

RESOLUTION

No. _____

Date of Adoption APR 21 2022

Approved as to Form and Legality

CITY ATTORNEY

DEG COUNSEL

Councilman /woman

Factual content certified by

Penelope S. Edwards-Carter
Assistant Municipal Clerk

presents the following Resolution:

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE NEW JERSEY STATE LEGISLATURE AND THE MERCER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REVISE THE REDISTRICTING LAWS RELATIVE TO THE APPOINTMENT OF WARD COMMISSIONERS, AND AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF MERCER COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS MEMBERS FROM FOUR TO SIX PERSONS WITH NECESSARY BUDGET INCREASES, WHILE ENSURING LOCAL AND NATIVE REPRESENTATION REFLECTING THE DIVERSE RACIAL AND ETHNIC DEMOGRAPHIC OF THE MUNICIPALITIES THEY SERVE

WHEREAS Redistricting is foundational to representative democracy, and the State of New Jersey, the County of Mercer, and the City of Trenton must draw maps that reflect and represent the diverse communities that live here; and

WHEREAS Ward Commissioners serve a vital function in the redistricting process for each municipality every ten years and therefore should reflect the racial diversity and represent the local interest of municipalities; and

WHEREAS under current statutory law, N.J.S.A. 40:44-11, Ward Commissioners consist of the members of the of County Board of Elections of the County in which the municipality is located, together with the Municipal Clerk; and

WHEREAS the members of the County Board of Elections are currently selected pursuant to N.J.S.A. 19:6-17, et seq., an archaic process by which the leaders of Political Parties effectively select candidates for the Governor's consideration for appointment thereto; and

WHEREAS the current process fosters cronyism, lack of diversity and prioritizes the appointment of individuals based upon their political affiliations rather than their qualifications, and more importantly does not address the need for diversity in the selection process; and

WHEREAS the public interest demands that Ward Commissioners represent the diversity of the county as well as the local municipal electorate and a true cross section of the population of their respective wards and districts; and

WHEREAS the current system of Ward Commissioners only consisting of members of the County Board of Elections, except for the Municipal Clerk, frustrates this critical interest and sanctions the existence of Ward Commissioners who are not reflective of the populace they represent, nor knowledgeable of local priorities or interests,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Trenton as follows:

- 1) The New Jersey Legislature be and is hereby urged to immediately revise the selection process for Ward Commissioners as not consisting of members of the County Boards of Elections; not subject to selection as candidates by political parties; and in a manner which mandates the appointment of individuals who truly reflect the diversity of the population over which they will be exercising jurisdiction;
- 2) Pending such Legislative intervention, the Mercer County Board of Commissioners be and is hereby urged to increase the membership of the Mercer County Board of Elections to six (6) members with necessary budget increases, pursuant to NJSA 19:6-17, with the understanding that these two new seats should be filled by individuals reflecting the diversity concerns hereinabove set forth;
- 3) Pending such Legislative intervention, the respective Chairpersons of the Mercer County Democratic and Republican Committees be and are hereby urged to select candidates based upon the diversity concerns hereinabove set forth;
- 4) A duly certified copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded by the City Clerk to the Governor of the State of New Jersey; the New Jersey Senate President; the Speaker of the New Jersey State Assembly; the State 15th Legislative Delegation representing the City of Trenton; the Mercer County Board of County Commissioners; and the Chairpersons of the Mercer County Democratic and Republican Committees;

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall take effect pursuant to law.

	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent		Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent		Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
CALDWELL					RODRIGUEZ	✓				MCBRIDE	✓			
WILSON		✓												
HARRISON	✓				VAUGHN	✓								
MUSCHAL	✓				WILKINS	✓								

This Resolution was adopted at a Meeting of the City Council of the City of Trenton on

APR 2 1 2022

Kathy McBride
President of City Council

Penelope S. Edwards-Carter
City Clerk
Penelope S. Edwards-Carter
Assistant Municipal Clerk