

Approved as to Form and Legality

Date

*[Signature]*  
 County Counsel

January 11, 2018

COUNTY EXECUTIVE AND MERCER COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS SUPPORTS ASSEMBLY BILL 135 (SENATE BILL 3490) TO AMEND NEW JERSEY'S CONSTRUCTION CODE FOR FIRE SAFETY REASONS AND TO BETTER PROTECT FIREFIGHTERS AND RESIDENTS

WHEREAS, over 800 fires occur each year throughout the country in buildings using lightweight wood construction; and,

WHEREAS, lightweight wood frames not only allow fires to flourish and spread quickly, but they also put firefighters at risk, causing many first responders to fall through collapsed roofs and floors; and,

WHEREAS, in Edgewater, NJ, a devastating five-alarm fire destroyed more than half of the 408-unit Avalon at Edgewater apartment complex in January 2015 that resulted in 500 residents being left homeless; and,

WHEREAS, earlier this year, a fire at another Avalon Bay Community in Maplewood -- that used the same construction method -- destroyed more than two-thirds of the apartment units under construction; and,

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 Clerk to the Board

RECORD OF VOTE

FREEHOLDER	Aye	Nay	N.V.	Abs.	Res.	Sec.	FREEHOLDER	Aye	Nay	N.V.	Abs.	Res.	Sec.
Cannon	X						Koontz	X					
Cimino	X					✓	Verrelli	X					
Colavita	X						Walter	X				✓	
Frisby	X												

X—Indicates Vote      Abs.—Absent      N.V.—Not Voting  
 Res.—Resolution Moved      Sec.—Resolution Seconded

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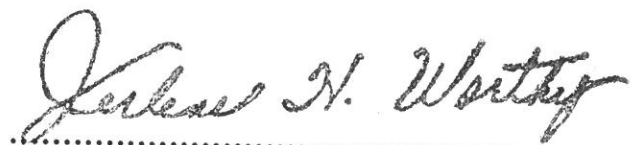
WHEREAS, Lakewood, NJ, Firefighters battled a raging blaze in September 2017, again featuring lightweight wood construction, that engulfed a building of Covington Village condo complex, a community for people over 55 years old; four people were injured, including two police officers; and,

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 135 (Senate Bill 3490) would amend New Jersey's construction code for fire safety reasons, and provide an added level of protection for firefighters and residents alike, including 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; and,

WHEREAS, a number of other cities and towns, including New York, NY; Chicago, IL; Sandy Springs, GA; and Tucker, GA, have taken similar proactive steps to limit the use of combustible construction materials in certain structures; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the County Executive and the Mercer County Board of Chosen Freeholders hereby expresses its support for A-135 (S-3490) and urges its timely passage; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk to the Board shall forward a copy of this Resolution to Assemblyman Wayne P. DeAngelo, Senator Brian P. Stack, Senate President, Assembly Speaker, the Lieutenant Governor, the Governor, and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities.



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*Clerk to the Board*