

Resolution Questioning and Opposing New Jersey State School Funding Cuts

WHEREAS, on March 3, 2023, New Jersey released State Aid numbers to local school districts, including High Bridge (Hunterdon) School district; and

WHEREAS, High Bridge is a quaint residential bedroom community located in Hunterdon County and is home to just over 3,500 residents with minimal businesses, industry and other ratables to offset the residential property tax; and

WHEREAS, the majority of the tax burden in High Bridge falls upon the residents of this small community; and

WHEREAS, the High Bridge School district has now realized significant cuts in state aid funding for the last two consecutive years, despite New Jersey being legally obligated to provide adequate funding for all school districts; and

WHEREAS, the fiscal year 2024 state aid cut represents 31.66% of our annual state funding and the fiscal year 2023 state aid cut represented 22.01% of our state aid funding, resulting in a reduction of state aid by nearly **47%** from our 2022 fiscal year funding; and

WHEREAS, High Bridge School District was the 7th largest percentage of state aid reduction for the 2024 fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, the High Bridge School District has the largest actual dollar loss, as well as the largest percentage loss of all K-8 school districts in Hunterdon County; and

WHEREAS, High Bridge's loss accounts for over 41% of the total County loss which is significantly impacting our ability to provide an adequate education to our students; and

WHEREAS, the High Bridge Board of Education believes that the State of New Jersey is responsible for providing Adequate Funding for all School Districts under the S2; and

WHEREAS, S-2 was enacted to help correct funding distribution, however, High Bridge, having a mostly residential base and despite not being overfunded, has lost the majority of its aid with loss of funding appearing to continue; and

WHEREAS, we believe that the State of New Jersey is not meeting its responsibilities related to providing adequate funding to High Bridge; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the High Bridge Board of Education urges the Governor's Office, District 23 New Jersey State Senator Douglas Steinhardt, New Jersey Assemblyman John DiMaio and Assemblyman Erik Peterson for immediate review and action on the funding mechanisms under S2 for High Bridge and provide financial relief to High Bridge for an unprecedented cut of nearly 50% of our State funding over the last two fiscal years; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be delivered to Governor Phil Murphy and our Legislative Representatives and the New Jersey School Boards Association.