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

WHEREAS, the Committee on Legislation has reviewed the following items for the 2023 Westchester County Joint State Legislative Package; Now Therefore Be It

RESOLVED, that after considerable deliberation, it is recommended that this Honorable Board approve these legislative initiatives, and that they be presented to and considered by the New York State Legislature and Governor during the current state legislative session.

Dated: January 30, 2023 White Plains, New York

Committee on 1 pais lation Dated: January 30, 2022 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.

Cathere By

Legislation

No.	Туре	Description/ Short Title	Legislative Status/Info	Notes/Justification
1	Budgetary	Reauthorize Westchester County's Property Taxpayer Protection Act Permanently and eliminate the need for state renewals of county sales tax.	n/A	Westchester County committed to and has fulfilled the requirement to share extra sales tax revenue with local municipalities and school districts; this provided relief to local taxpayers through the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020 alone, Westchester shared \$113 million with local municipalities and \$44 million with local school districts. Westchester County has, as a result, cut county property tax levy in four (4) consecutive budgets – 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 – as agreed to reduce county property taxes. Making Westchester's sales tax authorization permanent would also ensure the long term stability of an essential part of Westchester County's revenue, as well as the revenues of local school districts and municipalities. This permanency would guarantee continued relief to property taxpayers in Westchester and provide school districts and municipalities with more certainty in their budgetary processes. As such, Westchester requests that its sales tax be reauthorized and that the need for continued state renewal of sales tax be eliminated.
2	Budgetary	Give Westchester County parity with surrounding localities by providing it with the authority to set its own gun permit fees.	N/A	The fees charged by Westchester County for new pistol licenses and amendments are capped by New York State Penal Law section 400.00(14). Westchester's pistol license applications are capped at \$10, while the cost to perform the necessary work has been generally estimated at roughly \$300. These fees have not increased in decades and we currently operate this program at a significant annual loss of over \$300,000. This means that Westchester's taxpayers are essentially subsidizing the bureaucratic costs incurred by those seeking firearms licenses. Westchester is obligated to follow the New York State cap, while surrounding localities do not have this restriction. These localities have higher licensing fees, allowing them to cover a larger share of this cost, placing a lighter burden on their taxpayers. For example, Nassau County charges \$200 for pistol permit applications and New York City charges \$340. If granted similar authority, Westchester County will fully analyze and publicize the actual costs, and establish a rate commensurate to cover these costs. Westchester County requests that it be provided with this same authorization through the budget process in order to reduce costs for taxpayers and to expedite the process by which these fees are amended in the future. In 2019, seven agencies in New York City received authorization to utilize Design-Build project delivery (as opposed to Design-Build) through the Public Works Investment Act (PWIA). Design-Build consolidates projects into one point of responsibility on the basis of which design and construction team can deliver the best project at the best value. Westchester believes this novel strategy would allow it to save
3	Budgetary	Provide Westchester County with authorization to utilize Design-Build project delivery.	N/A	money and deliver an enhanced level of quality on forthcoming projects. Under the current Design-Bid-Build model, the 'Design' and 'Build' components of a project are barred from collaboration, slowing project schedules, increasing cost, and resulting in lower quality in final completed projects. New York City is required to provide annual reports on design-build projects, including short lists and proposers, cost savings, time savings and MWBE utilization within the project. Westchester county would be willing to provide this information as well. We intend to work closely with organized labor representatives in implementing this program. In order to save costs for taxpayers and implement a more logistically robust project delivery system, Westchester requests authorization from New York State to utilize Design-Build.
4	Budgetary	Continue funding programs to address the backlog of eviction cases by providing legal representation to those at risk of eviction and develop a long term eviction prevention program for New York State.	n/A	As of January 5, 2023 residents of Westchester County have submitted 9,879 applications to the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). 4,601 of these applications were paid, through October 31st, 2022, totaling \$66 million in back rent and prospective rent. Funding for this program is now depleted – the application portal remained open until January 15, 2023, but due to a lack of funding, no applications submitted after October 31st will be reviewed at this time. Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV) were receiving funding from New York State to manage these cases, but this funding was originally authorized for only two years. Westchester County requests that this funding be renewed and continued, and that the State adopt some statewide solution to the glut of eviction cases and necessitated legal representation of those seeking relief through these programs. Legislation was proposed in the 21-22 legislative cycle which would have established and funded a statewide office of civil representation to provide access to legal services in eviction proceedings. As the ERAP program essentially accomplishes this in a de-facto fashion, Westchester believes this would be a viable solution.

