

DRAFT LETTER TO SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

Date

RE: Please advance the “toolkit”

Dear Senator:

On July 19, the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee, on which you sit, began its deliberations on the “toolkit” for local governments and approved the following three bills that we believe are worthy of your support:

S-2012, which allows gross income tax refunds to be credited against a taxpayer’s delinquent local property taxes;

S-2072, which permits publication of legal notices by governments and individuals on official government websites instead of newspaper; and

S-2208, which would allow certain non-governmental organizations to file complaints with the Council on Local Mandates.

We thank and commend you for your support of these bills.

In the upcoming weeks, the Senate Committee will consider additional toolkit items, including reforms to interest arbitration, civil service and other mandates relief. As Governor Christie himself stated, the 2% cap is “unworkable” without such reforms. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, for property taxpayers that these reforms also pass in a timely fashion and before we begin developing our 2011 budget.

In their respective testimony, Mayors Mironov of East Windsor and Sworen of Frenchtown outlined the type of additional reforms local governments will need to work within the new cap. In doing so, they asked the Committee to also focus on issues like the State’s retention of Energy Tax property tax relief funding, arbitration reforms, further civil service reforms and cap considerations regarding the reserve for uncollected taxes, the costs of pre-existing labor agreements and the burden of tax assessment appeals. We concur with their statements, and respectfully request that you support the “toolkit” initiatives, in general, and reforms addressing these issues, in particular.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

DISTRIBUTION LIST**1. Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee**

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