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New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-01

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO COMBAT AUTO THEFTS

WHEREAS, municipal governments of all sizes across the country have experienced a surge in auto thefts, carjackings, and related criminal activity, impacting the safety of communities, and straining law enforcement resources at the local level; and

WHEREAS, the National Insurance Crime Bureau has reported that more than one million vehicles were stolen nationwide, with thefts rising from 1,008,756 in 2022 to 1,020,729 in 2023; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey State Police reported more than 16,000 auto thefts in 2023 and as of October 2024, according to the New Jersey State Police, 3,000 cars have been reported stolen; and

WHEREAS, as of October 2024, according to the New Jersey State Police, there has been 53 carjackings; and

WHEREAS, local elected officials have a responsibility to protect the health, safety, and property of communities as well as maintaining good governance, order, and security for the residents; and

WHEREAS, the increasing value of automotive parts and vehicles has contributed to the escalation in auto thefts, which adversely impacts public safety, raises insurance premiums, and strains local law enforcement resources; and

WHEREAS, as elected officials, we recognize the critical role of collaboration among municipal, state, and federal government agencies, alongside law enforcement, to deter theft, prevent the sale of stolen property, and reduce auto theft through strengthened penalties and regulatory measures; and

WHEREAS, these measures should include reinstating the National Auto Theft Bureau, to assist local, state and federal law enforcement to share information in real time; provide training and funding local law enforcement to combat car theft; and review of criminal penalties.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, supports continued federal actions intended to strengthen vehicle security and enhance protection against auto theft nationwide, thereby improving public safety and reducing burdens on local governments and law enforcement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to U.S. Senator Cory Booker, U.S. Senator George Helmy, our representatives in Congress, the President of the United States, the President-elect of the United States, all members of the New Jersey State Legislature, and the Governor of the State of New Jersey.

Sponsors:

Hon. Lawrence F. Jacobs
Mayor, Bedminster Township

Hon. Matthew Moench
Mayor, Bridgewater Township

Hon. Jennifer Asay
Mayor, Bernards Township

Hon. Kevin P. Welsh
Mayor, Borough of Far Hills

Hon. Mary Jane Canose
Mayor, Borough of Bernardsville

Hon. Mark Corigliano
Mayor, Borough of Peapack and Gladstone

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-02

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE TO PASS LEGISLATION PERMITTING MUNICIPALITIES TO IMPOSE IMPACT FEES FOR INCREASED SCHOOL COSTS AND INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS ON DEVELOPERS OF NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS

WHEREAS, New Jersey law prohibits municipalities from charging impact fees to offset the costs associated with increased demands on schools as a result of residential development, leaving the financial burden to be borne by local taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey law limits municipalities' ability to charge all necessary off-tract improvement fees to cover costs associated with increased water and sewer demand and roadway improvements as a result of residential development, leaving the financial burden to be borne by local taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, over the last several decades New Jersey municipalities have experienced increased residential development, due in large part to the excellent quality of life, geographic location, and superior public school system; and

WHEREAS, residential development will continue throughout the state as municipalities continue efforts to meet their affordable housing obligations; and

WHEREAS, this experience occurring across the state has grown demand for new school services and infrastructure increases; and

WHEREAS, it is fair and reasonable to shift some of the financial effects of residential development on local public schools and municipal infrastructure from the taxpayers to the developers whose projects clearly and directly create the need for additional funding.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, urges state lawmakers to pass legislation permitting municipalities to enact ordinances imposing impact fees for necessary public-school improvements and expansion on the developers who build the new housing in their communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the League urges state lawmakers to pass legislation permitting municipalities to enact ordinances imposing off tract improvement fees for all necessary municipal water, sewer, roadway, and traffic improvements on the developers who build the new housing in their communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the members of the New Jersey General Assembly, the New Jersey State Senate, Department of Community Affairs Commissioner Suarez, Department of Education Acting Commissioner Kevin Dehmer, and Governor Phil Murphy.

Sponsors:

Hon. Stephen Dalina
Mayor, Township of Monroe

Hon. Brian Wahler
Mayor, Township of Piscataway

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-03

**RESOLUTION CALLING FOR INCREASED HOUSING SUBSIDIES FOR PERSONS
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

WHEREAS, the special needs population is one of the most vulnerable components of our society due to their disabilities and needs for assistance; and

WHEREAS, housing opportunities for special needs persons are limited, due to the generally high demand for and cost of housing in the state, due to the particular type of housing suitable for such persons, and due to the limited supply of such housing; and

WHEREAS, special needs persons are frequently lower-income persons, which increases their difficulty in procuring housing.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, urges lawmakers to give increased consideration for providing housing opportunities for the special needs population in the form of housing subsidy funding for group homes for qualified individuals;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the members of the New Jersey General Assembly, the New Jersey State Senate, Governor Murphy, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, and the New Jersey Department of Human Services.

Sponsors:

Hon. Thomas “Ace” Gallagher
Mayor, Hanover Twp.

Hon. John Farramosca
Committeeman, Hanover Twp.

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-04

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR INCREASED INITIATIVES TO REDUCE ENERGY DEMAND AND THE USE OF FOSSIL FUELS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey has in recent years launched various initiatives to reduce the use of fossil fuels, due to their effect upon climate conditions and air pollution; and

WHEREAS, the state has included among these initiatives measures that promote energy efficiency and mandate the installation of electric vehicle charging equipment with new development; and

WHEREAS, new development typically increases the need for energy and the likelihood of increased usage of fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, the state has recently released fourth-round affordable housing obligations that will substantially increase new development activity; and

WHEREAS, the state has recognized, in its recent mandate for the installation of electric vehicle charging equipment, that new development presents opportunity to mitigate the increase in energy demand and the use of fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, additional opportunities exist to reduce the use of fossil fuels and conserve energy through such means as mandating the use or partial use of alternative energy sources, such as wind and solar power, or the use of more energy-efficient heating and air-conditioning systems, with new development; and

WHEREAS, the provision of alternative transportation options for substantial new development could also reduce energy demand and the use of fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS, the benefits of such initiatives and requirements must be balanced against their costs.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, urges lawmakers to consider the following measures through new legislation and/or funding priorities:

- 1) Encourage that new development over a certain threshold install alternative energy facilities such as solar panels, wind turbines, or other facilities that are not reliant upon fossil fuels, to address a minimum portion of the development's energy needs;
- 2) Mandate that new development over a certain threshold install higher efficiency heating and air-conditioning systems;
- 3) Promote the provision of alternative transportation options for new developments over a certain threshold;
- 4) Provide certain incentives for the location of substantial new developments near existing alternative transportation facilities; and

- 5) Provide increased funding for the implementation of the foregoing, through grants, low- or no-interest loans, use of affordable housing trust funds, and other means.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the members of the New Jersey General Assembly, the New Jersey State Senate, Governor Murphy, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, and the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

Sponsors:

Hon. Thomas “Ace” Gallagher
Mayor, Hanover Twp.

Hon. John Farramosca
Committeeman, Hanover Twp.

