

RESOLUTION 2026-191

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BARNEGAT, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, OPPOSING THE NEW JERSEY GOVERNOR'S BUDGET CUTS TO THE STAY NJ PROPERTY TAX RELIEF PROGRAM FOR NEW JERSEY'S SENIOR CITIZENS

WHEREAS: New Jersey homeowners continue to face some of the highest property taxes in the nation, and those costs place a particular burden on senior citizens living on fixed or limited incomes; and

WHEREAS: the Stay NJ Property Tax Relieve Program was established to help eligible senior homeowners remain in their homes and communities by providing meaningful property tax relief and supporting the ability of older residents to age in place; and

WHEREAS: under the current Stay NJ framework, eligible senior homeowners may receive a benefit that bring their total property tax relief up to 50 percent of property taxes paid, subject to a maximum Stay NJ benefit of \$6,500, with eligibility extending to applicants with incomes up to \$500,000; and

WHEREAS: in the Governor's Fiscal Year 2027 budget proposal announced on March 10, 2026, the State proposed modifying Stay NJ by reducing the qualifying income threshold to \$250,000 and lowering the maximum benefit amount to \$4,000.00; and

WHEREAS: these proposed reductions would substantially weaken a program specifically designed to address New Jersey's affordability crisis for seniors and would diminish the relief available to many older homeowners who have spent decades paying taxes and contributing to their communities; and

WHEREAS: Ocean County has a significant senior population, and many residents rely on property tax relief programs such as Stay NJ, ANCHOR, and Senior Freeze to remain in their homes, maintain financial stability, and avoid being priced out of the communities they helped build; and the State itself describes these property tax programs as major affordability measures for homeowners and seniors; and

WHEREAS: reducing Stay NJ benefits would have a direct and harmful impact on senior residents of Ocean County by increasing their housing cost burden at a time when many are also facing rising utility, Insurance, medical, and everyday living expenses; and

WHEREAS: preserving strong and predictable property tax relief is essential to helping seniors remain independent, sustain homeownership, and continue contributing to the economic and civic life of Ocean County; and

WHEREAS: the Barnegat Township Mayor and Committee find that balancing the State budget should not come at the expense of senior citizens who depend on Stay NJ to remain in their homes and age with dignity in New Jersey.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Barnegat Township Committee states as follows:

1. The Township Mayor and Committee hereby strongly oppose the proposed reductions to the Stay NJ Property Tax Relief Program contained in the State's Fiscal Year 2027 budget proposal, including the reduction of the income eligibility threshold from \$500,000 to \$250,000 and the reduction of maximum Stay NJ benefit from \$6,500 to \$4,000.
2. The Governing Body urges the Governor and the New Jersey Legislature to reject these proposed cuts and preserve the Stay NJ program in a manner that continues to provide meaningful and reliable property tax relief for New Jersey senior homeowners.
3. The Governing Body further urges State leaders to protect seniors in Ocean County and throughout New Jersey from policies that would make it more difficult for them to remain in their homes and communities.
4. A certified copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded to the Governor of the State of New Jersey, the President of the New Jersey Senate, the Speaker of the New Jersey General Assembly, the legislators representing Ocean County, the New Jersey Association of Counties, and all municipalities within Ocean County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Committee reaffirms its commitment to advocating for affordability, stability and the well-being of Ocean County's senior residents.

CERTIFICATION

I, Donna M. Manno, Municipal Clerk of the Township of Barnegat, County of Ocean, State of New Jersey hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Township Committee of said Township at their regular meeting held in the Municipal Complex, 900 West Bay Avenue, Barnegat, NJ on the 5th day of May, 2026.

Donna M. Manno, RMC
Municipal Clerk