

# NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

*County Government with a Unified Voice!*

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February 23, 2012

Honorable Jefferson Van Drew  
Chairman, Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee  
21 North Main Street  
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210-2154

**RE: SENATE, NO. 1694** (*Doherty R-23*)

Dear Chairman Van Drew:

On behalf of the New Jersey Association of Counties (NJAC), I'm pleased to inform you of our strong support of S-1694, which permits counties to share county tax administrators, and of which has been referred to the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee for consideration.

As you know, NJAC is a strong advocate for sharing resources and consolidation where feasible as cost effective alternatives for providing necessary and often mandated government services in a more reliable and practical manner. Over the past decade, our counties have led the way on implementing innovative programs and initiatives that have improved the level of service provided and saved valuable taxpayer dollars. Unfortunately however, several antiquated laws remain on the books and have become significant barriers to moving forward with potential cost saving initiatives.

One such example is the fact that N.J.S.A. 54:3-7(b) requires the county board of taxation in each county to appoint a full time county tax administrator. As you know, the Governor appoints all tax board members with the advice and consent of the Senate, and the State Treasurer pays their salaries accordingly. However, counties must pay for the salaries of their county tax administrator at approximately \$120,000 - \$150,000 per year, plus pension and health benefits. Counties must also pay for the salaries of all clerical assistants, and for the operation and maintenance of the offices for the entire tax board and administrator.

Several of our counties have expressed interest in sharing their county tax administrator as a meaningful cost saving measure, but have been advised that such an arrangement is prohibited by N.J.S.A. 54:3-7(b) as it again requires that counties employ their tax administrator on a full-time basis. At a time in which all local governments are struggling to make ends meet by reducing critical staff, essential services, and capital improvement projects, this outdated law imposes an unnecessary barrier to progressively sharing services. With this in mind, we respectfully request that the Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee have the opportunity to consider S-1694 at one of its upcoming meetings as this legislation will provide county governments throughout the State with an additional tool to implement cutting edge changes on how it does business.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration, and I would be happy to meet with you in person to discuss this important legislative initiative in more detail. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me at (609) 394-3467 with any questions or concerns.

Very truly yours,

John G. Donnadio, Esq.  
Executive Director

cc: Honorable Michael J. Doherty