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-05

RESOLUTION URGING EXPEDITED PROCESSING OF ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION GRANTS AND ENHANCED LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT

WHEREAS, in the battle to combat climate change, electric vehicles (EVs) have many environmental benefits, including reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by up to 50% compared to conventional vehicles over their lifetime, significant improvement in local air quality through elimination of tailpipe emissions, decreased dependence on fossil fuels, enhanced energy security, and reduced noise pollution in urban and suburban areas; and

WHEREAS, the development of charging infrastructure is essential to support the ever-increasing use of electric vehicles, as evidenced by a projected 300% increase in EV adoption in New Jersey by 2025, the state's goal of 330,000 registered EVs by 2025 and 2 million by 2035, the need for approximately 40,000 public charging stations to support these goals, and the current insufficient charging infrastructure creating "range anxiety" among potential EV adopters; and

WHEREAS, numerous grant applications and awards for charging stations which are vital for enhancing accessibility and convenience for EV users have been pending for months at New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, specifically over \$35 million in "It Pay\$ to Plug In" program applications awaiting review, community charging station grants for underserved communities facing extended delays, municipal fleet electrification projects stalled in the approval process, and fast-charging corridor applications pending since the previous fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, delays in the process hinder progress toward this critical infrastructure initiative and slow the state's advancement toward a cleaner environment by preventing timely installation of planned charging stations, discouraging potential applicants from pursuing future grants, impeding municipal efforts to meet sustainability goals, causing potential loss of matching funds from private partners, and delaying achievement of state environmental justice objectives; and

WHEREAS, legislative oversight is necessary to ensure accountability and efficiency in the NJ DEP's approval processes for charging station grant applications through regular progress reports to the Legislature, establishment of maximum review periods for applications, creation of transparent tracking systems for pending applications, and implementation of streamlined approval procedures.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, urge the NJ Department of Environmental Protection to expedite the review and award of all pending grants for electric vehicle charging stations across the state, establish a maximum 90-day review period for all charging station grant applications, create an online portal for real-time application status tracking, increase staffing resources dedicated to application review, and implement a streamlined review process for standardized applications; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the League calls for increased legislative oversight of the charging station approval process through quarterly reports to the Legislature on application processing metrics, regular public hearings on program implementation, annual audits of the grant approval process, and creation of an oversight committee including municipal stakeholders; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor of the State of New Jersey, the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the President of the New Jersey State Senate, the Speaker of the New Jersey General Assembly, the Chair of the Senate Environment and Energy Committee, the Chair of the Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee, and all New Jersey State Legislators.

Sponsor:

Hon. Brian Wahler
Mayor, Twp. of Piscataway

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-06

**IMPROVING COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN UTILITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES
FOR INFRASTRUCTURE WORK**

WHEREAS, public utilities regularly perform essential infrastructure work within municipal rights-of-way and on municipal property throughout New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, such utility work often impacts municipal operations, public safety, traffic flow, road conditions, and quality of life for residents; and

WHEREAS, effective communication between utilities and municipalities is crucial for coordinating construction schedules, managing public safety concerns, and minimizing disruption to local communities; and

WHEREAS, municipalities often face challenges in obtaining timely information about planned utility work, emergency repairs, and restoration schedules; and

WHEREAS, improved coordination could prevent unnecessary road openings, reduce costs, and better serve the public interest; and

WHEREAS, many municipalities have reported instances where lack of adequate notice or coordination has resulted in newly paved roads being opened, conflicting construction schedules, and public safety concerns; and

WHEREAS, standardized communication protocols and enhanced notification requirements would benefit both utilities and municipalities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, does hereby urge the creation of a comprehensive utility notification system that requires all utility companies operating within municipal boundaries to provide minimum 30-day advance notice for planned work, immediate notification for emergency repairs, weekly status updates for ongoing projects, and final completion notices within 48 hours of work completion; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the League supports the development of a standardized digital platform for utilities to submit work plans, schedules, and updates to affected municipalities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that utilities should be required to coordinate with municipal paving schedules and observe any moratorium on opening newly paved roads except in emergencies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the League advocates for the establishment of a working group comprising utility representatives, municipal officials, and state regulators to develop best practices for communication and coordination; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the League supports legislation requiring utilities to provide detailed restoration plans and timelines when infrastructure work impacts municipal property or rights-of-way; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Governor of the State of New Jersey, the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs, the President of the Board of Public Utilities, and all members of the New Jersey State Legislature.

Sponsor:

Hon. Brian Wahler
Mayor, Twp. of Piscataway

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-07

URGING LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENT TO *N.J.S.A. 43:21-4* FOR UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS REGARDING SCHOOL CROSSING GUARDS AND SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS-CLASS III

WHEREAS, the New Jersey State League of Municipalities acknowledges the essential services provided by School Crossing Guards and Special Law Enforcement Officers-Class III (SLEO III) in ensuring the safety of students during school hours; and

WHEREAS, these individuals are employed by local police departments and not directly by educational institutions, thereby creating a loophole under *N.J.S.A. 43:21-4* that allows them to be eligible for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits during recess periods, unlike their counterparts employed by educational institutions who are ineligible for such benefits; and

WHEREAS, these recess periods include, but are not limited to, summer and winter breaks, one-to-two-day holidays, and professional development days such as those during the NJEA Convention, with a reasonable assurance of employment immediately following these breaks; and

WHEREAS, the current law leads to inequitable UI benefit eligibility and imposes undue financial burdens on municipal budgets funded by taxpayers, contrasting sharply with the legislative intent to streamline fiscal responsibility and ensure equity in public service employment; and

WHEREAS, the situation necessitates a legislative review and amendment to ensure that UI benefits are allocated appropriately and fairly, reflecting the specific employment conditions of School Crossing Guards and SLEO III, who function within the framework of non-professional educational support during regular school sessions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, urgently requests the New Jersey Legislature to amend *N.J.S.A. 43:21-4* and any other relevant laws and regulations to address this significant discrepancy in unemployment insurance eligibility for School Crossing Guards and Special Law Enforcement Officers-Class III, ensuring that those with a reasonable assurance of returning to their roles post-recess are not unfairly granted UI benefits; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that such amendments should aim to foster fiscal prudence, legislative clarity, and fairness among similar categories of school-related employment, thereby safeguarding municipal resources and upholding the principles of equitable employment practices within our communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Governor of New Jersey, all members of the New Jersey Legislature, Department of Community Affairs, and Department of Labor to advocate for expedited legislative action to rectify this oversight, thereby enhancing the integrity of the Unemployment Insurance system and supporting the dedicated personnel who contribute to the safety and security of our educational environments.

Sponsors:

Hon. Peter Melchionne
Mayor, Twp. of Wyckoff

Hon. Peter Calamari
Mayor, Twp. of Washington (Bergen)

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-08

RESOLUTION URGING LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENT TO *N.J.S.A. 43:15A-25.2(a)* REGARDING PENSION CALCULATION FOR MULTIPLE POSITION PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

WHEREAS, the New Jersey State League of Municipalities recognizes the critical role that municipalities and school districts play in providing essential services to the residents of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, municipalities, particularly smaller ones, often rely on dedicated employees who serve in multiple capacities within their local governments or school districts to ensure efficient operations and delivery of services; and

WHEREAS, under the current provisions of *N.J.S.A. 43:15A-25.2(a)*, public employees who hold more than one office, position, or employment covered by the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) after May 21, 2010, are eligible for membership in PERS based only on one of their positions, specifically the highest-salaried one; and

WHEREAS, the current interpretation of this statute by the PERS Board of Trustees (hereafter referred to as the PERS Board) and the courts, as demonstrated in the recent appellate case of *Gail Krzyzczuk v. Board of Trustees, Public Employees' Retirement System*, restricts public employees from having their entire workday count towards their pension, despite working full-time hours in multiple roles within a single municipality or school district; and

WHEREAS, the original legislative intent of this restriction is believed to have been to prevent individuals from enrolling in PERS multiple times across various public employers; however, it has been applied in a manner that negatively impacts employees who serve full-time hours across multiple roles within a single jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, this restriction creates a situation in which public employees who have served diligently for years, under the assumption that their pension would reflect the full scope of their responsibilities, find themselves eligible for pension benefits based solely on the highest-salaried portion of their work, a result that is both inequitable and demoralizing for dedicated public servants; and

