MEMORANDUM

TO: Legislators, Directors, Staff and Media

FROM: Jack Moffitt, Clerk of the Legislature

DATE: February 13, 2020

RE: Matter of Importance – File No. 20-0088

20-0088 - Enact a Local Law to Repeal Local Law No. 9 of 2019 (Intro. No. 297 of 2019), Entitled "Prohibited Harassment of a Police Officer, Peace Officer or First Responder in Monroe County" – As a Matter of Importance – Democratic Minority Leader Vincent R. Felder and Legislator Karla F. Boyce

This referral was not made to committee at the preceding meeting of the Legislature on February 11, 2020, but has been determined by President Dr. Joe Carbone to be of sufficient importance to warrant referral between Legislative meetings, pursuant to Section 545-24 (C) of the Rules of the Monroe County Legislature.

Attachments
February 13, 2020

To The Honorable
Monroe County Legislature
39 West Main Street
Rochester, New York 14614

RE: Enact a Local Law to Repeal Local Law No. 9 of 2019 (Intro. No. 297 of 2019),
Entitled “Prohibited Harassment of a Police Officer, Peace Officer or First
Responder in Monroe County”

Honorable Legislators:

Last year, this Honorable Body adopted a Republican sponsored local law on a party-line
vote, aimed at further deterring harassment towards first-responders. The intent of the sponsors
was to improve the safety of first-responders. They recognized that first-responders answer the
call each day – often putting themselves in harm's way. They sought to provide additional
protections to ensure they return to home safely at the end of each day.

While the intentions behind the local law were genuine, there were valid, unforeseen
concerns and consequences. Never was the intention to undermine police-community relations
nor disparage minorities and persons of color. These negative impacts undermine the true intent
of the law, which was to improve the overall safety of the community and first-responders.

Public feedback holds a significant weight on the matters considered by this Honorable
Body. In the month that lapsed between when this local law and first introduced (October 8,
2019) and its adoption (November 12, 2019), there was limited feedback with only two
individuals speaking at the Public Hearing held prior to adoption. It was not until after adoption
of the local law that this Honorable Body received much of the negative feedback. Of additional
concern, the perceived vagueness of the local law by the public and law enforcement could
potentially criminalize constitutionally protected conduct.

Therefore, in light of additional legal research and further community conversations, we
are recommending that this Honorable Body repeal Local Law No. 9 of 2019 (Intro. No. 297 of
2019), entitled “Prohibited Harassment of a Police Officer, Peace Officer or First Responder in
Monroe County.”

The specific legislative actions required are:

1. Schedule and hold a Public Hearing on the proposed Local Law.
2. Enact a Local Law to Repeal Local Law entitled “Prohibited Harassment of a Police
   Officer, Peace Officer or First Responder in Monroe County.”
This action is a Type II Action pursuant to 6 NYCRR § 617.5 and is not subject to review under the State Environmental Quality Review Act.

This proposal will have no associated cost and no impact upon the expenditures and revenues of the Monroe County Budget.

Respectfully Submitted,

Vincent R. Felder  
Minority Leader  
District 22

Karla F. Boyce  
Monroe County Legislator  
District 5
By Legislators _______ and _______

Intro. No. _____

LOCAL LAW NO. ___ OF 2020

ENACTING LOCAL LAW TO REPEAL LOCAL LAW NO. 9 OF 2019 (INTRO. NO. 297 OF 2019), ENTITLED “PROHIBITED HARASSMENT OF A POLICE OFFICER, PEACE OFFICER OR FIRST RESPONDER IN MONROE COUNTY”

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF MONROE COUNTY, as follows:

Section 1. Monroe County Local Law No. 9 of 2019 (Intro No. 297 of 2019), entitled “Prohibited Harassment of a Police Officer, Peace Officer or First Responder in Monroe County,” is hereby repealed.

Section 2. This local law shall take effect immediately upon filing in the office of the Secretary of State as provided by Section 27 of the Municipal Home Rule Law.

Agenda/Charter Committee; February 24, 2020 – CV: ___ - ___
File No. 20-_______,LL

ADOPTION: Date: _______ Vote: _______

ACTION BY THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

APPROVED: _______________ VETOED: _______________

SIGNATURE: ___________________ DATE: __________

EFFECTIVE DATE OF LOCAL LAW: ___________________