

Dear Governor Murphy, Senate President Scutari, Speaker Coughlin, Senator Singleton, and Assemblywoman Lopez:

We, the undersigned, are writing to thank you for your leadership on affordable housing and for your commitment to advance legislation that will strengthen the Mount Laurel Doctrine and secure the development of much needed affordable housing in the coming years. We write to ask that you move this legislation forward expeditiously during this legislative session.

We are particularly appreciative of Senator Singleton and Assemblywoman Lopez for the swift introduction of Senate Bill 50 and Assembly Bill 4 this session and want to thank you both for incorporating many of our collective requests for amendments into these new versions of the bills. We appreciated the opportunity to provide feedback and look forward to future opportunities to do so and to support important other legislation that further expands affordable housing opportunities. We are excited to support the advancement of the legislation in the Senate Community and Urban Affairs meeting on January 25 and at future committee hearings as scheduled.

As you know, the introduction of such important legislation is a milestone for New Jersey and will bring stability to one of the most important constitutional and human rights—the right to a safe, healthy, and affordable place to call home. If passed, the legislation will go a long way to address the pervasive housing segregation that has plagued our state for decades.

We want to once again express the urgent need to pass this legislation as soon as possible. With the upcoming fourth round set to begin in 2025, providing clarity and time for all stakeholders involved in the process to prepare for the fourth round is of the utmost importance. Having that clarity sooner rather than later will benefit everyone in coming up with effective plans to create affordable housing.

We know that there is a tremendous shortage of affordable homes in New Jersey. This shortage was, in part, caused by the failures of the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) and was then exacerbated by increased demand in the wake of Covid-19 and other forces that have driven up prices.

We also know that having an effective Mount Laurel enforcement process is key to ensuring that these much-needed and long-delayed affordable homes actually get built. This bill will lead to more clarity around meeting municipal affordable housing obligations going forward—and thus the production of more affordable homes.

We support the strong framework of this bill, which builds on the parts of the existing Mount Laurel process that are working, while reforming the parts of the process that do not work and have never worked.

Again, we strongly support the advancement of this legislation as soon as practicable. We were happy to see Senate Bill 50 included on the agenda for the first meeting of the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee and hope to see it heard in the Assembly Housing Committee very soon as well.

We look forward to working with you to advance this legislation to create much-needed housing that New Jerseyans can afford.

Sincerely,

American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey
Asbury Park Affordable Housing Coalition
Cape Hope
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton
Coastal Habitat for Humanity
Community Planning and Advocacy Council
Community Refuge Church
Corporation for Supportive Housing
Cumberland County Habitat for Humanity
Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless
Fair Share Housing Center
Faith in New Jersey
Gloucester County Habitat for Humanity
Latino Action Network
Latino Action Network Foundation
Habitat for Humanity of Bergen County
Habitat for Humanity Cape May County
Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newark
Habitat for Humanity Passaic County
Habitat for Humanity of Salem County
Habitat for Humanity of South Central New Jersey
Habitat for Humanity of Southern Ocean County
Habitat for Humanity in Monmouth County
Homefront
Homeless Solutions, Inc.
Homes by TLC, Inc.
Housing Alliance of Morris County
Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey
League of Women Voters of New Jersey
Lincoln Park Coast Cultural District
Lutherans Engaging in Advocacy Ministry
Make the Road NJ
Monarch Housing Associates
Morris Habitat for Humanity
NAACP New Jersey State Conference
Newark Community Street Team
New Jersey Association of Alpha Phi Alpha Chapters
New Jersey Citizen Action
New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence
New Jersey Coalition to End Homelessness
New Jersey Future
New Jersey Harm Reduction Coalition
New Jersey Institute for Social Justice
New Jersey Policy Perspective
New Jersey Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism

New Jersey Urban Mayors Association
New Jersey Working Families Party
Northern Ocean Habitat for Humanity
People First! - The Affordable Homes Group
Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity
Region 9 UAW Housing Corp
Salt And Light Company
Salvation and Social Justice
Solutions to End Poverty Soon
Sussex County Habitat for Humanity
TANK EdDucates LLC
The Interfaith Food Pantry Network
The Latino Coalition
The Supportive Housing Association of New Jersey
VOADV Property, Inc.
Volunteers of America Delaware Valley
Warren County Habitat for Humanity
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center
York Street Project