RESOLUTION NO. 2026058

RE: MEMORIALIZATION URGING PASSAGE OF NEW YORK SENATE BILL S.8462 AND NEW YORK ASSEMBLY BILL A.8908 BY THE NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE

Legislators MUNN, VALDES SMITH, ALEXANDER, ARNOFF, BREDLI, DRAGO, KAUL, KEARNEY, LAWLER, REDL, RHODES, SHAH and WINSBY offer the following and move its adoption:

WHEREAS, the Mandating End of Lawless Tactics (MELT) Act (S.8462/A.8908) would require all law enforcement officers, including federal immigration enforcement agents, operating in New York State to wear clearly visible uniforms, display name badges, and show agency-identifying apparel during civilian enforcement actions; and

WHEREAS, the use of masks, face coverings, and plainclothes attire by federal agents during immigration enforcement operations has created widespread fear and confusion in communities across New York State, undermining public trust in law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the Dutchess County Legislature is committed to public safety, the rule of law, accountable government, and the protection of strong families and healthy communities; and

WHEREAS, the ability of the public to identify law enforcement officers acting in an official capacity is a fundamental principle of transparency and accountability in a democratic society; and

WHEREAS, the concealment of identity by agents of the federal government during civilian enforcement actions is inconsistent with the standards expected of law enforcement in a free and open society, and echoes the tactics of authoritarian regimes rather than those of a constitutional republic; and

WHEREAS, there have been documented reports of individuals impersonating ICE and other federal law enforcement officers to commit robberies, assaults, and other crimes, demonstrating that the use of masked, unidentified agents creates a serious and tangible public safety risk; and

WHEREAS, the Dutchess County Legislature recognizes that immigrant and non-immigrant communities alike are living in fear as a result of enforcement actions carried out by masked, unidentified agents, causing residents to withdraw from public life and avoid seeking essential services, including healthcare, education, and access to the courts; and

WHEREAS, the ability of individuals to seek legal recourse for misconduct by law enforcement officers is severely hampered when those officers cannot be identified, effectively shielding agents from accountability for their actions; and

WHEREAS, the MELT Act includes reasonable exemptions for legitimate safety needs, including medical-grade masks, protective gear for fire and smoke, water rescue equipment, cold weather protection during declared emergencies, and tactical face coverings for SWAT operations; and

WHEREAS, the State of California has already enacted comparable legislation prohibiting the masking of law enforcement officers, including federal immigration agents, during civilian enforcement operations, demonstrating that such protections are legally and practically achievable; and

WHEREAS, the allocation of tens of billions of dollars in new federal funding to expand ICE operations makes the need for robust transparency and accountability measures all the more urgent; and

WHEREAS, the MELT Act reflects the foundational democratic principle that when government exercises power over the people, the people have the right to know who is acting in their name;

WHEREAS, every level of government has a responsibility to protect the civil liberties, due process rights, and constitutional protections of all persons within its jurisdiction, regardless of immigration status; and

WHEREAS, Dutchess County holds a unique place in constitutional history as the site of New York State's ratification of the United States Constitution, and its elected officials are sworn to uphold principles of due process, accountability, transparency, and the rule of law; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Dutchess County Legislature hereby urges the New York State Senate and Assembly to approve New York Senate Bill S8462 and Assembly Bill A8908; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to New York State Governor Kathy Hochul, New York State Senators Michelle Hinchey and Rob Rolison, and New York State Assembly Members Sarahana Shrestha, Jonathan G. Jacobson, Anil Beephan, Jr., and Didi Barrett.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

☒ NO FISCAL IMPACT PROJECTED

APPROPRIATION RESOLUTIONS

(To be completed by requesting department)

Total Current Year Cost $ _____

Total Current Year Revenue $ _____
and Source

Source of County Funds *(check one)*: ☐ Existing Appropriations, ☐ Contingency,
☐ Transfer of Existing Appropriations, ☐ Additional Appropriations, ☐ Other *(explain)*.

Identify Line Items(s):

Related Expenses: Amount $ _____
Nature/Reason:

Anticipated Savings to County: _____

Net County Cost (this year): _____
Over Five Years: _____

Additional Comments/Explanation:

Prepared by: Kristofer Munn _____ Prepared On: 3/13/26