

2010 Legislative Resolutions

Resolution No. 1

PRESERVE AND STRENGTHEN HOME RULE

WHEREAS, beginning in 1894, the people of the State of New York have voted repeatedly to approve Constitutional provisions granting broad home rule powers to local governments and corresponding restrictions on the State Legislature to preserve these powers; and

WHEREAS, home rule powers encompass a wide range of subjects including but not limited to: the power to adopt, amend and repeal local laws in the exercise of its functions, powers and duties; the power to share services and act cooperatively with other local governments; the power to acquire real and personal property for its corporate purposes; the power to establish recreational facilities; the power to dispose of its real and personal property; the power to levy and collect rents, charges, fees and penalties in a city, village or town; the power to adopt, amend and repeal zoning regulations; and the power to perform comprehensive or other planning work relating to its jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, the exercise of these powers permits local governing bodies to meet the unique and diverse needs of local residents while fostering citizen participation and grass roots involvement in government; and

WHEREAS, New York's diverse communities are best served by maintaining the principles of home rule, including those set forth in the State Constitution, Local Government Bill of Rights, Statute of Local Government and the Municipal Home Rule Law; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor and Members of the State Legislature to preserve and strengthen home rule; and **BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns will strongly oppose any state initiative to weaken or eliminate New York's long-standing tradition of home rule and local government authority.

Resolution No. 2

PRESERVE LOCAL DEMOCRACY – AT LARGE ELECTIONS

WHEREAS, New York benefits from a rich history of diverse cultures and ideas; and

WHEREAS, New York supports and preserves its diversity and cultural heritage by giving local governments the ability to shape and govern their communities to best reflect the culture and diversity of their community; and

WHEREAS, choice in the means and method of electing local government leaders is reflected in state laws and policies; and

WHEREAS, the Town Law provides town voters with a choice in town government structure (Town Law, article 6; Chapter 634 of the Laws of 1932); and

WHEREAS, since the inception of the representative form of town government, towns have been governed by local leaders elected at large (Chapter 634 of the Laws of 1932) with the local option to elect town board members by alternative means such as via a ward system (Town Law, §81); and

WHEREAS, recent legislative proposals (e.g. S.1427/A.4879; S.4471/A.6392) seek to eliminate voter choice in the method of electing town board members by imposing a mandatory ward system; and

WHEREAS, not all towns due to their size or population will benefit from the election of town board members via a ward system; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Members of the State Legislature and the Governor to preserve local choice in the manner of election of town board members, including at large elections; and **BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns is opposed to any legislation mandating a ward system or other means of electing town officials.

Resolution No. 3

MUNICIPAL DEPOSITS IN CREDIT UNIONS AND THRIFT INSTITUTIONS

WHEREAS, the General Municipal Law of the State of New York requires that local governments designate one or more banks or trust companies for the deposit of public funds; and

WHEREAS, many state and local governments throughout the United States expressly allow for the deposit of public funds in credit unions, savings banks and savings and loan associations (hereinafter referred to as “thrift institutions”); and

WHEREAS, the State of New York remains one of the few states where local governments are statutorily prohibited from using thrift institutions for municipal deposits; and

WHEREAS, using local institutions for municipal deposits fosters local economic development because local tax dollars will be used by local institutions to invest in local businesses, mortgages and community development projects; and

WHEREAS, using local thrift institutions fosters local government efficiency; and

WHEREAS, like banks, credit unions are insured by the National Credit Union Insurance Fund, a federal agency comparable to the Federal Deposit Insurance Company, **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor and Members of the State Legislature to pass legislation that amends applicable state laws to allow local governments to deposit public funds in credit unions and thrift institutions.

