



Kenneth W. Jenkins
Westchester County Executive

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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COUNTY EXECUTIVE KEN JENKINS PARTNERS WITH LEGISLATOR JEWEL WILLIAMS JOHNSON

AND COUNTY DEPARTMENTS TO HOST THIRD BIRTH EQUITY TOWN HALL

Pushing the Needle Forward to Improve Maternal Health Outcomes

(White Plains, NY) – Westchester County Executive Ken Jenkins, in partnership with Chair of the Board of Legislators Sub-Committee on Health, Legislator Jewel Williams Johnson, the Westchester County Department of Health, Office for Women, and the Women’s Advisory Board, will host the third installment of the Birth Equity Improvement Project – **“Pushing the Needle Forward” Town Hall on Thursday, June 5, from 2 to 5 p.m.** at the **Westchester County Center**, 198 Central Park Avenue, White Plains.

This event builds on the County’s ongoing commitment to address maternal health disparities and advance equitable birth outcomes through collaboration, data sharing and community engagement.

Jenkins said: “Ensuring that every mother and baby receives equitable, high-quality care is one of the most urgent challenges facing our community. Together with Legislator Jewel Williams Johnson and our dedicated County departments, we are committed to pushing the needle forward on birth equity — because the health of families is the foundation of a thriving Westchester.”

Williams Johnson said: “Whether we frame it as birth equity or respectful maternal healthcare, the truth remains: too many mothers—especially Black and Brown women—are still fighting to be heard, treated with dignity, and to safely bring life into this world. This work is deeply personal to me, and I am grateful that we now have the full cohort of birthing hospitals participating in our town hall series. With Northern Westchester Hospital and Montefiore New Rochelle joining us and presenting, we are taking another powerful step in our county toward transparency, accountability, and lasting systemic change.”

Westchester County Department of Health Commissioner Dr. Sherlita Amler said: “Maternal and child health equity is a critical public health issue. Black and Brown women are three times more likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause than white women, and the vast majority of these deaths are preventable. Multiple factors ranging from variation in quality health care and underlying chronic conditions contribute to this disparity. As Commissioner of Health, I am proud of the meaningful steps that we are taking, including our

work through the Center for Women's Health Equity at Westchester Medical Center, to foster and support healthy women, healthy pregnancies, and healthy births here in Westchester.”

Westchester County Office for Women Director Robi Schlaff said: “With the commitment of the County Executive and the County Department of Health, the gap in maternal health outcomes for birthing mothers in the County is narrowing. The investment of funds, county workforce and attention to this matter is a testament to the County’s dedication to the health of all of its residents.”

The program will include:

- Updates from local hospitals on birth equity initiatives
- Maternal mortality and birth outcome data from the New York State Department of Health
- Overview of local perinatal wellness resources
- Community partner testimonials and advocacy spotlights
- A live Q&A session to engage the public

Free registration is available at: bit.ly/3rdBirthEquityTownhall

Parking fees will be waived, and light refreshments will be served.