

WESTCHESTER COUNTY

2022 Joint State Legislative Package



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George Latimer, Westchester County Executive

Catherine Borgia, Chair, Westchester County Board of Legislators

Colin Smith, Chair, Committee on Legislation



Catherine Borgia, Chairwoman
Westchester County Board of
Legislators



George Latimer
Westchester County Executive

February 10, 2022

Hon. Kathy Hochul, NYS Governor
Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins, NYS Senate Majority Leader
Hon. Carl Heastie, NYS Assembly Speaker
Honorable Senators and Assembly Members, Westchester Delegation

Dear Colleagues,

New York State faces a historic turning point. As we navigate the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic's endemic transformation and our State's economic recovery, we face a public in need of an accountable, open government that can deliver on seminal issues of housing, childcare and infrastructure. Our actions with this once in a generation surplus will chart the course of our State – it is then critical that all of us in government work together to make sure we deliver for our constituents.

This document identifies pieces of legislation and budgetary action which we – jointly, as two separate but equal branches of government and as a bipartisan coalition of elected officials – request that you consider as you work through this year's budget. These actions will have a positive impact on the people of Westchester County and, we believe, will chart a strong path for Westchester – and New York State.

We are in support of many initiatives recommended by Governor Hochul this year, including her requests to make sales tax authorization permanent, to issue licenses for downstate casinos, to increase the income threshold for childcare subsidies, and to lift AIM payments from County sales tax. We also request action on issues which are crucial to our community, like the development of statewide right to counsel, to amend civil service law to ensure our partners in public safety have the tools they need to hire the staff they need, and to amend the STOA formula to ensure Westchester can deliver high quality public transportation to residents all over the County.

We look forward to working in partnership with you and your staff, and we thank you for your consideration of the items submitted herein.

Sincerely,

Catherine Borgia, Chairwoman
Westchester County Board of Legislators

George Latimer
Westchester County Executive

Colin Smith, Chair
Committee on Legislation

2022 WESTCHESTER COUNTY JOINT STATE LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE

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FINANCE

Section I

Support the Expansion of Downstate Casino Licenses

REQUEST

Westchester County supports Governor Hochul's initiative to lift the moratorium which currently bars the creation of new commercial casino licenses.

JUSTIFICATION

Current State law prohibits the conversion of existing casinos into full commercial casinos, in addition to the granting of additional licenses. Governor Hochul's Executive Budget Proposal would expedite the process by which gaming facilities are granted commercial licenses, including those that currently exist in Westchester. This would provide immediate revenue in addition to creating long term, sustainable economic benefits to the County. Expansion of downstate casinos would provide economic opportunities in the following areas:

Tourism Revenue: New York City has an average of 62 million tourists visit on an annual basis. Despite this fact, millions of dollars in gaming revenue go to neighboring states due to New York City and Westchester County's limited gaming opportunities. New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania all have some of the highest gaming revenue statistics in the country, and greatly benefit from New York's casino licensing moratorium.

Job Creation: Unemployment in Westchester County continues to decrease, in part due to private employers such as Empire City, who currently employs over 1,200 people in the City of Yonkers. These are highly sought-after jobs, many of which have union representation. While Westchester County has had a decrease in unemployment this past year, the fact remains that many residents are leaving New York State, in part to seek better employment opportunities elsewhere.

Education Funding: Counties throughout New York State remain concerned about the lack of funding for education. The expansion of commercial casino licenses would generate increased education dollars not only for Westchester County, but for school districts throughout New York State.

MWBE/ Diversity Opportunities: The economic and employment benefits of casino expansion are far reaching, and would have a significant impact on Minority, Women and Veteran Owned Businesses. New casino development would provide opportunities for service providers, vendors and consultants who work in the gaming industry, and are part of these traditionally underrepresented groups.

HISTORY

This item was requested in the 2021 Joint State Legislative Package.

Make the Westchester County Property Taxpayer Protection Act Permanent

REQUEST

Support Governor Hochul's measures to make Westchester County's Property Taxpayer Protection Act Permanent by eliminating the need for state renewals of county sales tax.

JUSTIFICATION

In 2019, Westchester County sought authorization to raise its sales tax to a level of parity with surrounding localities. At that time, Westchester's sales tax was the lowest among populous New York State counties. In June of 2019, the NYS Governor signed Chapters 43 and 44 of the Laws of 2019 authorizing the County of Westchester to increase its sales and compensating use tax. The County's sales tax was reauthorized in 2020 and now expires in 2023.