Resolution No. 4

PUBLICATION OF LEGAL NOTICES

WHEREAS, an informed and engaged electorate is important to the governing process; and

WHEREAS, the electorate is notified of many local government actions by means of the publication of a legal notice in a paid daily or weekly newspaper as defined by Public Officers Law §70-a and General Construction Law, §60 (a) and

WHEREAS, studies show the decline in paid local daily and weekly newspaper readership is accelerating; and

WHEREAS, New Yorkers are increasingly turning to alternative sources of news and information such as the internet and free community newspapers; and

WHEREAS, the intent of required public notice is to increase the likelihood that citizens are well-informed regarding local government actions, finances and plans; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor and Members of the State Legislature to amend the General Construction Law to allow papers, distributed without charge, but with an established and large circulation, to be considered newspapers in certain instances to permit towns and other local governments to place legal notices in the local publications which may reach a larger audience and/or be less costly to the taxpayers; and **BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns supports legislation providing for optional alternative media for publication of legal notices in order to improve the citizen participation and awareness of town programs and expenses.

Resolution No. 5

PRESERVATION OF TOWN REGISTRARS OF VITAL STATISTICS

WHEREAS, the New York State Local Government Commission on Efficiency and Competitiveness has made certain recommendations to the Governor which affect the operation of local governments; and

WHEREAS, one of the recommendations of the Commission was to move all Registrar of Vital Statistics duties to the county level under the direction of the New York State Health Commissioner; and

WHEREAS, the NYS Department of Health has developed a program bill that would allow the commissioner to consolidate the function of the local registrars of vital statistics; and

WHEREAS, New York State Department of Health has inappropriately attached these proposed changes in the structure of the Registrar of Vital Statistics duties to the “Pandemic Flu and Public Health Emergency Preparedness Law;” and

WHEREAS, the commissioner could consolidate these services without county legislative approval; and

WHEREAS, the local city, town and village clerks have provided this service professionally and efficiently over the years; and

WHEREAS, losing this function would have a financial impact on the local governments; and

WHEREAS, many citizens are under financial stress due to fluctuating fuel costs, layoffs, rising food, health care and utility prices; and

WHEREAS, the town, city and village clerk offices are conveniently located thereby reducing the cost and burden to receive this service; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that in the interest of good government and accessibility to the taxpayer, the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor, the State Legislature and the Commissioner of the Department of Health to continue to allow town, city and village clerks to provide this important service; and **BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor, Members of the State Legislature and the Commissioner of the Department of Health to work with local governments to provide the necessary resources (including voluntary cooperation, local opt out or voluntary consolidation) to assist local registrars in the provision of this important service in order to comply with the Federal Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 and the pending regulations.

Resolution No. 6

REFORM OF GML §207-C DISABILITY BENEFITS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

WHEREAS, pursuant to General Municipal Law (GML), §207-c, law enforcement personnel are entitled to payment of municipal compensation including payment of salary, fringe benefits and all medical costs when they are injured in the line of duty and these payments are nontaxable and can continue for years or even decades until there is recovery, a disability retirement or attainment of retirement age; and

WHEREAS, the New York State Court of Appeals decided (*Matter of Theroux, et al. v. Reilly, et al.*) that pursuant to GML, §207-c, law enforcement officers are entitled to these benefits regardless of the duties performed or the nature of the injury; and

WHEREAS, the Office of the New York State Comptroller has the final determination as to when a law enforcement officer is eligible for a disability retirement and historically has been reluctant to issue disability retirements to law enforcement officers who are receiving GML, §207-c benefits; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement officers have been known to stay on municipal payrolls receiving GML, §207-c benefits for multiple years thereby occupying a position that could be filled by another officer; and

WHEREAS, this interpretation of GML, §207-c by the New York State Court of Appeals will substantially increase municipal compensation costs and create a great hardship to taxpayers at all municipal government levels; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns supports legislation to amend General

Municipal Law, §207-c to require disability retirement benefits to be extended to any law enforcement officer who has been receiving GML, §207-c benefits for a period of 36 consecutive months without the ability to return to work.