WHEREAS, municipalities and school districts, particularly smaller ones, were often unaware of this restriction, and many have been operating under the assumption that employees' pension calculations would reflect the totality of their work, not just the highest salaried position; and

WHEREAS, this issue also extends to school employees covered under the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund (TPAF), who similarly serve in multiple roles but only receive pension benefits based on their highest salaried position, ignoring the full scope of their professional contributions; and

WHEREAS, amending the statutory language in *N.J.S.A. 43:15A-25.2(a)* to allow the combination of part-time positions at a single employer, totaling no more than the standard full-

time hours per week for said employer, into a single employment for the purposes of pension calculations, would more accurately reflect the actual workload of these employees and provide a more fair and comprehensive pension benefit; and

WHEREAS, this legislative amendment would also enhance the ability of municipalities and school districts to attract and retain skilled professionals by offering more competitive pension benefits, support the operational efficiency of local governments, and reduce the need to hire multiple part-time employees, thus ensuring a more efficient allocation of resources; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey State League of Municipalities believes that this change would provide significant relief and operational benefits to municipalities and school districts across the state, particularly in smaller communities where attracting and retaining talent is a constant challenge.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, that we urge the Legislature to amend *N.J.S.A. 43:15A-25.2(a)* to change the phrase “only one of the offices, positions, or employments held concurrently” to “only one employment held concurrently,” thereby allowing the combination of part-time positions at a single employer, not exceeding the standard full-time hours per week, into a single employment for the purposes of pension calculations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this amendment will not only provide equitable treatment to employees but also promote operational efficiency and competitiveness for municipalities and school districts in New Jersey; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall be transmitted to the Governor of the State of New Jersey, the President of the New Jersey Senate, the Speaker of the New Jersey General Assembly, all members of the New Jersey Legislature, and Department of Treasury for consideration and support of this much-needed legislative amendment.

Sponsors:

Hon. Peter Melchionne
Mayor, Twp. of Wyckoff

Hon. Peter Calamari
Mayor, Twp. of Washington (Bergen)

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-09

**RESOLUTION URGING MODERNIZATION OF CERTIFICATION
EXAMINATIONS FOR MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS**

WHEREAS, municipal officials in the State of New Jersey, including Registered Municipal Clerks, Certified Municipal Finance Officers, Certified Public Works Managers, Certified Tax Collectors, and Qualified Purchasing Agents, are required by statute to obtain certifications through examinations held under the oversight of the Director of the Division of Local Government Services (DLGS); and

WHEREAS, these certifications are mandated by statutes, specifically *N.J.S.A. 40A:9-133.2* for Registered Municipal Clerks, *N.J.S.A. 40A:9-140.2(a)* for Certified Municipal Finance Officers, *N.J.S.A. 40A:9-154.6b(b)* for Certified Public Works Managers, *N.J.S.A. 9-145.2(a)* for Certified Tax Collectors, and *N.J.S.A. 40A:11-9(b)(7)* for Qualified Purchasing Agents; and

WHEREAS, these statutes require the DLGS Director to hold certification examinations semiannually and additionally at times deemed appropriate, with current regulations under the New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C.) in alignment with these statutes; and

WHEREAS, as currently administered, certification examinations are offered only twice per year, in person, and in a paper format, which limits flexibility and accessibility for municipal officials who must balance work obligations with certification requirements; and

WHEREAS, advancements in technology have enabled other professional certification exams to be conducted securely online at professional testing centers, such as Prometric and Kaplan, which offer flexible scheduling, multiple locations, and reliable, timely processing of exam results; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey State licensure exams for professions such as Certified Public Accountants (CPAs), real estate agents, and professional engineers, as well as national standards for professional certifications and license such as medical boards, now utilize online testing services to provide accessible, on-demand examinations that accommodate varying schedules and geographic needs of candidates; and

WHEREAS, transitioning these municipal certification examinations to a modern, online testing model would enhance accessibility for municipal officials across New Jersey, reduce the time and resources associated with travel, and allow for increased frequency and flexibility in scheduling, thereby supporting efficient municipal governance; and

WHEREAS, a more accessible testing framework would also support professional development, attract new candidates to the public sector, and improve overall municipal staffing by enabling municipal employees to obtain certifications at a pace that aligns with evolving municipal needs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the New Jersey State League of Municipalities in general conference assembled, that the State Legislature, in collaboration with the DLGS, is urged to consider options for modernizing certification examinations for Registered Municipal Clerks,

Certified Municipal Finance Officers, Certified Public Works Managers, Certified Tax Collectors, and Qualified Purchasing Agents to allow for testing through online platforms available at professional testing centers, ensuring exams are accessible and held at more frequent, convenient times throughout the year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this modernization should align with best practices in the field of professional licensing and certification in New Jersey and nationwide, providing flexibility, security, and ease of access for all current and prospective municipal officials seeking certification; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution shall be transmitted to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services, Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs, the Governor of the State of New Jersey, and members of the New Jersey Legislature, to encourage support for this initiative as a means to better serve municipalities and the residents of New Jersey.

Sponsors:

Hon. Peter Melchionne
Mayor, Twp. of Wyckoff

Hon. Peter Calamari
Mayor, Twp. of Washington (Bergen)

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-10

**RESOLUTION URGING LEGISLATIVE ACTION TO SIMPLIFY AND
STANDARDIZE VENDOR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS REGARDING
BUSINESS RESTRICTIONS WITH IRAN, RUSSIA, AND BELARUS**

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey has enacted laws restricting business entities from engaging in contracts with the state and local governments if those entities are involved in prohibited activities with the countries of Iran, Russia, and Belarus, as codified in *P.L. 2022, c. 3, N.J.S.A. 52:32-55 et seq., N.J.S.A. 40A:11-2.1, and N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-49.4*; and

WHEREAS, these laws provide important protections to ensure that public funds are not directed to businesses engaged in transactions with hostile governments; and

WHEREAS, vendors providing goods and services to local governments often serve multiple municipalities, and the current process requires them to submit separate certifications to each municipality, creating undue administrative burdens for both businesses and local governments; and

WHEREAS, this duplicative process causes delays in the awarding of contracts, hindering municipalities' ability to efficiently secure goods and services; and

WHEREAS, the businesses impacted by these restrictions are not commonly found among typical local vendors such as hardware stores, IT service providers, law firms, recreation suppliers, construction companies, and other small businesses that frequently contract with municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the number of businesses conducting prohibited activities with Iran, Russia, or Belarus is minimal, and many municipalities have never encountered such entities; and

WHEREAS, every business operating in New Jersey is required to submit an Annual Report to the Department of the Treasury's Division of Revenue and Enterprise Services, which includes requirements for a Business Registration Certificate (BRC), already a prerequisite for contracting with local governments above the bid threshold; and

WHEREAS, incorporating the required certification of compliance with the business restrictions into the annual report process would standardize the submission, reduce administrative redundancies, and ensure consistency across all municipalities; and

WHEREAS, tying this certification to the issuance or renewal of the BRC would create a streamlined, uniform process and provide municipalities with a centralized list of businesses that are denied a BRC due to non-compliance, reducing delays and inefficiencies in awarding contracts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, urges the New Jersey State Legislature to enact legislation requiring vendor certifications of compliance with restrictions regarding Iran, Russia, and Belarus to be

incorporated into the Annual Report process administered by the Division of Revenue and Enterprise Services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that such certification be made a condition for the issuance or renewal of the Business Registration Certificate, with the Division of Revenue and Enterprise Services publishing a list of businesses denied issuance or renewal for non-compliance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that such legislative changes would eliminate undue administrative burdens on businesses and municipalities, promote efficiency, and maintain compliance with the state's ethical contracting standards; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Governor of New Jersey, the President of the New Jersey State Senate, the Speaker of the New Jersey General Assembly, all members of the New Jersey State Legislature, State Treasurer, Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs, and the Office of the State Comptroller.

