, three (3) public forums, four (4) public information sessions, six (6) general Task Force meetings and sixty-five (65) Working Group meetings. The Plan also includes an additional recommendation issued by the County Board of Legislators, the minutes of the nine (9) Public Safety Committee meetings held reviewing the report, comments received by the County Board of Legislators from members of the public during the Board's one (1) public hearing and significant contextual documents from County Legislators and members of the County Department of Public Safety. The recommendations contained in the Task Force's Plan are intended to promote equitable policing in Westchester County.

**Section 3.** The County Executive and the Board of Legislators will work together to evaluate such recommendations in the Plan and create a blueprint for feasible implementation.

**Section 4.** The Westchester County Police Reform Plan issued in February of 2021 by the County Executive is hereby adopted.

**Section 5.** This Act shall take effect immediately.

Mam-3/22/21

Cac-3/20/21