Resolution No. 7

ELIMINATE COMMUNITY RATING REQUIREMENTS FOR SMALL MUNICIPAL HEALTH INSURANCE POOLS

WHEREAS, statewide since 1997, medical insurance costs for local governments (excluding New York City) have increased at rates almost four times that of inflation (almost 150 percent between 1997 and 2007); and

WHEREAS, municipalities are attempting to control the high cost of health insurance by taking advantage of economies of scale and developing shared insurance plans with neighboring municipalities; and

WHEREAS, many larger municipalities have joined multiple employer or similar trusts to jointly purchase health insurance plans; and

WHEREAS, by joining multiple employer and similar trusts and spreading the risk among a larger pool of risks, these municipalities have lowered health insurance costs by reducing administrative costs through negotiating power, amortizing costs across similar pools of risk, and risk sharing, all in an effort to stabilize health claims costs; and

WHEREAS, small municipalities with 50 or fewer employees are unable to take advantage of these costs savings due to New York's community rating laws; and

WHEREAS, since 1992, New York has required that individual and small group health insurance policies, those insuring groups of 50 or less, be community rated; and

WHEREAS, under community rating, the premium is determined by the collective claims experience of all insured in a particular community pool, without regard to age, sex, health status or occupations. Conversely, premiums for groups with more than 50 members are developed using experience rating methodology which determines the premium based upon a portion or all of the group's specific claims experience; and

WHEREAS, small municipalities have not been allowed to join multiple employer or similar trusts and cannot share in the cost saving benefits associated with these experience rate trusts; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill A2246 and Senate Bill S5080 would allow small municipalities to join multiple employer or similar trusts that are experience rated so they may share in the health insurance cost savings of these trusts; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor and the Members of the State Legislature to change the present Insurance Law by excepting from community rating requirements group health insurance policies issued to trusts consisting of municipal corporations and public benefit corporations.

Resolution No. 8

STUDY AND PREPARE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE DAMAGE RESULTING FROM ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSES

WHEREAS, the United States Congress created a commission to examine and report on the effects of electromagnetic pulses on critical infrastructure which demonstrated that critical infrastructure is highly vulnerable and largely unprotected; and

WHEREAS, the Congressional EMP Commission was disbanded in 2009; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, the National Academy of Sciences released a blue ribbon study that independently supported the EMP Commission's warnings that Mother Nature can also pose an EMP threat to the United States, by means of a great geomagnetic storm that occurs about once every century, very similar in effect to a nuclear EMP attack; and, according to the National Academy of Sciences, such a storm is inevitable, and may occur during the next cycle of solar flare activity, in 2012;

WHEREAS, economic output losses and physical harm to residents could be substantially reduced if even 10 percent of critical infrastructure were protected; and

WHEREAS, it is critically important to protect the public through an immediate, continuous, cost effective, and sustainable state of readiness that is resistant to foreign and domestic terrorist threats (including cyber threats and EMP attacks), and to be prepared for natural disasters (including great geomagnetic solar storms), and to provide emergency management and terrorism prevention services to citizens through an "All Hazards Approach" that builds on the creative coordination of existing state functions and local resources such as emergency management, law enforcement, fire and communications, using strategic priorities and aligning and empowering efforts by state and local agencies in coordination with private sector capabilities and resources; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns hereby requests that the New York State Legislature create a committee to assess the dangers of man-made and solar EMP threats, and develop and recommend a plan to prepare for, protect from, respond to and recover after such EMP events; and **BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns hereby requests that the New York State Public Service Commission and power utility authorities and companies take immediate action to protect the electrical power grid and supply systems from the effects of man-made and solar EMP; and **BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon members of the New York State Congressional Delegation to urge that the EMP Commission be reestablished.