Sponsors:

Hon. Peter Melchionne
Mayor, Twp. of Wyckoff

Hon. Peter Calamari
Mayor, Twp. of Washington (Bergen)

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-11

**RESOLUTION URGING CONGRESS TO ALLOW EXPIRATION OF THE DEDUCTIBILITY
CAP ON STATE AND LOCAL TAXES (SALT)**

WHEREAS, our tax obligation is an issue that concerns all residents in every municipality in the state of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Acts of 2017 imposed a \$10,000 cap on state and local tax (SALT) deductions; and

WHEREAS, this cap is scheduled to expire in 2025; and

WHEREAS, the deduction for SALT has been a fundamental feature of the tax code for more than 100 years, with the first federal income tax form in 1913 allowing taxpayers to deduct state and local taxes, one of only six deductions allowed at the time, and even the federal Civil War tax in 1862 included a deduction for SALT; and

WHEREAS, this important provision ensures against double taxation and reflects mandatory tax payments, which support public services that benefit all citizens, such as K-12 schools, law enforcement and public safety, transportation and infrastructure, and vital community and public health services; and

WHEREAS, the SALT deduction is one of the few provisions in the federal tax code that recognizes the burden placed on states like New Jersey, which provide significantly more in federal tax revenue than they receive back in federal services and grants; and

WHEREAS, many New Jersey families relied upon the full federal SALT deduction to ensure tax fairness, and capping the SALT deduction has placed an unfair burden on New Jersey homeowners; and

WHEREAS, the SALT deduction cap presents a barrier to affordable homeownership in New Jersey, impacting the ability of new, young families to prosper in the future and seniors to remain in their homes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, encourages Congress to allow the expiration of the SALT deduction cap and provide more equitable taxation once again to residents of New Jersey; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to U.S. Senator Cory Booker, U.S. Senator George Helmy, U.S. Senator-elect Andy Kim, our representatives in Congress, the President of the United States, the President-Elect of the United States, all members of the New Jersey State Legislature, and the Governor of the State of New Jersey.

Sponsors:

Hon. Charlie Carley
Mayor, South Brunswick Twp.

Hon. Brian Wahler
Mayor, Township of Piscataway

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No: 2024-12

A RESOLUTION URGING THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY TO TAKE AN INCREMENTAL AND TARGETED APPROACH TO ADOPTING THE PROPOSED “PROTECTING AGAINST CLIMATE THREAT (PACT) RESILIENT ENVIRONMENTS AND LANDSCAPE (REAL)” RULES

WHEREAS, the New Jersey State League of Municipalities acknowledges that climate change and sea level rise are a documented risk to the coastal zone of New Jersey and its barrier island communities, requiring thoughtful and well-reasoned response from all levels of government; and

WHEREAS, initiated through Governor Murphy’s Executive Order 100, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has produced a 1,057-page rule proposal policy document known as NJ PACT (Protection Against Climate Threats) / REAL (Resilient Environments and Landscape) to expand flood hazard areas (FHAs) statewide and implement higher floodplain management regulatory standards beyond the local and existing FEMA standards; and

WHEREAS, according to NJDEP’s website and publicly made comments by NJDEP representatives, these rules are set to be adopted in June 2025; and

WHEREAS, historically, new rules issued by the NJDEP have always been promulgated pursuant to legislation through the typical legislative process; and

WHEREAS, the proposed rules have received considerable opposition from shore communities, as they propose measures that would restrict development and impose unintended economic impacts, including the loss of tax ratables from new construction and potential tax appeals resulting from proposed declaration of inundation zones, elevation of roadways and more; and

WHEREAS, these rules will increase construction costs and impact the feasibility for public infrastructure projects within the minimum height requirements for new roads in excess of Base Flood Elevation (BFE) plus six feet freeboard, will be infeasible and unachievable given the path and location of the project; and

WHEREAS, municipalities in New Jersey and nationwide are experiencing a housing crisis due in part to the high cost of housing, and these requirements will significantly increase the cost of housing, making it difficult if not impossible to provide affordable housing for the region’s workforce; and

WHEREAS, the NJDEP’s proposed expansion of flood hazard areas limits the potential capacity of mixed income housing development and even prohibits development in most coastal areas where there is already statutory affordable housing obligations imposed through the State’s fair share housing laws, especially as inland development centers are being reduced in size via the State Planning process; and

WHEREAS, while recognizing the importance of addressing climate change, as stated previously, the New Jersey State League of Municipalities believes that a more gradual and balanced approach

is necessary to target incremental adjustments over time to mitigate the potential negative impacts that these radically changing rules will have on the coastal communities of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that the State of New Jersey consider the disproportionate burden resulting from the implementation of such stringent regulatory standards that will challenge the people of New Jersey living, working, and visiting the coastal zones.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, calls on the State of New Jersey to take an incremental and targeted approach to adopting the proposed PACT/REAL Rules initiated through Governor Murphy's Executive Order 100; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the League requests that the State of New Jersey engage the Legislature to enact these proposed rules through the typical legislative process, in order to give the residents a voice, rather than through an Executive Order and administrative rulemaking; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Governor of New Jersey, the State Legislature, the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection, and Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs.

Sponsors:

Hon. Frank Sippel
Mayor, Twp. of Lower

Hon. Marty Small, Sr.
Mayor, Atlantic City

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-13

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PATHWAYS TO PUBLIC SERVICE: A CAREER CONNECTION FAIR

WHEREAS, in the past several years, public sector employers have been faced with a myriad of challenges in their efforts to recruit, hire, train, and retain qualified job candidates, particularly those that may be recent college graduates; and

WHEREAS, to meet the ongoing needs and expanded demands being placed on local, county and municipal entities, the New Jersey League of Municipalities (NJLM), in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (NJ DCA), has established a career connection fair event to:

- 1) create and drive interest for students in careers in public sector employment, particularly at the municipal and county level;
- 2) ensure accredited colleges and universities have the opportunity to work with public sector stakeholders to identify and develop meaningful pipeline collaboration that aligns academic course work with the subject matter expertise needed for these public sector job opportunities; and
- 3) assist with matching eligible college students and graduates with open positions at local, county and state agencies.

WHEREAS, combining public sector employers in a career connection fair setting that brings various disciplines, stakeholders and subject matter experts to one space will provide an invaluable opportunity for students to get a candid perspective about public sector professionals and who is behind the everyday programs and services that support communities and New Jersey residents; and

WHEREAS, the collaboration and stakeholder engagement between local, county, state, affiliates and our state's colleges and universities can allow for a new approach to both workforce development but also a new attraction point for colleges/universities to engage and better support their student population; and

WHEREAS, the job opportunities for students, relationship creation between our academic and government partners and the ability to bring various experts and perspectives to one place makes this an innovative opportunity that can ignite greater interest in public and civil service as an attractive option for student professionals.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, hereby support the Pathways to Public Service: A Career Connection Fair and thank all who participated to make it a successful event.