Westchester County discretionarily shares extra sales tax revenue with local municipalities and school districts, and has continued this program through the COVID-19 pandemic to provide relief to local property taxpayers. Making Westchester's sales tax authorization permanent would 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. Further, this permanency would guarantee property taxpayers in the County would continue to receive this relief. Therefore, Westchester County supports Governor Hochul's initiative to make sales tax authorization permanent statewide.

HISTORY

2019 – Westchester receives authorization to raise its sales tax

2020 – Westchester's sales tax authorization is extended to 2023; Sales tax permanency is included in the Executive Budget Proposal but is removed

2021 – Sales tax permanency is included in the Executive Budget Proposal but is removed

Urge the Governor to Allocate Funding to Address Cuts to Essential Victims' Services Programs

REQUEST

Urge Governor Hochul to set aside emergency funding to address cuts to New York's essential victims' services.

JUSTIFICATION

Resources for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault are funded through Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Grants, administered by the NYS Office of Victim Services (OVS). Despite increased demand, FY21 funding was \$140M less than FY18, in the proposed Executive Budget, OVS projects cuts of 10-15% over the next three years. Failure to act will be catastrophic to many organizations that Westchester residents rely on for life-saving and life-changing services.

Relief is possible if Governor Hochul uses the State's emergency funding process to dedicate a portion of the state's surplus to address these cuts. Alternatively, federal funds received under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 – estimated to be a total of \$24 billion – could be relied on to keep the State's victim assistance programs at their current levels, during the next two-year cycle from October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2024.

Acting to prevent these cuts would have three outcomes. First, victim assistance providers would have better ability to budget over the next two years, to ensure continuity of services and once again beginning intake for clients. Second, OVS would be able to identify specific funding levels for advocacy services, legal services and case manager services, without pitting programs against one another in a competitive procurement process that lacks sufficient funding. Finally, OVS would have time to assess 2022-2023 federal VOCA grants and determine appropriate OVS awards going forward to its sub-grantees after the next two-year cycle ends in September 2024.

HISTORY

This item is a new request.

Ensure the Sunset of the Distressed Provider Assistance Account

REQUEST

Amend the budget to make the Distressed Provider Assistance Account sunset in 2022.

JUSTIFICATION

In 2020, part ZZ of Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2020 was amended by New York State Tax Law Section 1261, creating the Distressed Provider Assistance Account (DPAA) and directing the Office of the State Comptroller to withhold sales tax collections from counties outside of New York City. This action was taken to create a revenue stream for distressed hospitals early in the COVID-19 Pandemic, when there was significant concern that hospitals would be overwhelmed by coronavirus cases; even at its point of creation, the DPAA was set to sunset – first in 2021. It was extended to sunset in 2022 as the pandemic continued.

In this year's Executive Budget Proposal, the DPAA was extended indefinitely. This action results in the withholding of roughly \$1 million quarterly in sales tax revenue for Westchester County – an unsustainable recurring expense that places a burden on local property taxes in order to provide a statewide service. Further, drawing from county sales tax sets a dangerous precedent of utilizing those funds to support statewide action, hazarding local programming and support for mandates that are worse than unfunded – they draw directly from existing revenue streams.

Westchester County has additionally received no information on how to utilize the account or where the funding is going. Should a local hospital be impacted by severe COVID-19 burdens, we would be unable to advise them on how to seek assistance through this program.

As this pandemic becomes endemic, it is important that statewide resources and revenue streams be allocated to combat statewide problems. Westchester County hopes that this diversion of its revenue will be allowed to sunset, and that if additional support is necessary on this front, it is provided through state revenue streams.

HISTORY

This item is a new request.

Allow Westchester to Set its Own Gun Permit Fees

REQUEST

Give Westchester County with parity to surrounding localities by providing it with the authority to set its own gun permit fees.

JUSTIFICATION

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 costs roughly \$300. These fees have not increased in decades and we currently operate this program at a significant annual loss of over \$300,000. Although Westchester is obligated to follow the New York State cap, surrounding counties do not have this restriction and have much higher licensing fees; for example, Nassau County charges \$200 for pistol permit applications, and New York City charges \$340.

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.

HISTORY

This item is a new request.