Resolution No. 9

PRESERVE AND STRENGTHEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN THE SITING OF ENERGY GENERATION FACILITIES

WHEREAS, Governor Paterson signed Executive Order 24 of the year 2009, setting forth

a goal to reduce current greenhouse gas emissions from all sources within the state 80 percent below levels emitted in the year 1990 by the year 2050; and

WHEREAS, the wind energy facilities (WEFs) will likely play a significant role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, the proper regulation of the siting and installation of WEFs is necessary for the purpose of protecting the health, safety and welfare of neighboring property owners and the general public; and

WHEREAS, local governments have successfully developed, implemented and administered local WEF siting laws and policies with the input and guidance of local taxpayers, residents, business and agricultural representatives, environmentalists, energy generators, planners and lawyers; and

WHEREAS, the Wind Code of Conduct negotiated by the New York State Attorney General's Office and agreed to by the predominate players in the Wind Energy Market has addressed potential conflicts of interests in the siting of wind energy facilities; and

WHEREAS, Article X of the Public Service Law (PSL), which set forth the siting procedure to construct and operate major power generation facilities with a capacity of 80 megawatts or more, expired Dec. 31, 2002, thereby requiring electric generating project developers to undergo local zoning review and environmental review pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law); **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor, State Legislature and State Agencies to develop new laws and regulations that will preserve local authority over the siting of WEFs; and **BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED, that legislation authorizing the renewal of the state siting procedure for power generation facilities (PSL, article X) should include measures to enhance local government participation in the siting process such as, but not limited to: ad hoc membership on the state siting board, adherence to local siting policies, required community host agreements, and/or access to intervenor funds.

Resolution No. 10

PRESERVE TOWN LAND USE AUTHORITY IN THE NATURAL GAS EXPLORATION AND EXTRACTION APPROVAL PROCESS

WHEREAS, the towns of New York State are responsible for providing services to their residents to promote the health, safety and welfare of the community, including the regulation of land use; and

WHEREAS, by delegating land use authority to local governments, the State Legislature has recognized that local governments are in the best position to respond to the needs of residents who are uniquely affected by projects that impact their community and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the exploration, drilling and extraction of natural gas and oil can have significant impacts on local communities and raise numerous concerns about surrounding land uses

and the overall quality of life within the community; and

WHEREAS, the scope of local land use authority under Article 23 of the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL), which regulates the testing, exploration, drilling and extraction of natural gas and oil, has been called into question; and

WHEREAS, other states, including Texas and California, have expressly preserved local zoning and land use authority over the siting of natural gas and oil testing, exploration, drilling and extraction; and

WHEREAS, the importance of retaining local land use authority in this area is affirmed by the express preservation of local zoning and land use over the siting of mines and mineral extraction; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor, the Members of the State Legislature and the Department of Environmental Conservation to amend the Environmental Conservation Law to expressly preserve local land use authority over the testing, exploration, drilling and extraction of natural gas and oil.

Resolution No. 11

HIGHWAY, BRIDGE AND TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

WHEREAS, a safe and dependable transportation infrastructure network is necessary in order to protect users of New York's roads, bridges and mass transit and to encourage and sustain economic development; and

WHEREAS, the roads and bridges that make up our nation's highway and transit infrastructure are built, operated and maintained through the collaborative financial assistance of federal, state and local governments, with 85 percent of New York's roads and bridges maintained by local governments; and

WHEREAS, the federal "Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users" (SAFETEA-LU) funding program was established to provide federal funding for state and local infrastructure projects and expired in 2009; and

WHEREAS, the New York State "Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program" (CHIPS) was established to assist localities in financing the construction, reconstruction or improvement of local highways, bridges, highway-railroad crossings and/or other local facilities (Highway Law, §10-c) is subject to annual appropriation; and

WHEREAS, studies of New York's extensive local road system continue to identify a multi-billion dollar shortfall in funding for local highways and bridges; and

WHEREAS, a 2009 State Comptroller report provides that only one-third of the \$30 billion allocated to New York's Dedicated Highway and Bridge Trust Fund has been spent on building and repairing roads and bridges in the state since 1991; and