Sponsors:

Hon. William Chegvidden
Mayor, Borough of Warton
President, NJLM

Hon. Brian Wahler
Mayor, Township of Piscataway

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-14

RESOLUTION CELEBRATING THE 100th YEAR OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES

WHEREAS, the National League of Cities is an organization comprised of city, town, and village leaders who are focused on improving the quality of life for their current and future constituents; and

WHEREAS, their mission is to advocate for, and protect the interests of cities, towns, and villages by influencing federal policy, strengthening local leadership and driving innovative solutions; and

WHEREAS, on December 12, 1924, in Fraser Hall at the University of Kansas, John Stutz called to order what would be the first meeting of the group initially called the Association of State Municipal Organizations, next the American Municipal Association, and finally, the National League of Cities; and

WHEREAS, over the past 100 years, NLC has been a national policy leader on municipal issues including passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the American Rescue Plan Act, Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, Local Government Antitrust Act, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the creation of the Department of Housing and Urban Development; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey State League of Municipalities is a long-time member of the National League of Cities, regularly participates in its gatherings, including the annual Congressional City Conference, and relies on its guidance and counsel in federal matters that affect municipal governance; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey hosted the NLC Centennial Road Show with visits to Trenton, East Orange, and Newark; and

WHEREAS, municipal officials from New Jersey have served as President of NLC including Sedley H. Phinney, Secretary of the NJLM from 1930-32, and Newark Mayor Sharpe James in 1994.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, congratulates the National League of Cities on its centennial of service advocating for sound municipal policy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of the resolution be transmitted to NLC CEO & Executive Director Clarence Anthony and the National League of Cities elected officers.

Sponsors:

Hon. William Chegwidden
Mayor, Borough of Warton
President, NJLM

Hon. Sean Elwell
Mayor, Elsinboro Twp.
2nd Vice President, NJLM

Hon. Paul Tomasko
Mayor, Borough of Alpine
1st Vice President, NJLM

Hon. Shelley Brindle
Mayor, Westfield
3rd Vice President, NJLM

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-15

RESOLUTION URGING UNIFORMITY IN ELECTRONIC PERMITTING PROCESS

WHEREAS, the process to obtain various municipal construction permits is a vital municipal function that is necessary for safety, health, and compliance with the construction code; and

WHEREAS, the licensing or certification of the various contractors vary between the Division of Consumer Affairs and the Division of Fire Safety, whose authority varies as to whether a specific contractor needs to register, obtain a license, obtain a certificate, or obtain a certification; and

WHEREAS, some contractors, by virtue of their licensing and or certification board have the ability to transmit construction code permit applications electronically and some are required to submit hardcopy paper permits with a raised seal noting the specific trade; and

WHEREAS, these inconsistencies can create unnecessary permitting delays, cost time, money, and unnecessarily harm the municipal reputation due to varying types of permitting transmission; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Community Affairs, Division of Codes and Standards, Codes Assistance Unit, authored a construction code communicator article in the Spring of 2020 (V32 N1) advising that electronic permit submittals being limited due to the Department of Consumer Affairs requirement for raised pressure seals of certain licensed contractors; and

WHEREAS, Governor Murphy signed into law P.L. 2021, c.70, requiring the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to establish and implement the “Electronic Permit Processing Review System,” which will serve as a web-based system for the electronic submission of applications for construction permits, plans, and specifications pursuant to the State Uniform Construction Code Act.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, urge the various state permitting construction authorities to create uniformity and permit the use of electronic construction permits; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor of the State of New Jersey, the Attorney General of the State of New Jersey, the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs, the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety, and all members of the New Jersey State Legislature.

Sponsor:

Hon. Vito Perillo
Mayor, Borough of Tinton Falls

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-16

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PRESERVATION OF MUNICIPAL HOME RULE AUTHORITY
OVER CANNABIS OPERATIONS**

WHEREAS, New Jersey voters approved Public Question No. 1 in November 2020, amending the State Constitution to legalize cannabis for adult recreational use; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory, Enforcement Assistance, and Marketplace Modernization Act (P.L.2021, c.16) established the framework for legal cannabis operations in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, municipalities have traditionally exercised significant control over land use, business operations, and public safety within their borders through home rule authority; and

WHEREAS, local governments are best positioned to understand their communities' unique needs, concerns, and capacity regarding cannabis establishments; and

WHEREAS, municipalities bear the primary responsibility for addressing quality-of-life issues, public safety concerns, and enforcement costs related to cannabis operations; and

WHEREAS, local licensing fees provide essential revenue to offset the administrative and enforcement costs associated with regulating cannabis businesses including training for law enforcement officers on new cannabis regulations, equipment and technology for compliance monitoring, and response to complaints and violations; and

WHEREAS, local licensing and application fees provide essential revenue to offset these substantial administrative and enforcement costs, without which these expenses would burden local taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, municipal officials require flexibility to adapt cannabis regulations to their communities' evolving needs and circumstances.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, strongly supports preserving municipal home rule authority over cannabis operations, including but not limited to zoning and land use decisions, local licensing requirements, operating hours and conditions, number and types of establishments, local fee structures, and public safety and security requirements;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, opposes any legislative or regulatory actions that would diminish municipal authority to regulate cannabis establishments within their jurisdictions and supports maintaining municipalities' ability to establish and collect reasonable licensing fees to offset the costs of local oversight and enforcement and urges the State Legislature and Cannabis Regulatory Commission to consult with municipal officials on any proposed changes to cannabis regulations that would impact local control;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Governor of New Jersey, all members of the New Jersey State Legislature, and the Cannabis Regulatory Commission.

Sponsor:

Hon. Janice Kovach
Mayor, Clinton Town

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Resolution 2024-17

RESOLUTION TO AMEND TITLE 59 TO LIMIT PUBLIC ENTITY STORMWATER DRAINAGE LIABILITY

WHEREAS, significant weather events now occur more frequently and regularly overwhelm public stormwater systems; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature originally intended for public entities to have immunity under the Tort Claims Act in these situations, however, the courts have eroded Title 59 immunities creating unprecedented legal exposure for public entities; and

WHEREAS, one municipality was recently found liable with a jury award of \$21.5 million despite spending over \$1.2 million for stormwater improvements for the specific area designated in the lawsuit, being the largest claim ever against a New Jersey municipality, despite the fact that there were zero injuries; and

WHEREAS, while this case is being appealed, numerous other "copycat" suits have been filed; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey local governments are either self-insured or belong to self-funded insurance pools with the coverage being funded by tax dollars ; and

WHEREAS, local governments simply do not have the resources to pay this exposure, and counties, government agencies, authorities, as well as the State itself have similar exposures; and

WHEREAS, homeowners should have adequate insurance, including flood insurance for their properties rather than requiring local taxpayers to carry the burden for homeowners who fail to purchase insurance.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, urges that a new provision be added to Title 59 providing that neither a public entity nor its public employees shall be liable under any claim or legal theory, including but not limited to any claim for trespass, nuisance, negligence, strict liability, inverse condemnation or a dangerous property condition under N.J.S.A. 59:4-2 for flooding or any flood related or storm damages actually or allegedly caused, in whole or in part, from a public entity's failure to provide a stormwater drainage or management system or, if a stormwater drainage or management system is provided, for lack of sufficient capacity; defective design; any malfunction or defect or deficiency associated with the stormwater drainage or management system; failure to perform or inadequate inspections, maintenance, repair(s), alteration(s) or otherwise upgrade an existing stormwater system; and for any other alleged or actual insufficiency or failure in the system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that N.J.S.A. 20:3-29 be amended to provide that no damages shall be recoverable or awarded for non-economic losses, including but not limited to, pain and suffering, emotional distress, quality of life or inconvenience for condemnation, inverse condemnation or taking claims related to flooding, storm, or stormwater; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to all members of the New Jersey State Legislature and the Governor of the State of New Jersey.

