

# Warren County Board of Supervisors

## RESOLUTION NO. 417 OF 2016

**Resolution introduced by Supervisors Wood, Dickinson, Girard, Frasier, Brock, Seeber, Simpson, Vanselow, Montesi, Braymer and MacDonald**

### **URGING GOVERNOR CUOMO TO SIGN INTO LAW PUBLIC DEFENSE MANDATE RELIEF ACT (S.8114/ A.10706)**

WHEREAS, it is a fundamental right of all persons in the United States to be represented by counsel in all criminal prosecutions; and in the case of *Gideon vs. Wainwright*, 372 U.S. 335, the United States Supreme Court ruled that persons who were unable to afford counsel had a constitutional right to be defended by an appointed attorney paid by the State, and

WHEREAS, the New York State Senate and Assembly have passed historic legislation entitled Public Defense Mandate Relief Act (S.8114/A.10706) which will require New York State to reimburse counties for expenditures made fulfilling the state's obligation to provide representation for those financially unable to afford counsel commencing in 2017 and incrementally reaching 100% in 2023 and thereafter, and

WHEREAS, the Public Defense Mandate Relief Act (S.8114/A.10706) will give the Indigent Legal Service Office the authority "to adopt, promulgate, amend or rescind rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of [Executive Law 832], and

WHEREAS, the Public Defense Mandate Relief Act (S.8114/A.10706) also requires that the various counties and New York City receive an amount equal to the amount paid from the Indigent Legal Services Fund to the counties and NYC in March 2010, and

WHEREAS, New York State has previously entered into an agreement to settle the *Hurrell-Harring vs. State of New York* class action lawsuit and has begun to expend substantial amounts of State funds to create a more equitable and Constitutional system of representation in only the five settlement counties and creating an unequal system of justice in the remaining counties of the State, and

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WHEREAS, by entering into such agreement and funding additional services in only the five settlement counties, the State acknowledges that it is constitutionally required to fund public defense services for mandated representation, and

WHEREAS, requiring counties subject to a State-imposed tax cap to finance the State's obligation to provide public defense services imposes a significant, uncontrollable financial burden on counties dependent on real property taxes to fund needed services; both problems would be remedied under the Public Defense Mandate Relief Act (S.8114/A.10706) as passed by the New York State Senate and Assembly, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Warren County Board of Supervisors hereby strongly urges Governor Cuomo to sign the Public Defense Mandate Relief Act (S.8114/A.10706) when it is delivered to him, fulfilling the State's obligation under *Gideon vs. Wainwright*, 372 U.S. 335, relieving the taxpayers of Warren County and the other counties of the State and New York City to fund this State mandate, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Flanagan, Assembly Speaker Heastie, Senator Betty Little, Assemblyman Dan Stec, the New York State Office of Indigent Legal Services (ILS), the New York State Defenders Association (NYSDA), the Chief Defenders Association of New York (CDANY), and the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC).