

RESOLUTION NO. 2013179

RE: IN SUPPORT OF 2013 FAIR ELECTIONS ACT

Legislators TYNER, BLALOCK, DOXSEY, and WHITE offer the following and move its adoption:

WHEREAS, dozens of state legislators here in New York have recently been arrested or incarcerated, with many linked to money/bribery/campaign donation scandals due to the corrosive and pervasive influence of wealthy special interests in our state legislature, and

WHEREAS, our elected officials should be chosen not on the basis of their access to great wealth or their ability to raise large sums of money; they should be chosen on the basis of what they would do in office as evidenced by their public record-- what they have said and what they have done; our current system corrupts the process; presently, the money a candidate possesses or acquires enables them to overwhelm and even distort the dialogue with the public, and

WHEREAS, it is essential that we increase transparency, strengthen enforcement, impose stronger penalties and ensure independent investigations to safeguard our electoral process; we must strive to level the playing field for all who wish to participate in our democratic republic by campaigning for public office, and

WHEREAS, on May 7th the New York State Assembly passed the 2013 Fair Elections Act (A.4980-C/S.4705), co-sponsored by Assemblyman Kevin Cahill and state Senator Terry Gipson; this legislation removes the influence of special interest money, give elections back to the people, and restore confidence in our electoral process by establishing optional public financing for election campaigns that cover all statewide offices, state legislative offices, and constitutional convention delegates, and

WHEREAS, polls of New York voters have consistently shown for decades that the vast, overwhelming majority of citizens in our state strongly support the campaign finance reform in the 2013 Fair Elections Act; an October 2000 Zogby poll even found that over sixty percent of registered Republican voters across New York State strongly support Clean Money Clean Elections campaign finance reform, and

WHEREAS, the 2013 Fair Elections Act would reform the system by allowing candidates for state office who meet the necessary requirements and reach the eligibility threshold in their fundraising to receive matching contributions of \$6 for every \$1 they raise on contributions of up to \$250; it would require candidates to build a broad coalition

of contributors by requiring a certain number of small-dollar donors -- natural persons from a candidate's district -- to ensure that large-dollar donors do not have undue influence, and participating candidates may raise private money subject to a \$2,000 per contributor limitation, but only the first \$250 will be matched, and

WHEREAS, candidates who choose not to participate in the public financing system would be subject to the current contribution and receipt limitations; however, the 2013 Fair Elections Act would require the disclosure of bundlers of campaign contributions, and

WHEREAS, underscoring the importance of the substance of campaigns and not the money that funds them, candidates receiving public financing under the 2013 Fair Elections Act would be required to participate in at least one debate before the primary election and one debate before the general election; these debates would be open to all candidates, regardless of funding, and

WHEREAS, the 2013 Fair Elections Act provides mechanisms for funding these changes including an income tax check-off of \$5 that would be deposited into the newly created "New York State Campaign Finance Fund" and an additional 10 percent surcharge on recoveries from fraudulent practices relating to stocks, bonds and other securities; if the Campaign Finance Fund lacks sufficient money properly certified claims would be paid from the general fund, and

WHEREAS, the 2013 Fair Elections Act creates the position of an independent enforcement counsel, appointed by a five-member Fair Elections Board, who would be charged with enforcing all campaign finance laws, rules and regulations, and it would require expanded disclosure of independent expenditures and electioneering communications, and therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Dutchess County Legislature strongly urges that the New York State Senate pass the 2013 Fair Elections Act (S.4705) and that Governor Andrew Cuomo sign it into law, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor Andrew Cuomo, the leaders of the New York State Legislature, and Dutchess County's delegation of state legislators.

STATE OF NEW YORK

ss:

COUNTY OF DUTCHESS

This is to certify that I, the undersigned Clerk of the Legislature of the County of Dutchess have compared the foregoing resolution with the original resolution now on file in the office of said clerk, and which was adopted by said Legislature on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2013, and that the same is a true and correct transcript of said original resolution and of the whole thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of said Legislature this 10th day of June, 2013.

CAROLYN MORRIS, CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE