



New Jersey General Assembly

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TOP ASSEMBLY LEADERS: **GIVE TOWNS MORE TIME TO SUBMIT HOUSING PLANS**

Cite changing regulations, slumping economy, environmental concerns

(TRENTON) – Assembly Speaker Joseph J. Roberts Jr. and Assembly Housing and Local Government Chairman Jerry Green today sent a letter to the state Council on Affordable Housing asking it to give municipalities more time to submit housing plans.

COAH has given municipalities until Dec. 31 to submit their plans.

Roberts and Green, who is also Assembly speaker pro tempore, asked it to extend that deadline by at least 90 days.

The Assembly leaders cited changing COAH regulations, the slumping economy and new wastewater management rules expected to adopted early next year as top reasons for their request.

“We continue to share the commitment to maximize affordable housing in New Jersey, but with many communities struggling to adapt to COAH’s third-round housing rules, the state must provide more flexibility to help towns adjust,” they wrote.

They added, “Municipalities should be given the chance to apply for additional time so they can submit thoughtful and realistic housing plans that reflect the latest changes and the economic and wastewater management concerns.”

A copy of the letter is below.

--On the Net: www.assemblydems.com



NEW JERSEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JOSEPH J. ROBERTS, JR.
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Dec. 8, 2008

RE: COAH'S DEC. 31 Deadline

Lucy Vandenberg
Executive Director
New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing
101 S. Broad St.
PO Box 813
Trenton, N.J. 08625-0813

Dear Ms. Vandenberg,

As sponsors of A-500, which brought historic changes to the state's housing laws, we continue to share the commitment to maximize affordable housing in New Jersey, but with many communities struggling to adapt to COAH's third-round housing rules, the state must provide more flexibility to help towns adjust.

Extending the Dec. 31 deadline under which municipalities must submit housing plans is a top priority, especially considering how COAH proposed amendments to its rules as recently as September. Municipalities should be given the chance to apply for additional time so they can submit thoughtful and realistic housing plans that reflect the latest changes.

Also of concern is the ongoing global economic crisis that has hit municipalities and the housing markets hard. We want to give communities the best opportunity to build and provide housing in this tough economic environment.

We also want to give COAH and the state Department of Environmental Protection time to work together as new wastewater management rules are developed for municipalities. We don't want to see these two efforts collide.

Thus, municipalities should be given the chance to apply for additional time so they can submit thoughtful and realistic housing plans that reflect the latest changes and the economic and wastewater management concerns.

concerns.

Therefore, we are asking that COAH allow towns to apply for a at least 90-day extension of COAH's Dec. 31 deadline.

I look forward to hearing back from you on this reasonable request that would allow everyone to work cooperatively toward making housing affordable to all New Jersey families.

Respectfully,

Joseph J. Roberts, Jr.
Speaker
New Jersey General Assembly

Jerry Green
Speaker Pro Tempore/Housing Chairman
New Jersey Assembly