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|--|
| Increase the Income Threshold for Child Care Subsidy Programs to 300% FPL |
|--|

REQUEST

Support the Governor's Executive Budget initiative to increase the Income Threshold for Child Care Subsidy Programs to 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

JUSTIFICATION

The current threshold for families seeking support through the Child Care Subsidy Program is 200% of the federal poverty level, or \$55,500 for a family of 4. Due to the cost of living in Westchester, many families in need of this support are ineligible due to their financial situation. Due to this conflict, we are unable to spend our allocation of federal funds – making it impossible for us to act to support many needy populations in our County.

Child care support has been crucial through the pandemic, but due to the conflict between the threshold and Westchester's cost of living, we have been unable to support many families. Therefore, we support Governor Hochul's Executive Budget Proposal to increase this income threshold to 300% of the FPL; this will allow us to utilize previously underutilized federal revenue streams and support many more families in need of assistance.

HISTORY

This item is a new request.

Request Amendment of the STOA Funding Formula

REQUEST

Increase Westchester County's State Transportation Operating Assistance (STOA) to provide financial parity with Nassau County's transit assistance.

JUSTIFICATION

Westchester County's Bee-Line is the largest bus system in New York State, outside of New York City's MTA transit. It services nearly 30 million riders per year, or roughly 100,000 riders per weekday. Fifty-one percent are transit-dependent—meaning that they rely on the Bee-Line and do not have a car available for their use. With 325 vehicles and 59 bus routes, it caters to a wide market of users. It helps many New Yorkers commute to work by providing feeders to train stations and corporate parks. This is an amenity for New York City residents whose subway lines terminate in the Bronx and are met by Bee Line buses, and for New York City residents who take Metro North to work at Westchester businesses such as MasterCard, PepsiCo, IBM, Regeneron and numerous smaller but sizable businesses. Westchester buses also serve Putnam County – providing broad support to the economy throughout the region.

While Nassau County has a lower ridership than Westchester County, they receive a much greater amount of STOA aid. In this year's Budget, Nassau receives \$103.3 million, compared to the significantly lower amount for Westchester of \$85.4 million. This is a difference of \$17.9 million, which occurs due to a loophole in the STOA formula which prioritizes how far a transportation system travels, rather than its ridership.

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 to the populations served by the Bee Line: New York City, Westchester County and Putnam County. Westchester County therefore requests that the STOA formula be amended to give Westchester County financial parity with Nassau County.

HISTORY

2021 – No parity with Nassau County

Allocate \$3 million in Funding to Cover the Cost of WCDPS patrol of New York State Parkways

REQUEST

Allocate \$3 million in funding to cover costs associated with police patrols to New York State Parkways which are provided by Westchester County.

JUSTIFICATION

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.

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.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

If funding is not renewed, Westchester County will spend over \$5.6 million providing patrols on State Parkways.

HISTORY

2019 – New York State appropriated \$1.9 million; Westchester incurred costs of \$5.3 million and received re-appropriated funding of \$1.2 million.
2020 – New York State appropriated \$2.2 million and re-appropriated \$1.2 million; Westchester incurred costs of \$5.5 million and received no funding
2021 – New York State appropriated \$2.2 million; Westchester incurred costs of \$5.8 million
2022 – New York State cut all funding for this program in the Executive Budget; Westchester anticipates costs of \$6 million

Request Funding for Federal Infrastructure Projects Transportation Aid

REQUEST

Provide federal funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Plan to support the following local projects:

- RGI04: Glen Island Bridge Replacement (\$58 Million)
- RB180: Central Park Ave Repairs & Repaving (\$19 Million)
- RB04B: Boston Post Road Bridge over Playland Parkway (\$10.15 Million)
- Lake Isle Dam Repairs

JUSTIFICATION

Following federal approval of the Build Back Better Infrastructure Plan, Westchester County requests support in delivering infrastructure improvements for its residents. Above are a list of projects which the County hopes to secure funding for through the appropriate State agencies.

HISTORY

This item is a new request.

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|--|
| Request for CHIPS increase for FY 22-23 |
|--|

REQUEST

Increase the funding allocated to the Consolidated Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS).

JUSTIFICATION

In FY21-22, Westchester County received roughly \$2.98 million in CHIPS funding and \$942,000 in PAVE NY funding. In the proposed FY22-23 Executive Budget, Westchester County's allocation stays flat in spite of inflation and other economic factors. As Westchester County continues navigating the COVID-19 pandemic, additional funding will help ensure that our roads are well-maintained and safe for residents, providing jobs and benefitting economic activity throughout the County.

