



A COALITION OF THE NATIONAL READY MIXED CONCRETE ASSOCIATION

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## **Two More New Jersey Counties Unanimously Adopt Fire Safety Resolutions in Support of Stronger Building Codes**

*The Counties of Camden and Middlesex Join Essex and Mercer Counties and Wall Township in Calling for Timely Passage of Statewide Legislation*

**Silver Spring, MD** – On Thursday evening, councilmembers of the Camden County and Middlesex County Boards of Freeholders voted unanimously to adopt a resolution in support of New Jersey Assembly Bill 135, statewide legislation that would amend New Jersey’s construction code for fire safety reasons, and provide an added level of protection for firefighters and residents alike.

“All across New Jersey, local governments are calling on the state to institute commonsense safety measures that will save lives and property,” said Kevin Lawlor, spokesperson for Build with Strength, a coalition of the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association consisting of community organizations, fire safety professionals, architects, engineers and industry experts committed to strengthening the nation’s building codes. “Stronger building codes mean stronger communities, and as such, the state should heed the judgement of the local governing bodies.”

The votes in Camden and Middlesex Counties come just one week after members of the Mercer County Board of Chosen Freeholders voted unanimously to adopt a resolution in support of the legislation – to which the Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders and Wall Township have endorsed, as well.

The legislation calls for the installation of an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with NFPA 13, measuring the number of stories from the grade plane, using noncombustible materials for construction, and installing a fire barrier with a fire resistance rating of at least two hours that extends from the foundation to the roof.

“The decision by Camden and Middlesex Counties to join Essex and Mercer Counties as well as Wall Township is a step toward building a more secure New Jersey,” said Rich Silvia, president of the New Jersey State Fire Prevention and Protection Association (NJSFPPA). “We’re hopeful that state lawmakers will concur with their local counterparts, and demand stricter building standards that better contain and help stop the spread of devastating fires. Protecting the well-being of residents and their property, as well the fire fighters that serve them should be of the utmost priority.”

[In late December](#), firefighters responded to a fire at a wood-framed apartment complex in Princeton, New Jersey, that resulted in the death of a 73-year-old resident and the displacement of 35 others. The incident came after a pair of massive fires in the state in buildings constructed with combustible materials over the past couple years – namely in [Maplewood](#) and [Edgewater](#). There have been [dozens of fires of a similar nature](#) throughout the country over the last several few years.

[A September 2016 poll](#) of 400 registered voters in New Jersey found respondents very supportive of the state making changes to building codes following the devastating Edgewater apartment complex fire in January 2015.

Local New Jersey coalition members of Build with Strength include: The New Jersey State Firefighters' Mutual Benevolent Association, The Professional Association of Fire Fighters in New Jersey, the New Jersey State Association of County Fire Marshals, the Brigantine Beach Fire Company; the Bricklayers and Allied Crafts – New Jersey, and the Fire Departments of Burlington County and West Orange.

Learn more at [www.buildwithstrength.com](http://www.buildwithstrength.com).

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