

PRESS RELEASE

August 30, 2017

ESSEX COUNTY FREEHOLDERS PASS RESOLUTION CONDEMNING PRESIDENT TRUMP’S REACTIONS TO THE VIOLENT PROTESTS IN CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA



Members of the Board: (1st Row, left to right,) Freeholder Patricia Sebold, Freeholder Cynthia Toro, Freeholder Lebbly C. Jones and Freeholder Wayne L. Richardson. (2nd Row, left to right), Freeholder Vice President W. Brendan Gill, Freeholder President Britnee N. Timberlake, Freeholder Leonard M. Luciano, Freeholder Rufus I. Johnson and Freeholder Rolando Bobadilla. PHOTO BY GLEN FRIESON

(Irvington, NJ) – During the Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders’ meeting at the Irvington Town Hall on August 23, 2017, the Board unanimously passed a Resolution condemning President Donald Trump’s reactions to the violent protests in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Freeholder At-Large and Vice President of the Board Brendan W. Gill of Montclair and Freeholder At-Large Patricia Sebold of Livingston proposed the Resolution that was passed by acclamation in an effort to display the Board’s support for peaceful protests, denouncing violence.

During the meeting, Freeholder Sebold shared remarks, stating, “We must speak out against bigotry and racism. We must not remain silent.” She referenced a quote from Civil Rights Activist Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a quote that is also written in the Board’s Resolution, that reads, “In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.”

Freeholder Vice President Gill also stated, “At times of national crisis, we need a leader who will step up and provide Americans the moral clarity needed to bring us together as one.” He went on to add, “We must make no equivocation - the tragic loss of life we witnessed in Charlottesville was a direct result of the violent actions of white nationalists, neo-Nazis and Alt-Right groups spreading fear and hatred. This was a gravely missed opportunity for President Trump, and I condemn his woefully inadequate response in the strongest terms.”

During the protests in Charlottesville, White nationalists and counter protesters disagreed over the removal of Confederate monuments displayed throughout southern regions of the country. What started as a peaceful protest transformed into a state of emergency. The event was further catastrophized when a car crashed into a crowd of counter protestors, leading to the death of a 32-year-old woman and injuring at least 19 others.

In response to the August 12, 2017, occurrences, President Trump was quoted in *The New York Times* as stating, "I think there is blame on both sides." He went on to add, "You had a group on one side that was bad. You had a group on the other side that was also very violent. Nobody wants to say that. I'll say it right now." The Board fervently opposes Neo-Nazis and White supremacists across the United States.

The Resolution mentions that President Trump failed to directly denounce White nationalists, Neo-Nazis and Ku Klux Klan members in his initial statement. The Resolution states, "Despite condemning those groups in a subsequent statement, the President later backtracked by blaming 'both sides' for the violence and saying many of the rally participants were peaceful." By passing the Resolution, the Board seeks to urge President Trump to lead by uniting the country, challenging hate, bigotry, violence, and racism.

**For Additional Information:
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