WHEREAS, the Association of Towns is cognizant of the current financial crisis; and

WHEREAS, according to the Federal Highway Administration, every \$1 spent on street and highway improvements results in \$5.40 in economic benefits; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor, the State Legislature and the Department of Transportation to maintain CHIPS funding in the 2010-11 State Budget and to provide a stable and sustainable funding stream for local infrastructure needs; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor, the State Legislature and the Department of Transportation to fully fund and preserve the Dedicated Highway and Bridge Trust Fund (DHBTF) for capital infrastructure expenditures and to phase out noncapital expenditures; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the New York Congressional Delegation, to renew SAFETEA-LU and to provide an increased and dedicated funding commitment to New York State and local transportation infrastructure projects.

Resolution No. 12

ROAD PRESERVATION BONDS

WHEREAS, well-maintained roads and bridges are important to the economic well-being of New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS, many commercial endeavors such as, but not limited to, timber harvesting, wind energy development, mining and natural gas exploration are dependent on local roads and bridges and are therefore important to New York's economy; and

WHEREAS, many of these endeavors require the frequent transport of heavy equipment and loads over local highways, occasionally damaging local roads in the process; and

WHEREAS, most local roads and bridges are not designed to accommodate the weight, volume and frequency of vehicles used in support of these industries; and

WHEREAS, current New York State Law does not provide express statutory authority for local governments to require road reconstruction bonds to fund road repairs caused by vehicles moving heavy equipment and loads; NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor and Members of the State Legislature to provide express statutory authority for local governments to require the posting of road reconstruction bonds to protect local highways from damage attributable to commercial vehicles and loads.

Resolution No. 13

SPEED LIMITS ON TOWN ROADS

WHEREAS, Vehicle and Traffic Law authorizes all cities and villages (§1643) regardless of classification or population to set speed limits on their roads; and

WHEREAS, Vehicle & Traffic Law, §1662-a only authorizes certain towns (i.e., suburban towns or those with over 50,000 in population, which is less than 10 percent of towns) to set speed limits on highways within a town other than state highways maintained by the State; and

WHEREAS, most towns must petition the County Highway Superintendent and the Department of Transportation to set speed limits on town roads (Vehicle & Traffic Law, §1622); and

WHEREAS, towns are concerned that the procedure to have speed limits set by the Department of Transportation can be lengthy and has, in many instances, resulted in no material change to the posted speeds; and

WHEREAS, town officials are better positioned to work with their citizens to responsibly set speed limits on town roads and more likely to be responsive to their residents' concerns for health and safety; and

WHEREAS, town officials are legally required to set speed limits based upon the same engineering standards and traffic investigation techniques as cities, villages and DOT are required to employ; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 399 of the Laws of 2008, requiring the Department of Transportation to set speed limits on roads within the Towns of Bedford, Lewisboro, North Castle and Pound Ridge (Westchester County) in accordance with town board request, received overwhelming support from Members of the State Legislature; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns requests the Governor and Members of the Legislature to extend to all towns the option – through the adoption of a local law – to assume responsibility and authority to set speed limits on town roads within their respective jurisdictions, within the limits as defined in §1662-a of the Vehicle & Traffic Law, and so long as those roads have been functionally classified by the Department of Transportation as local roads.

Resolution No. 14

MANDATE RELIEF

WHEREAS, local governments are in partnership with the state and federal government to protect and preserve the health, safety and welfare of the people of New York State; and

WHEREAS, such a partnership requires collaboration in order to effectively accomplish these goals; and

WHEREAS, the imposition of tax-shifting unfunded state and federal mandates (commonly occurring in the areas of public works, procurement, personnel management, provision of local service, environmental quality enhancements and loss of local tax base) represents a barrier to effective collaboration and good governance; and