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				Individuals with income who enter Westchester's shelter system currently pay a portion of their income to offset County expenses incurred from the operation of the shelters. All remaining costs of providing care are reimbursed through New York State's federally-sourced Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding.
				Westchester County requests that New York State allow individuals with income (who are entering a County shelter) to deposit their income into trust accounts rather than paying the county to offset costs. This would give a client funding – when they hopefully transfer out of the shelter system – to secure new housing.
5	Budgetary	Development of PILOT program fully reimbursing Westchester County for shelter costs and allowing the transfer of DSS client shelter payments to trust accounts.	N/A	This would require that New York State provide 100% reimbursement for all shelter costs, but individuals with income make up a small portion of those in the shelter system. Westchester estimates that the cost of such a program would be between \$110,000 and \$210,000 in federal TANF funding, depending on how many clients return to shelters as the pandemic ebbs. Westchester County would also need to allocate between \$96,000 and \$234,000 locally in order to launch this pilot, a step which the County is willing to take. Such a PILOT would produce a significant path towards long term housing solutions for many of our clients, and could be replicated on a wider scale statewide in order to combat rising rates of homelessness.
				Westchester County's Bee Line Bus Service has a larger ridership than Nassau County, but receives less in State Transportation Operating Assistance (STOA); the STOA formula currently prioritizes the distance of a transportation system rather than its ridership. This favors counties like Nassau and provides Westchester with a more limited allocation despite its higher ridership and significant transportation issues. 51% of Westchester's riders are transit-dependent, meaning they rely on the Bee Line and do not have a car for their use. Our public transit policies have included providing free rides for 4 months in 2022, a first ever action in Westchester; we are converting our diesel buses to hybrid-electric and electric buses to ensure a reduced environmental impact. We believe these policies place our system at the vanguard of transportation implementation and reform; amending the STOA formula will allow us to expand this work to better serve residents of Westchester County.
6	Budgetary	Amend the State Operating Assistance (STOA) Formula to provide Westchester County financial parity with Nassau County's transit assistance	N/A	As New York State continues to recover from the coronavirus and strives to meet its net zero carbon emissions goals, supporting Westchester's public transportation system will have significant environmental and economic benefits. Westchester County therefore requests that the STOA formula be amended to give Westchester County financial parity with Nassau County.
				The Westchester County Department of Public Safety, under a grant agreement with New York State, patrols the State Parkways in the County (Hutchinson River Parkway, Saw Mill River Parkway and Cross County Parkway). In 2021, the state appropriated \$2,235,000 to support this program. This year, the Executive Budget Proposal contains no appropriation of funding for this purpose. Westchester's budgeted cost for providing this service was roughly \$3 million. This does not include fringe benefits of approximately \$3 million. Including fringe, our total cost is over \$5 million. This does not include the cost of vehicles, fuel, maintenance, computers, firearms, and other associated equipment. Westchester County's Department of Public Safety has patrolled the parkway system since 1920, and relies on this State funding to provide public safety services to travelers using these parkways.
7	Budgetary	Allocate \$3 million in funding to cover costs associated with police patrols to New York State Parkways which are provided by Westchester County.		These patrols generate some \$2.1 million in revenue to the State and \$2.3 million in revenue to local municipalities as a result of local summons activity. Westchester County receives no money from the fines for the tickets we issue, while combatting issues unique to these parkways including flooding, bridge strikes, and wrong way driver accidents. The funding and additional appropriation is necessary to cover the cost of the county's patrols, and can help minimize the property tax burden of Westchester taxpayers.

