

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING LEGISLATION ENABLING
HOMELESS TRUST FUND ACCOUNTS

WHEREAS, in 1987 the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders designated the Somerset County Board of Social Services the lead county agency in responding to homeless assistance needs; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Social Services has experienced that the overriding factor contributing towards Somerset County's homeless problem is a lack of affordable housing, particularly for low income families and individuals; and

WHEREAS, current levels of available funding along with private initiatives at low income housing development have not kept up with the growing needs; and

WHEREAS, homelessness negatively impacts the entire community affecting not only multi-generations of homeless victims but as well as negatively impacting the quality of life for all residents; and

WHEREAS, other states have passed legislation allowing local jurisdictions to establish "Homeless Trust Fund" accounts which have been proven effective in providing local communities with a sustainable source of revenue designed to specifically be used to address low income housing needs; and

WHEREAS, there is a growing initiative to encourage the New Jersey legislature to enact similar Homeless Trust Fund legislation that would provide jurisdictions within New Jersey the authority to voluntarily elect to establish a Homeless Trust Fund; and

WHEREAS, once established the Somerset County Homeless Trust Fund would also be able to leverage additional Federal and State funding to help increase affordable housing stock within the county and reduce the number of county residents who experience homelessness.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders endorses the need to establish a Somerset County Homeless Trust Fund and encourage members of the New Jersey State Legislature to pass enabling legislation as soon as possible for the Governor of New Jersey to sign such legislation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Governor of the State of New Jersey, the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Human Services, the Commissioner of the Department of Children & Families, all Legislators representing Somerset County, the New Jersey Association of Counties and all County Welfare Agencies.