

BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK
NO. 3-21-85

RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE PASSAGE OF A1571 & 1576

RESOLUTION: Council as a Whole

WHEREAS, The Mayor and members of the Highland Park Borough Council strongly believe in and support labor unions, collective bargaining, and paying workers a fair and reasonable wage; and

WHEREAS, The Mayor and Highland Park Borough Council also believe that it is a moral responsibility AND good fiscal stewardship to ensure that new housing developments in Highland Park meet or exceed the borough's Fair Share affordable housing requirements and by ordinance require new development to have 15% (for sale) and 20% (for rent) affordable units; and

WHEREAS, Payments in lieu of taxes (PILOTs) are the single-most powerful tool available to municipalities to encourage property owners and developers to make improvements to property or to locate a project in a distressed or blighted area; and

WHEREAS, PILOTs and tax abatements are granted only where the municipality has determined that the project would not occur but for the PILOT; and

WHEREAS, PILOTs and tax abatements have been instrumental in the construction of affordable housing, environmental remediation, historic preservation, and the installation of infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, A1571 and A1576 imposes prevailing wage requirements on any property where a public body has provided, approved, or authorized a tax abatement or tax exemption including PILOT agreements; and

WHEREAS, increasing the cost of already challenged projects by requiring a private property owner to pay prevailing wage for improvements on their property will prompt a greater demand on the municipality to provide additional concessions, concessions that are particularly difficult for small municipalities with limited development opportunities requiring the purchase and combining of small lots, like Highland Park; and

WHEREAS, one of the most recent Highland Park developments (31 River Road) would not have been possible without a PILOT agreement and as a result, it would have been more difficult, if not impossible, for the borough to meet its moral and legal obligation to provide affordable housing units to future residents of Highland Park; and

WHEREAS, Highland Park generally lacks the space for the type of large scale development projects where paying prevailing wages is not cost prohibitive; and

WHEREAS, the type of comparatively small development opportunities available to Highland Park are those that are least likely to be able to afford paying prevailing wages if this legislation advances, all future Highland Park redevelopment projects will likely not occur, or if they do occur, will force the municipality to accept less than optimal amounts of affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, Highland Park needs every tool available to encourage and spur post-COVID development, without the economy-stunting limitations of A1571 and 1576.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the governing body of Highland Park in the county of Middlesex strongly opposes A1571& 1576 and urge our legislators, and in fact all legislators, to oppose the same for the benefit of all New Jersey taxpayers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to our State Senator Patrick Diegnan, State Assembly Representatives Robert Karabinchak and Sterley Stanley as well as Senate President Steve Sweeney, Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin, Governor Phil Murphy and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities.

ADOPTED: March 2, 2021

ATTEST:

Joan Hullings, Borough Clerk

I, Joan Hullings, Borough Clerk of the Borough of Highland Park, New Jersey, do hereby certify the above to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Borough Council of said Borough on the 2nd day of March, 2021.

Joan Hullings, Borough Clerk

RECORD OF COUNCIL VOTES

Council Member	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Canavera				
Foster				
George				
Hale				
Hersh				
Kim-Chohan				