

# SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 70

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY

### 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 3, 2022

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator NELLIE POU**

**District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)**

**Senator VIN GOPAL**

**District 11 (Monmouth)**

**Assemblywoman BRITNEE N. TIMBERLAKE**

**District 34 (Essex and Passaic)**

**Assemblywoman ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT**

**District 31 (Hudson)**

**Assemblywoman YVONNE LOPEZ**

**District 19 (Middlesex)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

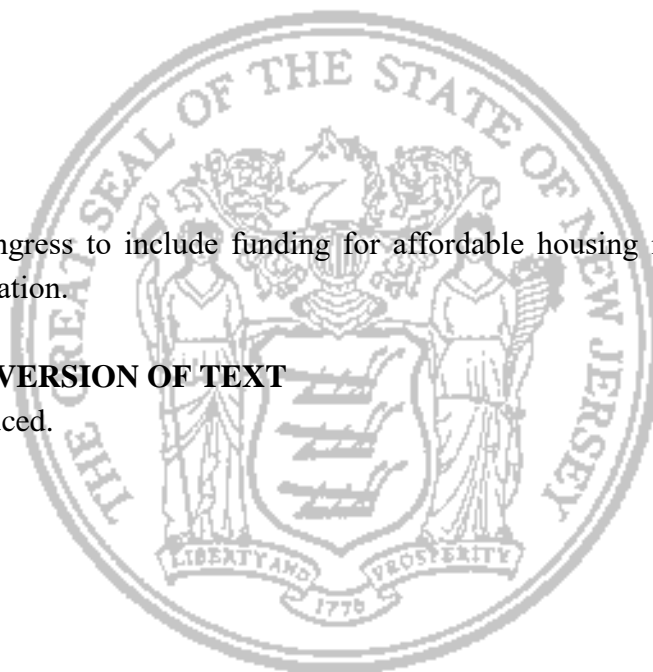
**Senators Diegnan, Ruiz, Singleton, Stack, Turner, Zwicker, Cruz-Perez, Johnson, Assemblymen Karabinchak, Mukherji, Assemblywomen Jasey, Reynolds-Jackson, Carter, Assemblymen Spearman, Stanley and Wimberly**

**SYNOPSIS**

Urges Congress to include funding for affordable housing in “Build Back Better” legislation.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/27/2022)

1   **A JOINT RESOLUTION** urging Congress to include funding for  
2       affordable housing in federal “Build Back Better” legislation.  
3  
4   **WHEREAS**, Housing insecurity has long been a substantial threat to the  
5       public’s health and safety, and the COVID-19 pandemic has served  
6       to highlight and heighten the dangers associated with this housing  
7       crisis; and  
8   **WHEREAS**, The pandemic has caused untold economic hardship for  
9       New Jersey residents and communities, who, through no fault of  
10      their own, have been faced with the threat of foreclosures and  
11      evictions; and  
12   **WHEREAS**, Many people have suffered and struggled due to the  
13      physical, emotional and economic impacts of the coronavirus  
14      pandemic; however, people of color, especially women of color and  
15      other marginalized renters, have been disproportionately impacted  
16      by the virus and its effect on the housing crisis; and  
17   **WHEREAS**, In New Jersey, in order to afford a modest, two-bedroom  
18      apartment, on average, a renter would need an income of \$31.96 per  
19      hour; however, this is often far above the income of many working  
20      families, seniors, and people with disabilities in this State; and  
21   **WHEREAS**, Only a small percentage of households eligible for rental  
22      assistance receive such assistance due in large part to decades of  
23      chronic underfunding; and  
24   **WHEREAS**, Addressing the housing crisis and bridging the gap  
25      between incomes and housing costs through the expansion of rental  
26      assistance programs is of utmost importance; and  
27   **WHEREAS**, On September 27, 2021, the United States House of  
28      Representatives introduced H.R. 5376, commonly referred to as the  
29      “Build Back Better Act,” which would provide funding and  
30      establish programs relating to a broad array of areas, including  
31      among others, housing, education, labor, childcare, health care,  
32      taxes, immigration, and the environment; and  
33   **WHEREAS**, This legislation was passed by the U.S. House of  
34      Representatives on November 19, 2021; and  
35   **WHEREAS**, Congress is currently considering the Build Back Better  
36      agenda which could provide a once-in-a-lifetime investment in  
37      housing affordability, stability and security and lay the foundation  
38      to help make New Jersey a more affordable place to live for  
39      generations to come; and  
40   **WHEREAS**, By including mechanisms in the Build Back Better  
41      economic recovery package to expand rental assistance programs  
42      and address the severe shortage of affordable housing for people  
43      with the lowest incomes, Congress could help bridge the gap  
44      between wages and housing costs for America’s lowest-income and  
45      most marginalized households; and  
46   **WHEREAS**, It is therefore critical that Congress make a robust  
47      investment in housing affordability in any budget reconciliation bill  
48      similar to what was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in

the “Build Back Better Act,” including: an expansion of rental assistance by \$25 billion to serve 300,000 additional households; \$65 billion to repair public housing, which is home to 2.5 million residents; and \$15 billion in the national Housing Trust Fund to build and preserve 150,000 homes affordable to people with the greatest needs; now, therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. The Senate and the General Assembly urge the United States Congress to include in the Build Back Better economic recovery package funding to expand rental assistance programs, and build, repair, and preserve affordable homes in order to reach and provide greater assistance to more people in need of affordable housing.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate or the Clerk of the General Assembly to the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate, the Speaker and the Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, and to each member of the United States Congress elected from this State.

3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

#### STATEMENT

This joint resolution urges the United States Congress to include within the federal “Build Back Better” legislation funding to expand rental assistance programs, and build, repair and preserve affordable homes in order to reach and provide greater assistance to more people in need of affordable housing. Housing insecurity has long been a threat to the public’s health and safety, and the COVID-19 pandemic has served to highlight and heighten awareness of the dangers associated with this housing crisis. A substantial number of New Jersey residents do not have sufficient income to afford even modest, decent housing, but often only a small percentage of those who are eligible to receive housing assistance actually receive it, as these programs are often substantially underfunded. Due to the pandemic, many New Jersey residents incurred economic hardships and faced the threat of homelessness and foreclosure because they could no longer afford to pay for housing. Moreover, people of color, specifically women of color and other marginalized renters, have been disproportionately impacted by these hardships.

In an effort to provide relief to many of the people struggling as a result of the pandemic, the U.S. House of Representatives introduced H.R. 5376, better known as the “Build Back Better

1 Act.” This legislation provides Congress a once-in-a-lifetime  
2 opportunity to invest in housing affordability, stability and security.  
3 Including mechanisms to expand rental assistance programs and  
4 address the severe shortage of affordable housing for people with  
5 the lowest incomes, Congress could help bridge the gap between  
6 wages and housing costs for America’s lowest-income and most  
7 marginalized households. It is therefore critical that Congress make  
8 a robust investment in housing affordability in any budget  
9 reconciliation bill similar to what was passed by the U.S. House of  
10 Representatives in the “Build Back Better Act.” The New Jersey  
11 Legislature urges Congress to include the following in this  
12 legislation:

- 13 • an expansion of rental assistance by \$25 billion to serve  
14 300,000 additional households;
- 15 • \$65 billion to repair public housing, which is home to 2.5  
16 million residents; and
- 17 • \$15 billion in the national Housing Trust Fund to build and  
18 preserve 150,000 homes affordable to people with the  
19 greatest needs.