

**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON**

**MORRIS COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

No. R-25-14

**Date of Adoption:** January 20, 2014

**Title or Subject:** SUPPORT OF A WATER TAX TO FUND THE LOSS OF LAND EQUITY FOR PROPERTY OWNERS IN THE HIGHLANDS REGION

**WHEREAS,** The Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act was passed by both houses of the New Jersey Legislature and signed into law on August 10, 2004 by Governor James McGreevy; and

**WHEREAS,** The Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act designated areas to be in the “Preservation” or “Planning” areas; and

**WHEREAS,** the Act reads, “The Legislature finds and declares that the national Highlands Region is an area that extends from northwestern Connecticut across the lower Hudson River Valley and northern New Jersey into east Central Pennsylvania; that the national Highlands Region has been recognized as a landscape of special significance by the United States Forest Service; that the New Jersey portion of the national Highlands Region is nearly 800,000 acres, or about 1,250 miles, covering portions of 88 municipalities in seven counties; and

**WHEREAS** , the Act additionally reads, “The Legislature further finds and declares that the New Jersey Highlands is an essential source of drinking water, providing clean and plentiful drinking water for one-half of the State’s population, including communities beyond the New Jersey Highlands, from only 13 percent of the State’s land area”; and

**WHEREAS,** the Township of Washington, County of Morris is located in both the Preservation and Planning Areas; and

**WHEREAS,** the value and equity of the land has decreased dramatically for those property owners in the Township and Highlands Act region; and

**WHEREAS,** the Township also is restricted in bringing economic opportunity, jobs and growth forcing existing taxpayers to pay higher amounts due to lack of growth and smart development ; and

**WHEREAS,** areas located outside of the “Highlands Area” are using Highlands resources without paying or compensating those affected communities.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Township Committee of the Township of Washington, County of Morris, strongly urges the New Jersey State Senate and General Assembly to craft a bill which would charge those who use Highlands Area water to compensate those communities impacted by the Act; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED;** that the Township Committee of Township of Washington, County of Morris, forward this resolution to every municipality located within the territory of the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act Region.

**ATTEST:** **TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON**

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Nina DiGregorio, Township Clerk

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Kenneth W. Short, Mayor

I, Nina DiGregorio, Township Clerk, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted at a meeting of the Township Committee held on January 20, 2014.

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Nina DiGregorio, Township Clerk

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Date