



Township of Monroe

County of Middlesex

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Monroe Leaders Urge Christie to Reverse Cuts to Senior Property Tax Relief Programs

MONROE – Monroe's Township Council, joined by Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro, is urging Gov. Chris Christie to reverse his policies, which have led to reduced enrollment and benefits in the Homestead Rebate and the Senior Freeze Programs.

These critical property tax relief programs become even more important as President Donald Trump and Congress look to eliminate federal tax deductions that will negatively impact New Jersey residents.

At an Oct. 2 meeting, the Monroe Township Council approved a resolution asking the Governor to reinstate the cuts made to the Homestead Rebate Program and to deliver on cost-of-living increases that have long been promised as a remedy to a currently flawed Senior Freeze Program.

"Monroe is considered one of the State's most prominent senior communities because of our quality of life, safety and careful spending," Tamburro said. "Many of our senior residents have watched the Homestead Rebate dwindle and the Senior Freeze become unobtainable over the past 10 years."

Homestead Rebate Tax Relief Program

In 1976, New Jersey enacted the Homestead Rebate Program to provide property tax relief to residents. The Governor eliminated the 2009 rebate by instituting a tax credit that has since been reduced and delayed.

Before Christie took office, over 8,000 senior households in Monroe received up to \$1,200 annually as part of the Homestead Rebate Program.

Had the program continued intact, Township seniors would have received \$9,600 over the course of the past eight years, Township officials assert.

"Unfortunately, those seniors have only seen, on average, \$2,021 over that period – a \$7,579 reduction in tax relief," Tamburro said. "The Township Council and I recognize that many of our seniors are on a fixed income and we hope the Governor will reverse course."

Senior Freeze Program

The Senior Freeze Program utilized state funds to freeze property bills for seniors and disabled residents with incomes less than \$70,000.

"Our Governor has vetoed bills that would have increased the program's income threshold to \$87,000," said Monroe Councilman Leonard Baskin. "This increase would have kept pace with inflation and allowed more seniors to participate in the program."

Monroe's hope is to encourage other municipalities to come forward, forcing the Christie administration to respond to the shortfalls in tax relief funding targeting seniors and the disabled.

"In just a few years' time, the impacts of the Governor's decisions have become increasingly apparent given our demographics," said Monroe Councilwoman Miriam Cohen. "But this truly is a statewide problem. I hope the Governor will act in the best interest of New Jersey residents, especially given the federal government's plans to reduce state and local deductions."

For further details, contact Monroe Township's Public Information Officer Maria Prato at 732-521-4400 or mprato@monroetwp.com.