Sponsor:

Hon. Paul Tomasko Mayor,
Borough of Alpine 1st Vice
President, NJLM

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-18

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF LOCAL PARTICIPATION AND GREATER
TRANSPARENCY IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE HEALTH BENEFITS
PROGRAM LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE GROUP**

WHEREAS, the purpose of the New Jersey State Health Benefits Program (SHBP) Local Government Employee Group is to provide health insurance for local government employees and create a large pool of covered lives to do so at a reasonable cost to local governments and their employees because local governments are self-insured; and

WHEREAS, upon its establishment in 1961, the state has administered the program and has historically been robust and provided taxpayer value for local governments compared to a Health Insurance Fund (HIF) or on the open market; and

WHEREAS, in Plan Years 2025, 2024, and 2023, there have been premium rate increases for local government employees and employers of 16.3%, 7.4%; and 20% that have included increased costs to mitigate adverse selection and replenish the Claim Stabilization Reserve which has caused many local governments with “good risk” among their covered lives to seek better premium costs through a HIF or the open market; and

WHEREAS, local government employers and employees have been forced to absorb the entire amount while state government employees increases were capped by the administration at 3%, creating a cost imbalance between types of government employees; and

WHEREAS, over the past few years there have been troubling signs that the program administration was not maintaining the professionalism it had long enjoyed; and

WHEREAS, among those signs include delayed approval of rate renewals in two of the last three years, where the open enrollment period did not include full information about plan comparisons and the insurance calculator for participants to make an informed decision; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Pensions made it known to the Administration and Legislature that they may lack the funds to pay claims and needed authority to borrow from the state employee fund to cover costs of the local employee fund and in less than a month both chambers introduced, favorably reported out of committee, and passed in each chamber S-3838/A-4999, which was signed by the Governor less than a week after passage; and

WHEREAS, these examples, along with local governments continued exodus from the SHBP, as well as the need for increase transparency,, calls the long-term viability and need for reforms of the SHBP into question; and

WHEREAS, local governments have long decried the lack of committee representation on both the State Health Benefits Commission and the Plan Design Committee, which is incongruous since

the New Jersey School Boards Association has a seat on the School Employees Health Benefits Commission; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, that reforms are necessary to ensure the long-term viability of the program and that municipalities that are not able to find competitive cost coverage elsewhere are left in the program in a “death spiral,” and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to all members of New Jersey State Legislature, the Governor of the State of New Jersey, State Treasurer, and Department of Community Affairs.

Sponsors:

Hon. William Chegwidden
Mayor, Borough of Warton
President, NJLM

Hon. Sean Elwell
Mayor, Elsinboro Twp.
2nd Vice President, NJLM

Hon. Paul Tomasko
Mayor, Borough of Alpine
1st Vice President, NJLM

Hon. Shelley Brindle
Mayor, Westfield
3rd Vice President, NJLM

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-19

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING INCREASED FEDERAL FUNDING FOR CITIES TO
COMBAT THE FENTANYL CRISIS**

WHEREAS, the fentanyl crisis poses a significant threat to public health and safety in New Jersey and across the United States; and

WHEREAS, fentanyl is a potent synthetic opioid, up to 50 times stronger than heroin and 100 times stronger than morphine, and can be highly addictive and deadly; and

WHEREAS, fentanyl has become a leading cause of death in the New Jersey with 2,497 fentanyl overdose deaths in 2022; and

WHEREAS, fentanyl and similar drugs have accounted for the vast majority of overdose deaths in recent years; and

WHEREAS, the rate of fentanyl overdose deaths has increased significantly over the past several decades, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive prevention and intervention efforts; and

WHEREAS, municipalities are increasingly becoming the frontline of the fentanyl crisis, even though more federal resources flow to states and counties; and

WHEREAS, municipalities have proven the ability to respond to public health emergencies in a fast, flexible, efficient, and innovative matter, including during the Covid-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the fentanyl crisis affects all municipalities in New Jersey, cutting across socioeconomic, demographic, and political differences; and

WHEREAS, tackling the fentanyl crisis requires a holistic approach, recognizing that it is both a public health and public safety emergency; and

WHEREAS, Congress and the Biden-Harris Administration has described synthetic opioids such as fentanyl as presenting a “national security, public safety, and public health threat”; and

WHEREAS, federal funding specifically is critical to address this crisis effectively, recognizing that local governments face the brunt of this crisis and need adequate resources to save lives and protect their communities; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP) is a U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance grant program that provides funding to cities, counties, and states to address the fentanyl and opioid crisis;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, calls upon Congress and the Administration to prioritize funding specifically for local law enforcement, fire and EMS departments, including but not limited to comprehensive case management, treatment and recovery services, harm reduction services,

community education, data collection, and research and evaluation, and provide increased funding for the COSSUP program and other key programs to address the fentanyl crisis; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to U.S. Senator Cory Booker, U.S. Senator George Helmy, our representatives in Congress, the United States President Joseph Biden, United States President-elect Donald Trump, all members of the New Jersey State Legislature, and Governor Phil Murphy of the State of New Jersey.

Sponsors:

Hon. Raymond Heck
Mayor, Millstone Borough
Past President, NJLM

Hon. Brian Wahler
Mayor, Township of Piscataway

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-20

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE FEDERAL TAX EXEMPTION ON MUNICIPAL BONDS

WHEREAS, tax-exempt municipal bonds provide access to affordable capital that finances infrastructure that touches the daily lives of every American and is the foundation of civilized society, including roads, transit, schools, affordable housing, water and wastewater, hospitals, airports, and electricity; and

WHEREAS, while federal grants are an important source of funding for our nation's infrastructure, 75 percent of all infrastructure investments made in the United States are financed by state and local governments and their agencies, with many of these investments made with tax-exempt municipal bonds, and these bonds, not federal grants, are the backbone of infrastructure financing in the United States; and

WHEREAS, for over 100 years tax-exempt municipal bonds have been the primary financing tool state and local governments use to access capital markets to meet the infrastructure needs of their citizens; and

WHEREAS, interest on municipal bonds is exempt from federal taxation under a principle of reciprocal immunity under which the federal government is exempt from state and local taxation and local governments are exempt from federal taxation; and

WHEREAS, savings from affordable financing through tax-exempt bonds allows for greater infrastructure investments and savings passed directly to taxpayers and ratepayers in the form of reduced taxes and fees; and

WHEREAS, keeping infrastructure costs low is critical to job creation and to the infrastructure investments that are the backbone of our economy; and

WHEREAS, federal mandates significantly increase state and local government infrastructure costs, with mandates related to the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act placing an especially large burden on municipal governments; and

WHEREAS, the federal tax code outlines rules for a special category of bonds (often called "private activity bonds") that permit a greater degree of private sector involvement in projects and programs that provide important public benefits, including housing, transportation, economic development, higher education facilities and financing, with the majority issued for housing (affordable multi-family housing and single-family mortgage revenue bonds); and

WHEREAS, private activity bonds are especially important to supporting the development and preservation of affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, the Tax Cut and Jobs Act (PL 115-97) maintained the tax exemption for municipal bonds, including private activity bonds; and

WHEREAS, the Tax Cut and Jobs Act repealed the tax exemption for advance refunding of municipal bonds, effective December 31, 2017; and

WHEREAS, prior to the enactment of the Tax Cut and Jobs Act, the tax exemption for advance refunding bonds saved state and local governments and their taxpayers and ratepayers billions of dollars and helped stretch valuable state and local infrastructure dollars; and

WHEREAS, the loss of the tax exemption for advance refunding bonds has increased the cost of financing infrastructure investment for state and local governments; and

WHEREAS, the expiration in 2025 of many provisions in the Tax Cut and Jobs Act means that the 119th Congress will likely consider major tax legislation, and

