

RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF MERCHANTVILLE, OPPOSING THE FAILURE OF THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED STATE BUDGET FOR THE 2008-2009 FISCAL YEAR TO TREAT PROPERTY TAX RELIEF AS OUR PRIORITY

WHEREAS, on February 26, 2008, in Trenton, Governor Jon S. Corzine presented his FY 2009 Budget proposal to a Joint Session of the State Legislature, which proposal now goes to the Legislature, which must pass a balanced budget by the start of the State's next Fiscal Year, which begins on July 1; and

WHEREAS, the proposal, which represents what the Governor called "many unpleasant choices," calls for the elimination of two Departments of State Government (the Departments of Agriculture and Personnel) and the State Commerce Commission, and asks all other Departments to absorb funding cuts, and further calls for sacrifice in a number of other areas, including direct property tax relief, hospital aid, higher education assistance and Medicaid, with the inordinately deep cuts in municipal property tax relief funding; and

WHEREAS, one year after the historic Special Session for Property Tax Reform, which purportedly eliminated the need for a Citizens' Convention, our property taxpayers will once again be asked for patience, and they will be asked to shoulder more than their fair share of the funding burden; and

WHEREAS, local officials have done so much with so little for so long, that State Budget-makers now believe some can do everything with absolutely nothing; and

WHEREAS, municipal property tax relief will be slashed by \$189.6 million; and

WHEREAS, for municipalities with a population of less than 5,000, there will be no CMPTRA funding this year; for municipalities with a population total between 5,000 and 10,000, this relief will be limited to one-half of the amount received in the State's 2006-2007 budget; and the \$32.6 million distributed according to the CMPTRA formula, which municipalities received last year as 2008 Municipal Property Tax Assistance, is gone; and

WHEREAS, all municipalities will receive level Energy Tax Receipts Property Tax Relief funding, despite State Law that 'requires' annual inflationary adjustments of this (and CMPTRA) funding; and

WHEREAS, last year, municipal efficiency was promoted to the tune of \$34.8 million, but in this proposal, this funding has been eliminated; and

WHEREAS, last year's \$32 million in Municipal Homeland Security Funding is gone, Special Municipal Aid funding is cut from \$153 million to \$145.4 – a loss of \$7.6 million, Extraordinary Aid funding is reduced by \$1.7 million – from \$34 million to \$32.3 million, and the \$8 million Regional Efficiency Aid Program will not be funded; and

WHEREAS, beyond these cuts, certain municipalities served by the State Police will be asked to contribute \$20 million to the State's General Fund, and Homestead Rebates for Homeowners will be cut by \$257 million, and for Renters by \$124 million; and

WHEREAS, the reduction in state aid will cause a .28 cent increase in the tax rate for the citizens of Merchantville, or the equivalent reduction in essential services provided throughout the community; therefore, now be it

RESOLVED, that the governing body of The Borough of Merchantville *calls on* its elected representatives in Trenton, Senator Diane B. Allen and Assembly members Herbert C. Conaway and Jack Connors, to work with their colleagues in the Legislature and with the Governor to take affirmative action to restore program funding sufficient to honor state statutes and their stated commitment to the cause of property tax relief in all New Jersey municipalities; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be forwarded to Governor Jon S. Corzine, Acting State Treasurer R. David Rousseau, Senate President Richard J. Codey, Senate Minority Leader Thomas H. Kean, Assembly Speaker Joseph J. Roberts, Assembly Minority Leader Alex DeCroce, the Chairs and Members of the Senate and Assembly Budget and Appropriations Committees, our own Senator Diane B. Allen and Assembly members Jack Conners and Herbert C. Conaway and to the New Jersey State League of Municipalities.

THE BOROUGH OF MERCHANTVILLE

BY: _____
FRANK M. NORTH, MAYOR

ATTEST:

JOHN C. FRY, BOROUGH CLERK

I, **JOHN C. FRY**, Borough Clerk for the Borough of Merchantville, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of the Resolution of the Borough of Merchantville, at a meeting of said Borough of Merchantville on MARCH 10, 2008, and that said Resolution was passed by a majority vote of the Borough Council of the Borough of Merchantville.

JOHN C. FRY, BOROUGH CLERK