The
MAYOR AND BOROUGH COUNCIL
of the
BOROUGH OF GLEN RIDGE
County of Essex
State of New Jersey

Monday, August 9th, 2010.

RESOLUTION NO. **125 - 10**

Offered By Councilperson **SEYFFARTH**
Seconded By Councilperson _____

RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE STATE LEGISLATURE AND THE GOVERNOR TO ENACT PROPERTY TAX REFORM WITH PASSAGE OF THE "MUNICIPAL TOOLKIT" AND MANDATES RELIEF

WHEREAS, difficult times demand difficult choices, and facing an unprecedented revenue gap this year, Governor Christie introduced, and the Legislature passed, a budget that cut municipal property tax relief funding by about $450 million, from last year's already reduced totals; and

WHEREAS, realizing that a 20% cut in revenue replacement funding, instead of the statutorily required increase, would present a serious challenge to local budget makers, Governor Christie intended to provide local officials with meaningful tools to limit the, otherwise devastating, impact of the cuts; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's "Tool Kit to Meet Today's Fiscal Challenges" was supposed to accomplish six objectives: collective bargaining reform; pension and benefits reform; civil service reform; management reform; a constitutional cap on increases in spending for direct State government services; and a constitutional cap on property tax increases; and

WHEREAS, Governor Christopher Christie and the State Legislature have agreed on and enacted a 2% statutory cap for annual property tax levy increases; and

WHEREAS, the Governor was correct when he said, 'New caps without the toolkit are unworkable.' and

WHEREAS, with the cuts assured in the State's new budget and with bi-partisan agreement reached on new property tax caps, New Jersey Mayors - from municipalities, large and small, and from all around our Garden State – still wait for Trenton policy makers to enact meaningful local government cost containment reforms; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Glen Ridge calls for immediate passage of the "Toolkit" reforms and mandates relief, including, but not limited to interest arbitration reform, civil service reforms, public employee pension and benefits, disciplinary procedures, school and special district elections, reforms to the Fair Housing Act and the Council on Affordable Housing and mandates relief; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that statutory arbitration reforms must limit the full economic impact of awards to conform to the 2% cap; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that statutory Health benefit reforms must conform future health benefit costs to the 2% cap; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that municipal revenues, such as the Energy Tax, which are now collected by, and diverted to, the State, but which are legally intended for municipal property tax relief, must be constitutionally dedicated for their original purpose; or in the alternative, those taxes should be reformed to allow collection directly by municipalities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Administration and Legislature must advance immediate mandates relief initiatives to assist municipalities in managing within the 2% cap; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Administration and Legislature must advance reforms to the Fair Housing Act and the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a cap exception for the costs associated with tax appeals should be included, and costs mandated by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) should be excepted from the 2% cap or the costs of new AOC mandates should be capped at 2%; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this Resolution be forwarded to New Jersey Governor Christopher Christie, to Senate President Stephen Sweeney, to Assembly Speaker Sheila Oliver, to our State Senator, to our two Representatives in the General Assembly, and to the New Jersey League of Municipalities.

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