WHEREAS, consideration of major tax legislation could pose a threat to the tax exemption for municipal bonds as lawmakers seek offsets and new revenue, and

WHEREAS, over the past few decades, funding for core federal government infrastructure grant programs for state and local governments has been stagnant at best and in many cases has declined precipitously; and

WHEREAS, increased borrowing costs would translate to increased fees and increased taxation at the local level, or in the failure to meet core infrastructure needs; and

WHEREAS, limiting, eliminating or replacing tax-exempt bonds could shut many small issuers out of the bond market entirely; and

WHEREAS, tax-exempt municipal bonds are the financing tool that exists by and for local governments without federal interference; and

WHEREAS, tax credit bonds and direct subsidy bonds are good complements to traditional tax-exempt municipal bonds, but would be poor substitutes due to reliance on a federal subsidy and higher costs for smaller issuers; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, 2016, 2013, and 2012 the League of Municipalities approved a resolutions Expressing Support for and Defending the Continued Tax Exemption for Municipal Bonds, and because of the paramount importance of this issue to municipalities, it is both necessary and appropriate to reiterate the League's strong support for preserving the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, strongly urges the Administration, the President-Elect and Congress preserve the current tax-exempt status of municipal bonds that have successfully provided trillions of dollars in low-cost financing for critical infrastructure investments that serve citizens in all states and local communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President, the President-Elect, U.S. Senator Cory Booker, U.S. Senator George Helmy, our representatives and representatives-elect in Congress, members of the New Jersey State Legislature, and the Governor of the State of New Jersey.

Sponsors:

Hon. Charles Daniel
Mayor, Borough of Califon

Hon. Brian Wahler
Mayor, Township of Piscataway

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-21

**RESOLUTION TO HIGHLIGHT THE NEED FOR MUNICIPAL RESOURCES FOR FIFA 2026
WORLD CUP**

WHEREAS, the 23rd quadrennial 2026 FIFA World Cup, the international men's soccer championship with 48 teams competing in 104 matches held in 16 North American cities throughout Canada, Mexico, and the United States over 39 days; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey previously hosted seven matches at Giants Stadium during the 1994 FIFA World Cup, including a semi-final match; and

WHEREAS, among the American cities hosting matches will be Philadelphia, PA, where six matches will be held and East Rutherford, NJ, where eight matches, including the final championship match will be held; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey is proud that our state will host this international event and is rightfully highlighted as a destination for national and international culture and commerce as well as home to countless museums, art galleries, outdoor adventures, dining, nightlife, historical sites, shopping centers, amusement parks, and other exciting destinations throughout the state, as well as near the host venues; and

WHEREAS, the additional municipal and regional costs for the state serving as a host must be offset with state and federal funds as increased public safety, health, public works, and various other costs will be borne by municipal governments despite the benefit to the region, state, and nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, are prideful and excited about the FIFIA World Cup benefiting all of New Jersey and encourages Congress to fully support agencies such as Department of Commerce; Department of Defense, particularly the Air National Guard, Army National Guard, and Coast Guard; Department of Homeland Security; Department of Transportation; and State Department in their efforts to provide essential support services crucial to U.S. cities with hosting responsibilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RECOLVED, that the League encourages Congress to follow through on the commitments made to provide sufficient federal funding of a minimum \$622 million support, increased security and transportation demands in host cities and provide federal funding to support host city sustainability, security, and economic development priorities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to U.S. Senator Cory Booker, U.S. Senator George Helmy, our representatives in Congress, our representatives-elect in Congress, the President of the United States, the President-Elect of the United States, all members of the New Jersey State Legislature, and the Governor of the State of New Jersey.

Sponsors:

Hon. David Fleisher
Mayor, Cherry Hill Twp.

Hon. Jeffrey Lahullier
Mayor, Borough of East Rutherford

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-22

RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE LEGISLATURE TO PERMIT ONLINE NEWS PLATFORMS TO QUALIFY AS LEGAL NEWSPAPERS FOR THE PURPOSE OF MUNICIPALITIES PUBLISHING LEGAL NOTICES

WHEREAS, various statutes require municipalities to publish legal notices in an official newspaper for numerous governmental actions such as meeting notices, ordinances, resolutions, municipal land use actions, or public bidding; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 35:1-2 requires that in order for a newspaper to qualify as a legal newspaper for the publication of official advertisements it must be printed and published in the English language within the state at least once a week for at least one year continuously; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 35:1-2.2 establishes the following qualifications for newspapers publishing official notices: newspapers must be printed entirely in the English language, be printed and published within the state, have a general paid circulation in the municipality where their publication office is situated for not less than two years and have been entered for two years as second class mail under US postal laws and regulations; and

WHEREAS, Advance Local, owners of NJ Advance Media and NJ.com, announced the termination of daily print publications for *The Star Ledger*, *The Times of Trenton*, and *South Jersey Times* effective February 2, 2025, the *Hunterdon County Democrat's* weekly print edition on January 30, 2025, and the dissolving and closing of *The Jersey Journal* on February 2, 2025; and

WHEREAS, municipalities have relied on these and other now defunct print publications as the legal newspapers for compliance with statutory notice requirements; and

WHEREAS, as technology has advanced, news publication has changed from voluminous newsprint to greater online reporting with fewer print pages, it is anticipated that other newspapers will join the growing trend of ceasing print operations and moving to digital publications

WHEREAS, this change has impacted municipalities, ranging from difficulties in having public notices printed, even though meeting print newspapers' deadlines, to fewer reporters covering local meetings and community events; and

WHEREAS, to fill the void, online news platforms have evolved to become the local source of news for many municipalities, however, they do not meet the statutory definition of legal newspapers and are unable to publish official notices; and

WHEREAS, at the same time a recent PEW Research Center survey on the news habits and attitudes of U.S. adults ages 18 and older, conducted in association with the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, found that 81% get some of their news through websites, apps, or social media, in fact, about four in 10 often get their news online.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, urges the State legislature to amend the various statutes to permit municipalities to use qualified online news platforms and other online means to publish official notices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the League calls on the Legislature to take swift action to ensure that as municipalities begin the process of reorganization they have the ability to designate a qualified publication for legal notices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution is forwarded to the members of the New Jersey General Assembly, the New Jersey State Senate, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Governor of the State of New Jersey.

Sponsor:

Hon. Janice Kovach
Mayor, Clinton Town

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-23

RESOLUTION URGING THE NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE TO ADDRESS AFFORDABLE HOUSING OBLIGATIONS AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS, the Mount Laurel decisions by the New Jersey Supreme Court have mandated that municipalities must provide for their "fair share" of affordable housing, interpreting the term "general welfare" in the New Jersey Constitution in a manner that imposes significant impacts on local zoning, planning, and development; and

WHEREAS, some municipalities that have already met or exceeded their affordable housing obligations, including age-restricted housing for seniors, are still required to build more units, leading to overdevelopment that disregards environmental constraints, limited infrastructure, and community needs; and

WHEREAS, affordable housing advocates, through litigation, have imposed increasingly stringent obligations on municipalities, often requiring developments that far exceed what towns can reasonably support; and

WHEREAS, while recent legislation has been passed to reform the affordable housing process, significant uncertainty remains regarding its ability to create a more stable and realistic framework for municipalities to meet their obligations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, urges the New Jersey Legislature to consider a sensible approach to housing that:

1. Prioritizes the rehabilitation of existing housing over new high-density developments, and ensures municipalities are credited for past contributions to affordable housing;
2. Provides municipalities with reasonable flexibility to meet their obligations based on local conditions, and protects the character of communities by avoiding overdevelopment; and
3. Ensures that local zoning laws and community planning are respected, and that resident input is considered as a central part of the affordable housing process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor of New Jersey, the President of the New Jersey Senate, the Speaker of the New Jersey General Assembly, and all members of the New Jersey Legislature.

