

RESOLUTION 2025-227
RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FLORENCE OPPOSING NEW JERSEY
STATE SENATE BILL #4736, ENHANCING THE ABILITY OF RELIGIOUS AND
NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TO CONVERT CERTAIN PROPERTY TO
PREEMPT LOCAL ZONING WITH HIGH DENSITY HOUSING

WHEREAS, municipalities are required to establish a Municipal Master Plan with a combination of mandatory and optional elements including Goals and Objectives, Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Community Facilities, Downtown Economic Development, Historic Preservation, and Sustainability; and

WHEREAS, municipalities are also required to reexamine the Municipal Master Plan every 10 years to ensure that the master plan meets the community needs and is relevant as communities, evolve, grown and change; and

WHEREAS, municipalities complete this effort at great cost and community input to ensure their community has a roadmap for growth; and

WHEREAS, a municipality is best suited to plan for and understand their community's needs, the existing infrastructure to address the municipality's public safety, health, traffic, and character and the ability to expand such infrastructure for desired growth; and

WHEREAS, there are many mechanisms for exceptions and variances to the local planning process; and

WHEREAS, municipalities have been diligently working to comply with the changes outlined in the passage of A-4/S-50 in 2024 that made substantial changes to the 4th Round of Affordable Housing obligations; and

WHEREAS, affordable housing construction has generally comprised between 10 – 20% of a total development, but municipalities will end up constructing far more units during this current round of affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, recent legislative proposals that preempt the planning process by permitting the conversion of underutilized properties into mixed use developments, reducing the number of parking spaces required for the new developments near transit, making Accessory Dwelling Units permissible, and most recently, legislation that enhances the ability of religious and nonprofit organizations to convert certain property to inclusionary developments with affordable housing undermine the careful planning process outlined in the Municipal Land Use Law; and

WHEREAS, this proposal, S-4736 is particularly egregious because the required percentage of affordable housing units is only 20% with the remaining 80% at market rate making it more challenging for municipalities to meet their 4th Round Affordable Housing obligations; and

WHEREAS, this legislation bypasses local planning for increased density and height, regardless of a municipality's ability to ensure safety; and


WHEREAS, a worthy project could, and should participate in local planning and zoning process to engage with the public; and

WHEREAS, S-4736 permits the bypassing of the local planning process which is an egregious assault on municipal autonomy and local decision making.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township of Florence urges the legislature to defeat S-4736 and similar legislation that denies local autonomy in land use planning and ignores the well thought out master plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to Senate President Nicholas Scutari, Senator Troy Singleton, Senator Benjie E. Wimberly, Assembly Speaker Craig J. Coughlin, our Assembly Members Carol A. Murphy and Balvir Singh, Governor Phil Murphy, Governor-Elect Mikie Sherrill, and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities.

I, NANCY L. ERLSTON, CLERK of the Township of Florence, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey, do hereby certify that the certification of available funds has been provided to the governing body and that the foregoing is a true copy of the Resolution approved by Township Council at their December 17, 2025 meeting.


Nancy L. Erlston, RMC
Township Clerk