ASSEMBLY STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 55

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: APRIL 5, 2018

The Assembly State and Local Government Committee reports favorably Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 55.

This concurrent resolution opposes the inclusion of a citizenship question in the 2020 census survey and urges the New Jersey Congressional Delegation to reject any measure directing the Census Bureau to include such a question.

The United States Department of Justice has asked the Census Bureau to include a question about citizenship status in the 2020 decennial census form. According to experts, including four former Census Bureau directors, a citizenship question in the decennial census would have a detrimental effect on the accuracy of the decennial census count, as privacy concerns and fear of deportation would prevent many households from completing their census form. An undercount of the total population in municipalities, counties, states, and the nation would yield inaccurate data for research purposes and, among other impacts, will affect the equitable allocation of nearly $700 billion per year in federal funds, the number of electoral votes in each state, the reapportionment of legislative districts, and the apportionment of seats in the United States House of Representatives. The Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution requires that members of the House of Representatives "shall be apportioned among the several states according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each state."

Given the Trump Administration's deportation, immigration, and naturalization policies, a citizenship question in the decennial census survey would prevent the achievement of the full count of the population required by the Constitution, as many households would refuse to complete the census form. Including a citizenship question in the decennial census would be counterproductive to the goal of achieving a full count of the population and would yield inaccurate data for the next decade.