HISTORY

This item was requested in the 2021 Joint State Legislative Package.

Support the Governor's Effort to Lift the Burden of AIM Payments from Counties

REQUEST

Support Gov. Hochul's Executive Budget Proposal to lift the burden of Aid and Incentives for Municipalities (AIM) payments from county sales tax.

JUSTIFICATION

New York State originally provided aid to municipalities through the AIM program for decades; most of this aid went to cities, but towns and villages also received annual funding shares. The SFY 2019 budget cut this program by \$59 million and then backfilled this funding by diverting county sales tax revenues in SFY 2021. This regressive tax policy put additional pressure on property taxes and we support Governor Hochul's Executive Budget Proposal to repeal it.

HISTORY

This item was requested in the 2021 Joint State Legislative Package. New York State shifted these costs gradually under the previous administration, completing that process in the FY21-22 budget.

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Section II

Provide Statewide Right to Counsel

REQUEST

Westchester County urges the adoption of a State program providing a right to counsel for evictions, ensuring universal, statewide response to this issue.

JUSTIFICATION

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, over 10,000 households in Westchester County faced eviction annually. By September of 2021, Westchester had the most eviction filings in New York outside of New York City. Landlords have legal representation in 93% of eviction cases, while tenants are represented in roughly 7% - meaning thousands of people have no way to litigate the loss of their homes. Ensuring these at-risk New Yorkers have legal representation will save money on social spending, including housing, mental health, and public safety services.

New York State is in a unique position, possessing a surplus and an opportunity act on the struggles of everyday New Yorkers. We hope that you will develop a statewide right to counsel at this opportune moment.

HISTORY

This item was requested in the 2021 Joint State Legislative Package.

2021-22 S.6678A – Housing, Construction, and Community Development
 A.7570A – Judiciary

Amend Custodial Intake Procedures for Minors

REQUEST

Westchester County urges the adoption of legislation (S.2800B/A.5891B) that amends procedures required for the custodial interrogation of children to provide additional protections and for taking juveniles and sixteen and seventeen year olds into police custody.

JUSTIFICATION

Minors taken into custody by law enforcement are often unaware of their rights, and may waive them believing it will help their case, resulting in custodial interrogation by law enforcement before they have ever consulted with an attorney. History shows that the rights of youth, especially those of minority demographics, have not been sufficiently protected in this regard, as evidenced by the “Central Park Five” case.

The proposed legislation helps to clarify and protect the rights of children in custody, as well as making associated changes to NYS Criminal Procedure Law to help ensure minors in police custody understand their rights before deciding whether or not to give them up and would seek to raise to age 18 existing protections for youth under the age of 16. Additionally, this legislation also requires that a minor arrested without a warrant be brought directly to court, instead of the police station, if a parent or legally responsible adult is not expected to appear for them and they are not being questioned, unless otherwise required by law.

This is beneficial to youth as they are still developing, both neurologically and socially. Young people may not understand their rights or the consequences of waiving them. Additionally, the historically tenuous relationship between youth, especially those of color, and law enforcement makes it difficult for young people to assert their rights or make clearheaded decisions about waiving them. The proposed legislation addresses deficiencies in existing law by considering both science and power dynamics when youth are in the custody of law enforcement and validates their rights by ensuring counsel is granted that will help them understand these rights.

HISTORY

This item is a new request for 2022.

2021-22 S.2800B – Senate Children and Families
 A.5891B – Assembly Children and Families

2019-20 S.4980 – Senate Children and Families
 A.6982B – Assembly Children And Families

Establish the Crime of Forcible Touching of Correction Officers and Increasing Associated Penalties

REQUEST

Westchester County urges the adoption of legislation (A.8647/S.8027) that establishes the crime of forcible touching of a correction officer and increases criminal penalties for certain sexual offenses committed against correction officers.

JUSTIFICATION

At present, NYS Penal Code treats forcible touching as a Class A Misdemeanor, defining it as intentionally touching the sexual or intimate parts of someone else for no reason or in order to receive sexual gratification. For inmates at correctional facilities who may have sentences lasting years or decades, the punishment for the crime is inadequate. This loophole allows perpetrators to commit these heinous acts without fear of serious repercussions, while the officer is often left with trauma and no meaningful avenues of justice.

