

R E S O L U T I O N 2023 – 04

RESOLUTION OF THE OCEAN COUNTY MAYORS' ASSOCIATION, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, ENCOURAGING STATE LEGISLATORS TO PROVIDE FAIR AND EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF DISCRETIONARY SPENDING APPROPRIATIONS IN THE ANNUAL STATE BUDGET FOR KEY PROGRAMS THAT WILL ASSIST OCEAN COUNTY RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

WHEREAS, Ocean County's year-round population continues to grow along with the needs of its residents; and

WHEREAS, Ocean County is one of the largest counties in the state land wise with one of the largest county road networks, and is also home to the largest body of water in the state – Barnegat Bay- a national estuary; and

WHEREAS, Ocean County, which is a premier tourism destination bringing in large sums of revenue to the state of New Jersey, doesn't get the same financial help or benefits as other areas of the state, including many northern and urban cities and counties; and

WHEREAS, as an example, Ocean County once again was excluded from the state's annual "Christmas Tree" list receiving no extra state funding for projects that fall outside of the normal budget; and

WHEREAS, in the meantime, millions of dollars have been allocated to towns and counties in predominantly urban regions, without a comprehensive list of appropriations and no way to easily access information on how all the money is being spent; and

WHEREAS, media reports on the "Christmas Tree" list, a fund for legislators' pet projects and other expenses that normally fall outside the line items of the annual budget, revealed that Ocean County received zero dollars in 2023; and

WHEREAS, urban and city legislative districts received the bulk of the \$661.6 million that lawmakers earmarked for projects in individual counties or towns; and

WHEREAS, included on the list was funding for a new marina, swimming pool and a dog park in Northern New Jersey, Camden County received \$64 million for new infrastructure projects and Union County was second with a \$57.5 million award; and

WHEREAS, in the absence of additional funds for Ocean County, the Route 9 corridor continues to present at traffic bottleneck, as do other state roads in the County. Additional funds could also help with the construction of a new justice complex annex to house state courts, substantial repairs to the county parking garage, to fund recreational programs, transportation services, needed assistance for our seniors and veterans, to protect Barnegat Bay and to help the 33 municipalities that make up the County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Ocean County Mayors' Association encourages our state legislators to provide fair and equitable distribution of discretionary spending appropriations in the annual state budget for key programs that will assist not just Ocean County residents but the thousands of people from across the state that visit the County annually.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Ocean County Mayors' Association, County of Ocean, State of New Jersey that a copy of this resolution shall be forwarded to Governor Murphy, Senate President Scutari, Assembly Speaker Coughlin, Senator Menendez, Senator Booker, Congressman Van Drew, Congressman Smith, Senator Connors, Senator Holzapfel, Senator Thompson, Senator Singer, Assemblyman Rumpf, Assemblywoman Gove, Assemblyman Catalano, Assemblyman McGuckin, Assemblyman Sauickie, Assemblyman Clifton, Assemblyman Kean, Assemblyman Thomson, Ocean County Commissioner Vicari, Ocean County Commissioner Haines, Ocean County Commissioner Kelly, Ocean County Commissioner Quinn, Ocean County Commissioner Crea, and all Ocean County Mayors.

Carmen F. Amato Jr.

Carmen F. Amato, Jr.
Secretary, Ocean County Mayors' Association
Mayor, Township of Berkeley