

A RESOLUTION URGING CONGRESS TO INCLUDE FUNDING FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE FEDERAL “BUILD BACK BETTER” LEGISLATION (H.R. 5376).

WHEREAS, housing insecurity has long been a substantial threat to the public’s health, safety and welfare, and the COVID-19 pandemic (the “pandemic”) has served to highlight and heighten the dangers associated with this housing crisis; and

WHEREAS, the pandemic has caused untold economic hardship for New Jersey residents and communities, including the City of Asbury Park (the “City”), who, through no fault of their own, have been faced with the threat of foreclosures and evictions; and

WHEREAS, many people have suffered and struggled due to the physical, emotional and economic impacts of the pandemic; however, people of color, especially women of color and other marginalized renters, have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 virus and its effect on the housing crisis; and

WHEREAS, in New Jersey, in order to afford a modest, two-bedroom apartment, on average, a renter would need an income of approximately \$31.96 per hour; however, this is often far above the income of many working families, seniors, and people with disabilities in this State; and

WHEREAS, only a small percentage of households eligible for rental assistance receive such assistance due in large part to decades of chronic underfunding; and

WHEREAS, addressing the housing crisis and bridging the gap between incomes and housing costs through the expansion of rental assistance programs is of utmost importance; and

WHEREAS, on September 27, 2021, the United States House of Representatives introduced H.R. 5376 (also referenced as the “legislation”), commonly referred to as the “Build Back Better Act,” which would provide funding and establish programs relating to a broad array of areas, including among others, housing, education, labor, childcare, health care, taxes, immigration and the environment; and

WHEREAS, the legislation was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on November 19, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Congress is currently considering the Build Back Better agenda which could provide a once-in-a-lifetime investment in housing affordability, stability and security, and lay the foundation to help make New Jersey a more affordable place to live for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, by including mechanisms in the Build Back Better economic recovery package to expand rental assistance programs and address the severe shortage of affordable housing for people with the lowest incomes, Congress could help to bridge the gap between wages and housing costs for the City’s lowest-income and most marginalized households; and

WHEREAS, it is therefore critical that Congress make a robust investment in housing affordability in any budget reconciliation bill similar to what was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in the “Build Back Better Act,” including an expansion of rental assistance by \$25 billion to serve 300,000 additional households; \$65 billion to repair public housing, which is home to 2.5 million residents; and \$15 billion in the national Housing Trust Fund to build and preserve 150,000 homes affordable to people with the greatest needs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the City of Asbury Park, in the County of Monmouth and State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. That the Mayor and Council do hereby urge the United States Congress to include in the Build Back Better economic recovery package funding to expand rental assistance programs, and build, repair, and preserve affordable homes in order to reach and provide greater assistance to more people in need of affordable housing.
2. That a certified copy of this Resolution shall be provided to each of the following:
 - a. Majority Leaders of the United States Senate;
 - b. Minority Leaders of the United States Senate;
 - c. Speaker of the United States House of Representatives;
 - d. Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives;
 - e. All members of the United States Congress elected by the State of New Jersey;
 - f. New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy;
 - g. Senate President Nicholas P. Scutari;
 - h. Speaker of the General Assembly Craig J. Coughlin;
 - i. Senator Vin Gopal;
 - j. Assemblywoman Kim Eulner;
 - k. Assemblywoman Marilyn Piperno;
 - l. Senator Nellie Pou;
 - m. New Jersey League of Municipalities;
 - n. Donna M. Vieiro, City Manager; and
 - o. Frederick C. Raffetto, Esq., Municipal Attorney.