WHEREAS, the growing expense of tax-shifting unfunded mandates, both individually and collectively, places financial burdens on local governments and, ultimately, the taxpayer and has in some instances forced local governments to drastically underfund crucial local services such as road maintenance, public safety and recreational and cultural services, and

WHEREAS, Governor Paterson penned Executive Orders Nos. 17 and 25 of the year 2009 to address the cost of mandate compliance on local taxpayers to inventory existing mandates and to fully evaluate the actual cost of compliance with future mandates regarding state

agency program bills; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the President and Congress to enhance the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA; P.L. 104-4) to expand the definition of the term “unfunded mandate” and to fully fund Federal programs administered at the state and local level; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor and Members of the State Legislature to enact comprehensive mandate relief legislation that would take into consideration the following among other relief measures: (1) inventory and full funding of existing and future mandates and (2) require all future legislation to include specific local fiscal impact notes.

Resolution No. 15

PRESERVE AND FULLY FUND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT RECORDS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT FUND

WHEREAS, the Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund (LGRMIF) was established by the New York State Legislature in 1989 as “a dedicated fund to improve records management and archival administration in New York’s local governments” (Ch. 78, Laws of 1989); and

WHEREAS, LGRMIF provides necessary support, advice and assistance to local governments to support the development of records management programs in accordance with the Local Government Records Law of 1987; and

WHEREAS, LGRMIF is sustained by a \$5 fee collected by the county clerks and New York City Register on recordings and for the assignment of index numbers to actions pending in County or Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, approximately 9,000 grants totaling about \$175 million have been given out over the past 20 years to assist local governments in proper records management; and

WHEREAS, this program provides cutting edge support services such as digital imaging, saving taxpayers approximately \$4.5 million annually; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor and Members of the State Legislature to support the LGRMIF by increasing available revenue through the enactment of legislation increasing fees (see A.06783A/S.3640-A) and fully funding the LGRMIF and its programs.

Resolution No. 16

SUPPORT LOCAL ECONOMIES THROUGH CONTINUATION OF STATE FACILITIES

WHEREAS, the 2010-2011 Executive Budget includes a proposal to close the minimum security Moriah Shock Incarceration Correctional Facility (Essex County); the minimum security Lyon Mountain Correctional Facility (Clinton County); the medium security Ogdensburg Correctional Facility (St. Lawrence County); and the minimum security portion of Butler Correctional Facility (Wayne County); and

WHEREAS, these state facilities provide stable employment and serve as an economic engine for these regions; and

WHEREAS, local governments hosting these facilities have spent local tax dollars on necessary support facilities such as schools, water, wastewater and highways; and

WHEREAS, the locally funded services, facilities and infrastructure are directly tied to these state facilities; and

WHEREAS, the loss of these state prisons will negatively impact the quality of life, economies, state aid rates and tax bases of these communities, **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor, Members of the State Legislature and the Department of Corrections to continue to support these regions through the continuation of these important state facilities.

Resolution No. 17

REFORM REAL PROPERTY TAX SYSTEM

WHEREAS, towns primarily rely on real property tax revenues to fund important government services; and

WHEREAS, New York's property tax burden is higher than the national average, thereby impacting our standard of living and economic vitality; and

WHEREAS, a contributing factor to high real property taxes is the volume of legislation passed each year granting particular property owners either a partial or full exemption from the payment of real property taxes, a practice that has continued unabated; and

WHEREAS, the legislative trend to grant exceptions from established taxable status dates, either at local option or statewide, contributes to the increase in real property taxes paid by homeowners and small businesses; and

WHEREAS, it is essential that the cumulative long-term impact of real property tax exemptions be addressed in New York, particularly in light of the retroactive exemptions for specific properties annually enacted and the expanding scope of existing exemptions; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Association of Towns calls upon the Governor and Members of the State Legislature to define and enact a uniform, well-defined approach to exemption and taxable status date legislation and provide state funding for any state-mandated or encouraged exemption programs and protect local property tax revenues.