



ULSTER LEGISLATIVE NEWS

COUNTY

ULSTER COUNTY NEWS INFORMATION

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY LEGISLAUTRE
244 FAIR STREET, 6TH FLOOR
KINGSTON, NY 12401

MEDIA CONTACT INFORMATION

• PHONE 845-340-3900
* EMAIL LegislativeNews@co.ulster.ny.us
• FAX 845-340-3651

Legislature.UlsterCountyNY.gov

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Ulster County Laws & Rules Committee Advances Changes to the Human Rights Law

(Kingston, NY) – In its June meeting the Laws, Rules & Government Services Committee has advanced changes to the Ulster County Charter that will provided needed updates to the County Human Rights Law and the role of the Commission and head of the Human Rights Department by approving a Resolution to set a public hearing on Proposed Local Law No. 6 of 2024.

Proposed Local Law No. 6 2024, introduced by Legislator Limina Grace Harmon (District 21 – Village of New Paltz) will update the County Human Rights law to clarify the responsibilities of the Department Head, a title change from Human Rights Commissioner to Director of Human Rights, and providing greater equity in appointing authority in order to greater represent the diverse communities of our County. Additionally, under Proposed Local Law No. 6 the members of the Human Rights Commission will elect their own Chair, where currently the County Executive chooses who shall lead the board.

During the Laws, Rules & Government Services Committee, Chair Peter Criswell introduced a friendly amendment to add gender expression to the diverse criteria of the make up of the board to further ensure better representation of the body, which was approved unanimously.

“As a former Human Rights Commissioner, these commonsense changes proposed by the Charter Revision Commission will allow the Department of Human Rights to be more responsive to the needs of our community as well as clarify responsibilities of the Board Commissioners and the Director. I hope the public will come to our July hearing on this measure in support of these modifications and vote in favor on their ballot in November,” said Legislator Harmon.

The legislature is anticipated to approve setting a public hearing for July 14, 2024 at 7:00 PM prior to the start of Legislative Session. The public will have the opportunity to provide their thoughts in person or in writing to the clerk by sending an email to yfab@co.ulster.ny.us. The full text of the Proposed Local Law can be found [here](#). As this is a change to the Ulster County Charter, this local law will need to be approved by Ulster County voters by referendum. If adopted by the Legislature, voters will find this question on the back of their ballot in November.

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