N	o. Ty	pe Description/ Short Title	Legislative Status/Info	Notes/Justification
8	3 Budgeta	Pass legislation providing Westchester County with authorization to install up to 50 Red Light Cameras at intersections it maintains.	N/A	The rate of serious injury from traffic accidents is on the rise, statewide. A study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) found that red light cameras reduced fatal red light running in large cities by 21% and the rate of all types of fatal crashes at signalized intersections by 14%. Many municipalities have received authorization to install red light cameras in order to combat this problem. Authorization has been provided to the following communities within Westchester County: Yonkers, Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, White Plains and Pelham Manor.Red Light Cameras are also installed in Nassau and Suffolk counties, which are comparable in size to Westchester. Westchester County requests the same authorization which has been provided to other municipalities within the county's boundaries and which has been provided to counties of comparable size. Such legislation has been introduced previously and would provide authorization for Westchester to install up to 50 red light cameras at intersections it runs and maintains. We seek no authority greater than what has already been granted to comparable counties, and the cities and villages within our county which have already received this authority. We will commit to additional protections in our local enabling legislation, which will be subject to public hearings and public dialogue. Any issues that relate to local municipalities will be cooperatively negotiated and agreed upon before any plan is implemented.
		Authorize and fund a pay raise to 18-B		18-B assigned counsel pay has remained at \$60 per hour for misdemeanors and \$75 for felonies since 2004, reducing the number of attorneys willing to do this crucial work, and imposing heavy financial pressure on those who do. By comparison, assigned counsel rates in New York's federal courts have been to a rate of \$158 per hour. New York State has the sole authority to increase the pay of these attorneys. The New York State Bar Association has commenced lawsuits in order to secure these raises. These lawsuits, which proceed under the thesis that this lack of equitable pay deprives the children and indigent adults who receive these legal services of their constitutional right to meaningful and effective representation, have already been successful in jurisdictions like New York City. Westchester believes that these attorneys should be paid more, but through the current mechanism, counties pay these attorneys. An increase – along the lines which the NYS Bar Association has sued to secure – would generate \$11 million in additional recurring expenses for Westchester County. Westchester is not able to absorb a recurring expense of that size, and thus requests that New York State fund the pay raise. Legislation has been proposed by Senator Bailey and supported by Westchester Senator Peter Harckham which would fund and secure this
	Budgeta D Budgeta	Authorize and fund two additional Opportunity Centers in Westchester	N/A	pay raise. Westchester County supports this legislation as a feasible solution. The 2020 census named Westchester County the fourth most diverse County in New York – behind Queens County, Kings County, and New York County. The census highlighted significant increases in Westchester's Hispanic/Latino population, which saw a 5% increase from 2010 (21.8%) to 2020 (26.8%). Westchester County has maintained a large foreign born population for many years, and the 2020 census found that this continues – roughly 25.3% of the County's population is foreign born, slightly ahead of New York State. The census also found that 33.5% of residents spoke a language other than English at home, and 11.8% of all residents spoke English 'less than very well'. The number of new U.S. citizens nationwide hit a 15-year high in 2022, following pandemic-related delays to the naturalization process. New Americans – in Westchester and the rest of the State – need support: Job training, help finding housing, civics test preparation, legal consultation, and more. As Westchester's immigrant population continues to grow, more work is necessary to support their needs. Department of State 'Opportunity Centers' offer free services crucial to support these populations as they strive to work in our county. As such, Westchester requests funding and authorization for 2 additional State Opportunity Centers in support of our flourishing immigrant population.