The proposed legislation rectifies this by amending Section 130 of the NYS Penal Code to establish the crime of forcible touching against a correction officer, and would also significantly elevate the associated sexual misconduct charges against the perpetrator. This legislation will create stronger laws that will better protect Correction Officers in Westchester County and will help in the prosecution of those who abuse them.

HISTORY

This item is a new request for 2022.

2021-22 S.8027 – Codes
 A.8647 – Codes

Amend NYS Civil Service Rules to Increase Pool of Qualified Candidates

REQUEST

Westchester County respectfully requests that members of the Westchester Delegation to the State Legislature introduce and adopt legislation that amends NYS Civil Service requirements to help increase the pool of qualified candidates for civil service positions.

JUSTIFICATION

The Westchester County Police Reform & Reimagining Task Force was formed by County Executive George Latimer in June 2020 in accordance with Executive Order 203. The Task Force was made up of law enforcement, attorneys and key community stakeholders, seeking to implement positive reform within law enforcement agencies in Westchester County.

The Task Force's Qualification & Recruitment Working Group submitted recommendations that sought to "increase the pool of qualified candidates to be considered for open positions" and "expand the number of qualified diverse applicants by reducing unnecessary barriers such as age, bias, overemphasis of standardized test scores and other factors." Among the recommendations submitted by the Working Group called for revising NYS Civil Service Rules to:

1. Change the hiring age limits to include candidates up to the age of 40.
2. Broaden recruitment requirements by placing less emphasis on standardized test scores and basing the final decision on a full evaluation of all relevant factors, and allowing hiring departments to consider candidates from the top two score levels instead of only the top score.
3. Revise the "Rule of Three" to allow for the selection of up to 15 candidates in the top two scoring levels in order to increase the pool of candidates.
4. Increase the frequency of offering the civil service exam to every two years from every four years, or using a "continuous list" model.
5. Allow departments to access multiple civil service lists to include local and regional civil service lists, Spanish-speaker lists, and others.

Legislation including one or more of these changes would not only significantly expand the applicant pools for agencies in Westchester and throughout the state but would also make entry into law enforcement easier through the elimination of unnecessary delays and burdens for potential applicants.

HISTORY

This item is a new request for 2022. There is no legislation presently associated with this request.

Acquisition of North County Trailway by Westchester County

REQUEST

Westchester County urges the adoption of legislation (S.1138/A.4017) that authorizes the New York State Commissioner of General Services to convey the North County Trailway to the County for \$1.

JUSTIFICATION

Westchester County operates and maintains two recreational trailways spanning the county along a former railroad line from the Putnam County border to Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx. The trailways are a unique resource enjoyed by thousands of hikers, bicyclists, and park-goers each year. Located north of Interstate Highway I-287, the North County Trailway is leased to the County by the New York State Department of Transportation (“NYSDOT”) under a newly signed 25-year lease. South of I-287, the County both owns and operates the South County Trailway, having acquired this asset from New York State in 1993. We appreciate the assistance of NYSDOT thus far in making the North County Trailway available for residents of Westchester County and others nearby.

We believe the County’s interests are best served by the County’s acquisition of the North County Trailway for \$1. Although we have authorized a new 25-year lease with NYSDOT in order to continue public access, we think full County ownership of the North County Trailway would enable the County to more efficiently implement improvements, as well as simplify County planning and operations overall. Note that the County is currently undertaking a substantial rehabilitation of the North County Trailway, for which we have authorized bond financing of \$8.75 million. However, the lease requires the County to obtain New York State approval prior to constructing the improvements, thus adding another step to completing this upgrade. Other typical lease provisions - such as County defense and indemnification of the State - put responsibilities on the County that are equally satisfied by County ownership of the North County Trailway.

HISTORY

This item was requested in the 2020 and 2021 Joint State Legislative Packages.

2021-22 S.1138 – Investigations and Government Operations
 A.4017 – Government Operations

2019-20 S.5247 – Rules
 A.7207 – Governmental Operations

Installation of Climb Deterrent Fencing on Bridges

REQUEST

Westchester County urges the adoption of legislation (S.7310/A.8273) that requires the installation of climb deterrent fencing on all bridges under the jurisdiction of the New York State Bridge Authority

JUSTIFICATION

Suicide is a public health problem. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, suicide was the 2nd leading cause of death in the United States for individuals aged 10-34. As the pandemic continues, job loss, social isolation, and other factors have highlighted the deteriorating mental health for a growing number of individuals for a myriad of reasons, sometimes resulting in attempted or completed suicide. According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, bridges and other publicly accessible areas of significant height pose a risk for suicide attempts and despite increased investment in suicide prevention, education, and research by Westchester County, it still occurs on bridges throughout Westchester.

