

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 3686
WHICH PROPOSES THE TRANSFER OF THE GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL
ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE TO THE
NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Franklin desires to oppose Assembly Bill No. 3686 sponsored by Assemblywoman Sheila Y. Oliver, Assemblywoman Connie Wagner and Assemblywoman Elease Evans, which proposes the transfer of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse and control of the Drug Enforcement Demand Reduction Fund to the New Jersey Department of Human Services; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Franklin has been advised and believes that Assembly Bill No. 3686 is not in the public interest as it would dramatically diminish, if not eliminate, the role of the Municipal Alliances to Prevent Substance Abuse which is an invaluable community program and an effective asset for the development and implementation of "grass roots" local programs for the prevention of alcohol and drug abuse; and

WHEREAS, Township Council of the Township of Franklin has been advised during the Human Services Assembly Hearing on January 26, 2009 that Raquel Mazon Jeffers, Director of Division of Addiction Services, indicated during her testimony that the Municipal Alliance Funding would be placed into a competitive RFP process; and

WHEREAS, this money was originally intended not to be a hindrance for volunteers to obtain; however, with a competitive RFP process this will put communities at an unfair disadvantage to compete for funding with non-profit and for profit agencies with paid employees who have more expertise in grant writing to obtain these types of grants versus

volunteers who have no background in competitive grant writing; and

WHEREAS, a competitive RFP eliminates addressing community specific needs as towns within a county do not have the same problems, and often within a town there are different specific needs in the various sections of a community. Community volunteers know town-specific information and are better to identify and address the problems and issues; and

WHEREAS, the basis of the Comptroller's Audit Report was misleading and insinuated that the funding was not being used properly, but when reviewed, the funds were used according to the guidelines. The perception that the funding was spent improperly when in fact in a case by case basis it was following the procedures put into place as well as understanding prevention of substance abuse often times needs creative and alternative programs to bring the public out in numbers; and

WHEREAS, the dissolving of the volunteer based Municipal Alliance Program undermines the Governor's Plan to put out a three pronged approach as indicated in the State of New Jersey Executive Summary A Strategy for Safe Streets and Neighborhoods; and

The Township Council of the Township of Franklin opposes the transfer of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse and control of the Drug Enforcement Demand Reduction Fund to the New Jersey Department of Human Services as the consequences of those actions are likely to diminish or eliminate a data-driven, evidence producing drug and alcohol prevention program that already effectively uses the efforts and expertise of dedicated local volunteers; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Franklin hereby opposes Assembly Bill No. 3686 and if there is an absolute need to transfer the Governor's Council on

Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, the Department of Law and Public Safety would be a more proper fit due to the Strategy for Safe Streets and Neighborhoods Strategy and framework described.

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Township Council of the Township of Franklin through this Resolution strongly opposes and objects to Assembly Bill No. 3686 sponsored by Assemblywoman Sheila Y. Oliver, Assemblywoman Connie Wagner and Assemblywoman Eleise Evans which Bill proposes the transfer of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse and control of the Drug Enforcement Demand Reduction Fund to the New Jersey Department of Human Services; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this resolution shall be sent to Governor Jon S. Corzine, Senate President Richard J. Codey, Senator Robert G. Smith, Assemblyman Upendra Chivukula, Assemblyman Joseph W. Egan and Assemblywoman Denise Coyle.

CERTIFICATION

I, Ann Marie McCarthy, Clerk of the Township of Franklin, in the County of Somerset, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution duly adopted by the Township Council at a regular meeting held on the day of March 2009.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Township this day of March 2009.

Ann Marie McCarthy
Township Clerk