

Amending The 2021 Ulster County Budget To Create A Criminal Justice Discrimination Support Referral Specialist – Human Rights Commission

Referred to: The Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee (Chairwoman Walter and Legislators Fabiano, Haynes, Heppner and Parete), and The Ways and Means Committee (Chairman Gavaris and Legislators Archer, Bartels, Haynes, Maio, Parete, Ronk, and Walter)

Chairwoman of the Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee, Eve Walter, offers the following:

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 410 of October 15, 2019 established the Ulster County Criminal Justice Reform Task Force (UC-CJRTF) which has set forth to evaluate existing and potential criminal justice programs, to ensure the best and most cost-effective delivery of services, and to explore opportunities for program expansion to help the greatest number of county residents who may be in need of services; and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Legislature is in receipt of, and has reviewed the report of the UC-CJRTF; and

WHEREAS, the report finds that based on the 2019 arrest and conviction data collected by the New York Department of Criminal Justice, the rate of arrest of Black individuals in Ulster County is 39% higher than that of Whites; this jumps to 101% higher for felonies and 238% higher for drug felonies; further, while 51% of arrests for Whites resulted in a sentence conviction, the rate is 72% for Blacks.; and

WHEREAS, as socio-demographics such as disability, income, sexuality etc. are not collected in arrest data potential discrimination based on these factors cannot be enumerated but likely exist; and

WHEREAS, measuring the true extent of discrimination experienced by individuals from police, attorneys, judges, probation and corrections officers is not possible; and

WHEREAS, while there are complaint processes in place for each area of the criminal justice system, most individuals are unaware of how to issue their complaints should any arise; and

WHEREAS, the Criminal Justice Reform Task Force identified the need for the county to provide assistance to any individual who feels they have been discriminated against by any employee of the criminal justice system including law enforcement, attorneys, judges, and corrections officers and who seek to properly report the incident; and

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WHEREAS, the UC-CJRTF has learned that the Office of the Commissioner of Human Rights receives numerous calls seeking precisely this information on a regular basis; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, a part-time Criminal Justice Discrimination Support Initiative Referral Specialist position will be created in the Human Rights Commission Budget to provide a support and referral system for community members who feel they have been discriminated against in our criminal justice system; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2021 Ulster County Budget is hereby amended as follows:

	<u>INCREASE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
AA-8040-3500-1400-1400 (App.#)	Part-Time Pay	\$ 8,057.00
AA-8040-3500-8000-8000 (App.#)	Retirement	\$ 1,344.00
AA-8040-3500-8010-8010 (App.#)	Social Security	\$ 617.00
AA-8040-3500-8020 (App.#)	Health Insurance	\$ 2,206.00
AA-9900-9900-3700 (Rev.#),	Appropriated Fund Balance	\$12,222.00

and move its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:

NOES:

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No Action Taken in Committee: Law Enforcement and Public Safety on September 1, 2021 with consent

Postponed in Committee: Law Enforcement and Public Safety on October 6, 2021 with consent

Postponed in Committee: Law Enforcement and Public Safety on November 3, 2021 with consent

No Action Taken in Committee: Law Enforcement and Public Safety on December 1, 2021 with consent

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

\$12,222.00 - ADDITIONAL 2021 APPROPRIATION DOLLARS

\$23,894.42 – ESTIMATED 2022 ANNUAL REGULAR PAY