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				New York State currently disposes of an estimated 860,000 tons of potentially recyclable materials ever year. These products end up in the trash and are often costly for municipalities to dispose of or recycle. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation exists and/or has been submitted during the last few legislative cycles which would resolve this issue.
				EPR legislation encourages improvements to these products in order to reduce non-recyclable waste and to require producers to bear the cost of recycling their products. Legislation may establish a framework for an organization to manage funding from producers or a direct fee on products, to reimburse municipalities for the cost of recycling, or by directly managing recycling of the product.
				Westchester supports the following legislative solutions to this problem
				Bottle Bill Expansion 2021-2022 Legislative Session: S8651(Parker)/A8668A(Cahill) Attempts to expand the Bottle Bill, which created the five cent returnable bottle deposit, have been ongoing for years. In particular, the inclusion of additional glass bottles (wine, liquor) could increase glass recycling, creating more recycled product to support markets for reuse of recycled glass.
				Rechargeable Battery Recycling Expansion 2021-2022 Legislative Session: S2906 (Kavanagh)
				2019-2020 Legislative Session: S2331 (Kavanagh)/A4559 (Rozic) Current NYS law requires the recycling of certain batteries. The law does not include large batteries (over 25lbs), vehicle batteries (electric
				vehicle, mobility devices, marine batteries, etc), or solar generator batteries. As these items become more popular and age out of use, proper disposal becomes more important, especially considering that many of these batteries are lithium ion that can result in fires from improper
11	Budgetary	Support Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Legislation	N/A	disposal.
12	Budgetary	Increase Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Funding	N/A	In addition to carrying forward an anticipated \$14.4 million transfer to the state Office of Victim Services' (OVS) Criminal Justice Improvement Account, Westchester County requests an increase of \$10 million for OVS administered funding for victim Victim Assistance providers. We recommend this funding be used specifically to supplement funding to those victim assistance providers that received less funding under the 2022 RFA than under prior OVS contracts.
				Westchester County established a Guardian ad Litem (GAL) program for those facing eviction in 2022. Guardians ad Litem are assigned to assist persons with physical or mental challenges who cannot come to court or represent their rights and interests for the duration of the case. Specifically, GALs are assigned for litigants who are deemed to be 'impaired', but have not yet been judicially declared 'incapacitated'.
				Westchester has been forced to suspend its own program – which had already helped many facing eviction – because GALs are not provided with defense and indemnification by New York Public Officers Law §17. New York City obtained this authority in 2010, which allowed them to significantly expand their GAL program. Although uncompensated GALs throughout New York State are entitled to State indemnification, compensated GALS are not.
13	Budgetary	Indemnification for ad litem attorneys	N/Δ	Westchester requests that its Guardians ad Litem be authorized to receive State indemnification by amending New York State Public Officer's Law, \$17(w), similar to New York City's authorization. This authorization will incur limited – if any – substantive cost to New York State, and will allow Westchester County to continue providing crucial representation to incapacitated persons at risk of eviction, keeping those persons in their home and ensuring they receive the support services they need.
13	Daugetal y	Establishes the crime of forcible	147.1	and their notice and ensuring they receive the support services they need.
		touching of a correction officer and increases criminal penalties for certain		
	1 2 - 1 - 12	sexual offenses committed against	2023: A1606-Weprin/	
1	Legislative	correction officers	No Same-As	Raises penalties for sexually touching or assaulting a corrections officer to a Class E Felony
			2021-22: S8432A-Mayer	
1	Logislativo	Deletes to amorganou modical	(Reichlin-Melnick)/	Includes the establishment of an emergency medical services quality and sustainability assurance program, a statewide comprehensive
	Legislative	Relates to emergency medical services	A9509A-Otis	emergency medical system plan and an emergency medical systems training program.