This legislation seeks to require the NYS Bridge Authority to install climb deterrent fencing on all bridges under their jurisdiction, including the Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge and Bear Mountain Bridge. Barrier 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 deterrent to an individual at risk, providing more time to get through the intense, often brief, moment of suicide crisis.

HISTORY

This item is a new request for 2022.

2021-22 S.7310 – Transportation
 A.8273 – Transportation

Tax Relief for Rent Controlled/Regulated Properties for Seniors or Disabled Individuals

REQUEST

Westchester County urges the adoption of legislation (S.4216/A.480) that allows localities to raise the income eligibility limits for the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) or Disabled Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) program to \$55,000 beginning on July 1, 2016.

JUSTIFICATION

Westchester County has one of the highest costs of living in the nation. Residents often spend a significant portion of their income on monthly rental expenses and the burdens of the COVID-19 pandemic have highlighted the underlying inequities of the rental market. Despite increased aid from the Municipal, County, State and Federal Government, it remains a serious issue, especially for our most vulnerable residents. The Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption is a program that can freeze the rents for senior citizens living in subsidized housing, however the current income eligibility limit for SCRIE and DRIE is \$50,000.

These vital programs help Westchester seniors by allowing eligible senior and disabled residents to remain in their homes and communities by keeping their rents affordable, however they have not adjusted for cost of living increases or inflation. SCRIE and DRIE freeze rents for low-income seniors and people with disabilities living in rent-regulated housing who pay one third or more of their income in rent. Both low-and middle-income residents are subject to the burden of escalating costs and often rely on a fixed income, while homeowners typically have their primary wealth invested in their property. Also, elderly and disabled residents are often burdened with higher-than average healthcare costs. Exempting low income seniors and the disabled from rent increases helps protect some of Westchester's most vulnerable residents from being forced to give up their homes.

HISTORY

This item is a new request for 2022.

2021-22 S.4216 – Aging
 A.480 – Aging

2019-20 S.3914 – Aging
 A.7843 – Aging

State Delegation Support List

Section III

State Delegation Support List

1. S.8135 (Mayer) - Establishes the Hurricane Ida relief fund and recovery program; provides financial assistance as compensation/reimbursement for property damage for uninsured or underinsured property not otherwise eligible for FEMA assistance or other federal, state or local disaster relief programs.
2. S.7582 (Mayer) Requires the examination of current and the recommendation of future standardized building code requirements for flood mitigation; adds the director of the office of emergency management and an individual with significant professional technical experience in flood mitigation in the built environment to the state fire prevention and building code council.
3. S.7530/A.4245 (Mayer/Otis, Abinanti) Relates to enhancing the state's flood mitigation and coastal resiliency activities to expand the types of climate adaptation and mitigation projects funded by the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) to include real property acquisition.
4. S.2988/A.5925 (Harckham, Reichlin-Melnick/Galef) Authorizes the department of transportation to conduct a study pertaining to proposed improvements of State Route 9A in the towns of Ossining and Mount Pleasant.
5. A.7462/S.6635 (Galef/Harckham) – Relates to including certain employees or volunteers of youth organizations whose primary purpose is to interact with youth through activities, events or other one on one group gatherings as mandated reporters.
6. A.6324 (Galef, Paulin, Abinanti) - Relates to municipal corporations within counties having a population of between three hundred ten thousand and three hundred thirteen thousand, or with a population of nine hundred forty-five thousand or more, according to the last decennial census.
7. A.2514 (Sayegh, Galef) – Relates to increasing foundation aid to certain 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.
8. A.8528/S.8033 (Sayegh, Galef, Paulin/Bailey) – Exempt diapers from all sales and use taxes to ensure that specifically adult and children's diapers (including disposable) are not subject to this tax by the counties/jurisdictions and follow the state exemption.
9. A.8533/S.7681 (Sayegh, Galef/Jackson) – Updates the census numbers used to calculate certain education funding to provide for greater equity among New York State school districts.
10. S.3052/A.5509 (Biaggi/Richardson) – Includes statistics on childbirth complications, fetal losses, other injuries and other maternity outcomes, along with racial makeup that hospitals and the Department of Health are currently required to provide.