Sponsor:

Hon. Paul Tomasko
Mayor, Borough of Alpine
1st Vice President, NJLM

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-24

**IN APPRECIATION OF LEAGUE PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CHEGWIDDEN,
MAYOR OF WHARTON BOROUGH**

WHEREAS, the Honorable William J. Chegwiddden is completing his term as the President of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities; and

WHEREAS, President Chegwiddden has well served the municipal community as a spokesperson and tireless advocate, carrying its concerns and issues to the Murphy Administration, to the State Legislature, the Biden Administration, and to the New Jersey Congressional Delegation; and

WHEREAS, President Chegwiddden has been a strong advocate on a host of issues important to municipal interests, including modernization of the Open Public Records Act for the first time in a generation, reauthorization of the Transportation Trust Fund, and legislation addressing the 4th Round Affordable Housing law, and

WHEREAS, under his leadership, several new features were added to the Annual Conference, including collaborative roundtables for elected officials, a municipal job fair for students attending the conference to learn about careers in municipal government, recorded forum with the 2025 declared gubernatorial candidates to be broadcast on NJ PBS Chat Box, and an opportunity to have a professional digital headshot taken for elected officials; and

WHEREAS, the League and the municipal community at large have been well guided by the leadership of President Chegwiddden, whose service to the League exemplifies the very best of the high-minded goals and objectives of the League and its service programs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, that we do extend to President Chegwiddden sincere appreciation for his dedicated administration, effective advocacy, untiring efforts to improve local government in New Jersey, and for his careful stewardship of this organization; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that sincere wishes for continued success in all future endeavors be extended to President Chegwiddden and his entire family and that a copy of this resolution be transmitted herewith to him.

Sponsors:

Hon. Paul Tomasko
Mayor, Borough of Alpine
1st Vice President, NJLM

Hon. Shelley Brindle
Mayor, Westfield
3rd Vice President, NJLM

Hon. Sean Elwell
Mayor, Elsinboro Twp.
2nd Vice President, NJLM

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference Resolution No. 2024-25

RESOLUTION OF THE NEW JERSEY STATE LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES HONORING WILLIAM JOHN KEARNS JR., ESQ., FOR HIS DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AS GENERAL COUNSEL

WHEREAS, William John Kearns Jr., Esq., has served with distinction as General Counsel to the New Jersey State League of Municipalities for more than four decades, providing invaluable legal guidance and counsel to the League's Executive Board, staff, and member municipalities; and

WHEREAS, throughout his career, Mr. Kearns has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to advancing municipal law and local government interests as Municipal Attorney for numerous municipalities, practicing municipal law for over 50 years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Kearns has been a pillar of municipal law education in New Jersey, regularly conducting educational sessions at the League's Annual Conference, authoring numerous articles for the *New Jersey Municipalities Magazine*, and contributing to various League publications on municipal law; and

WHEREAS, he has served as Chair of the Local Government Law Section of the New Jersey State Bar Association and has been recognized as a preeminent authority on the Open Public Meetings Act, the Local Public Contracts Law, and numerous other areas of municipal law; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Kearns has served as president of the International Municipal Lawyers Association, the Burlington County Bar Association, and was appointed in 2009 as a member of the NJ Governor's Task Force on Local Government ethics; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Kearns has played an instrumental role in drafting and reviewing significant municipal legislation, providing testimony before legislative committees, serving as the League's representative on various stakeholder groups, and working tirelessly to protect the interests of New Jersey's 564 municipalities; and

WHEREAS, his expertise and counsel have been invaluable in helping municipalities navigate complex legal challenges, including interpretation of state statutes, compliance with regulations, and adaptation to evolving municipal law; and

WHEREAS, throughout his distinguished career, Mr. Kearns has exemplified the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and dedication to public service.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, hereby expresses its profound gratitude and appreciation to William John Kearns Jr., Esq., for his exemplary service as General Counsel and his countless contributions to the advancement of municipal government in New Jersey; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the League recognizes Mr. Kearns' legacy of excellence in municipal law and his enduring impact on local government administration in New Jersey; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that sincere wishes for continued success in all future endeavors be extended to William John Kearns Jr., Esq., and his entire family and that a copy of this resolution be transmitted herewith to him.

Sponsors:

Hon. William Chegwidde
Mayor, Borough of Warton
President, NJLM

Hon. Sean Elwell
Mayor, Elsinboro Twp.
2nd Vice President, NJLM

Hon. Paul Tomasko
Mayor, Borough of Alpine
1st Vice President, NJLM

Hon. Shelley Brindle
Mayor, Westfield
3rd Vice President, NJLM

New Jersey State League of Municipalities Resolution No. 2024-26

RESOLUTION URGING THE RESTORATION OF ENERGY TAX RECEIPT FUNDING

WHEREAS, gas and electric utility companies utilize public land, specifically the public right of way, for their equipment, thereby incurring taxes for this use; and

WHEREAS, these taxes were historically collected directly by host municipalities and were designated to provide property tax relief for the constituents of those municipalities; and

WHEREAS, upon the State assuming the role of tax collector for these Energy Taxes, there was a clear promise made to return the proceeds of such collections back to the municipalities to continue the provision of property tax relief; and

WHEREAS, just as municipalities undertake the collection of property taxes to the benefit of various public entities, including school districts and counties, the State has been entrusted with the collection of Energy Taxes for the express benefit of municipal governments; and

WHEREAS, State officials have reappropriated funds from Energy Taxes to address deficits in the State budget and to support State programs, which contravenes the original intent for these funds; and

WHEREAS, this reallocation of dedicated energy tax receipts to the State's General Fund has resulted in municipalities facing severe financial needs, and has perpetuated the imposition of onerous property taxes on residents; and

WHEREAS, the FY 2024 State Budget converted the Consolidated Municipal Property Tax Relief Aid (CMPTRA) into Energy Tax Receipts; and

WHEREAS, local elected officials, who have the most immediate understanding of community needs, are the ones most suitably placed to make decisions regarding the optimal allocation of these resources, which were always intended to support local programs and services; and

WHEREAS, due to the advocacy of local elected officials and the League, highlighting the inequity of utilizing municipal funds for State budget priorities, New Jersey's State Fiscal Year 2023 budget included \$75 million in Municipal Relief Funds, and the State Fiscal Year 2024 budget doubled the Municipal Relief Funds to \$150 million; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's State Fiscal year 2025 budget eliminated the \$150 million allocated in prior years to the Municipal Relief Fund, reducing the total amount of CMPTRA in SFY 2025 by 15.2%, representing an erosion of the progress made to rightfully return Energy Tax Receipts to municipalities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, in conference assembled, calls for the immediate restoration of all funding diverted from Energy Taxes intended for local use and that State budget makers do not repeat the action taken in past State Budget cycles to divert these funds and rightfully fully restore to municipalities dedicated Energy Tax Receipts, as directed by statute; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to members of the New Jersey General Assembly, the New Jersey State Senate, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Governor of the State of New Jersey.

Sponsors:

Hon. William Chegwidden
President, NJLM
Mayor, Borough of Wharton

Hon. Paul Tomasko
1st Vice President, NJLM
Mayor, Borough of Alpine

Hon. Sean Elwell
2nd Vice President, NJLM
Mayor, Elsinboro Twp.

Hon. Shelley Brindle
3rd Vice President, NJLM
Mayor, Town of Westfield