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				Require that children under 18 consult with an attorney before they can be subjected to custodial interrogation by law enforcement, thereby
		Amends procedures related to the		lensuring any waiver of rights under Miranda is genuinely knowing, voluntary, and intelligent. The bill also requires that a child arrested
		-	2023: S1099-Bailey/ No-	without a warrant be brought directly to court, as opposed to the police station, if a parent or legally responsible adult is not expected to
3	Legislative	taking juveniles into custoday	Same As	appear for them and they are not being questioned, unless otherwise required under the Criminal Procedure Law.
				Requires the installation of climb deterrent fencing on all bridges under the jurisdiction of the New York State Bridge Authority. Barrier
		Requires the installation of climb	2023: S2708-Harckham	installation is a proven method of increasing this crucial time for individuals at risk for suicide by jumping. These barriers act as a delay or
4	Legislative	deterrent fencing on certain bridges	/No Same As	deterrent to an individual at risk.
		Provides an exemption from		
		requirements for the alienation of	2002 24472	Under current law, municipalities must request an act from the legislature to alienate parklands which includes airspace directly above real
_		parkland for certain renewable energy	2023: S1179-	property being used for vehicle parking. This bill will allow solar energy projects under 2 megawatts, located directly above real property
5	Legislative	generating projects Relates to tax abatement for rent-	Harckham/ No Same-As	which are currently being used for vehicle parking to bypass the procedure of requesting an act from the Legislature.
		controlled and rent regulated property		
	State	occupied by and real property owned		
	Delegation	by senior citizens or persons with	2023: S1819-Stavisky/	To allow localities to raise the income eligibility limits for the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) or Disabled Rent Increase
1	Support List	disabilities	No Same-As	Exemption (DRIE) program to \$55,000 beginning on July 1, 2022.
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				Require court approval before the termination of, or failure to renew, a lease for tenants in rental buildings where substantially all of the
				lessees or tenants occupying such units are sixty-five years of age or older and/or are persons with disabilities.
				As the population of older Americans continues to grow, a greater number of seniors will require access to stable, affordable and physically
		Book this the december of the control of		accessible housing. To ensure these needs are met, many opt to move into senior living facilities. Many residents who move into senior
		Prohibits the termination of tenancy in housing occupied by substantially all		housing expect they may live there for the rest of their lives.
		persons over sixty-five years of age		Recently in White Plains, the Esplanade Senior Living facility decided to repurpose their property into higher-end apartments. The facility gave
		and/or persons with disabilities without		their senior tenants notice of their pending eviction, despite the fact the facility allowed new tenants to move in and renew leases as late as
	State	cause; prohibits increasing rent more		one month before announcing the evictions. Many of the approximately 150 senior citizens forced out of their homes were on fixed incomes
	Delegation	than one percent above the percentage	2023: \$286 Stewart-	and were not able to quickly secure new housing or had limited mobility and were not easily able to move to a new location.
2	Support List	change.	Cousins/ A308 Burdick	
				Requires the department of environmental conservation to implement permit regulations and guidance regarding shoreline management.
		Decided the decidence to 6		Due to climate change, our coasts and the people that live along them face increased risks from flooding and other climate change-related
		Requires the department of		hazards. Benefits of natural shorelines are well-known and numerous (reduce flooding and erosion, encourage native species and habitat
	State	environmental conservation to		diversification, improve water quality, provide adaptability and resilience to sea level rise in comparison to hardened shorelines, and more.
	State	implement permit regulations and	2022, 500204	Nature-based solutions (also called "living shorelines" when in the coastal environment) are shoreline management techniques that are
3	Delegation Support List	guidance regarding shoreline	2022: S8828A- Mayer/A10053A-Otis	supported or inspired by nature or natural processes and functions and are designed to mimic natural shorelines. These can offer an alternative to many hardened structures so that we can preserve the invaluable benefits of a more natural shoreline.
3	Support List	management	iviayei/A10035A-OUS	parternative to many natural structures so that we can preserve the invaluable benefits of a more natural shoreline.
		Relates to coverage for health care		
		services under the basic health program		
	State	for individuals whose immigration		
	Delegation	status renders him or her ineligible for	2023: S2237 Rivera/No	This bill will provide adult immigrants with access to health insurance coverage that is equivalent to the coverage offered to their citizen or
4	Support List	federal financial participation	Same As	lawfully present counterparts who are eligible for the Essential Plan.

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5	State Delegation Support List	Increases foundation aid for school districts that meet five variables impacting academic success: free or reduced lunch, English language learners, wealth ratio, enrollment, special education, and being located in a high wealth ratio county.	2023: A103-Sayegh/ No	Tens of thousands of students in New York State attend schools which are underfunded due to an antiquated funding formula that does not take into account for discrepancies between the general wealth in a county and specific communities. For instance, in the Yonkers City School District, where over sixty-seven percent of students qualify for free and-reduced lunch, the dominant factor in determining Foundation Aid funding is the wealth in Westchester County. As a result, the Yonkers City School District can expect less than half of the foundation aid which is granted to school districts that have similar student populations in New York State.
6	State Delegation Support List	Relates to providing protections to health service providers who perform legally protected health activities.		This bill will strengthen New York's role as a nation-wide leader in reproductive rights, creating new avenues for those who live in states with severe abortion restrictions. This legislation builds upon the abortion and reproductive health services laws signed in June 2022 by explicitly adding protections for telehealth and telehealth services.
7	State Del Support List	Provides for the trustees of the state university of New York to establish a college of engineering and applied sciences in the city of Yonkers	2023: S290-Stewart-	The City of Yonkers is the third largest city in the State of New York. Four of the five largest cities, the City of new York, Buffalo, Syracuse, and Rochester have various established institutions of higher learning. Yonkers, however, does not house any major public universities or State University of New York (SUNY) sites. This legislation aims to afford the residents of the fourth largest city an opportunity to attend a public four-year institution of higher learning.
8	State Del Support List	Authorizes NYSDOT to conduct a study pretaining to traffic flow and safety of Rt. 35 and Rt. 202 from the Hudson River to the border of Connecticut.		Rt. 35 is a frequently traveled, essential roadway for county residents, as the principal east-west highway in Northern Westchester. Rt. 35 sees roughly 16,500 vehicles daily. Rt. 202 is also a frequently traveled roadway and one of oldest components of the State's highway system. Due to increasing traffic congestion and rising levels of traffic incidents on both roadways, these studies were requested by their respective municipalities in order to ensure the effective flow of traffic as well as driver safety.
9	State Delegation Support List	Requires each electric corporation to submit a storm hardening and system resiliency plan to the public service commission for review and approval; makes related provisions.	2022: S4861-Comrie	Due to the rise in storm intensity, dedicated storm hardening programs need to be developed and implemented by electric utility companies. Storm hardening is the process of constructing new, or upgrading old, infrastructure to increase resiliency and overall reliability of service during weather events. The Department of Public Service has recommended New York's major electrical utilities create and implement storm hardening and system resiliency plans. However, the Public Service Commission has been unduly slow in their approval of submitted plans. Legislative hearings held after major storms that significantly impacted Westchester and other neighboring counties made clear that storm hardening efforts are needed to mitigate storm impacts. By requiring electrical utilities to adopt and implement such hardening and resiliency plans and the Public Service Commission to approve such plans within a fixed timeline, New Yorkers will be better prepared to endure and recover from future extreme weather events.
	State Delegation Support List	Provides additional tax exemptions for two qualified veterans living in the same household	2023: A74-Sayegh/ No Same As	If the relevant jurisidiction has opted into the program, a veteran who served during wartime can qualify for the Alternative Veterans Real Property Tax Exemption, which exempts 15% of the property's assessed value from taxation. If two qualified veterans reside in the same household the exemption does not change or increase. This legislation will allow for an additional 7.5% increase in the Alternative Veterans exemption for a household with two qualifying veterans. Thus, a household with two qualifying veterans would have 22.5% of their property's assessed value exempt from taxation.
11	State Delegation Support List	Enacts the "drag racing and speeding enforcement act"		While drag racing and speed contests are already prohibited under the NYS Vehicle and Traffic law, no points are issued against the license of drivers convicted of such racing. This legislation would ensure that drivers convicted of illegal drag racing will have five points issued against their driver's license.
12	State Delegation Support List	Enacts the "all-electric building act"	A920-Gallagher (Burdick, Paulin,	The bill would direct the fire prevention and building code council to prohibit the installation of systems that can be used for fossil fuel combustion in new contruction. The prohibition shall take effect no later than December 31, 2023 for buildings under 7 stories and July 01, 2027 for all other buildings. Lastly, the bill requires the NYS department of Public Service, division of housing and community renewal, department of state, and NYSERDA to issue a report to the governor and legislature detailing the changes to law necessary to ensure enactment does not diminish the production of affordable housing and the availability of affordable electricity by February 1, 2024.