

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**January 29, 2018**

### **ESSEX COUNTY FREEHOLDERS PAY HOMAGE TO FREEHOLDER BRITNEE N. TIMBERLAKE AMID HER MOVE TO THE NEW JERSEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY**



Pictured are (from left to right) Freeholder Carlos M. Pomares of District 5, Freeholder Vice President Wayne L. Richardson of District 2, Freeholder At-Large Patricia Sebold, Freeholder At-Large President Brendan W. Gill, Freeholder Leonard M. Luciano of District 4, Freeholder Britnee N. Timberlake of District 3, Freeholder At-Large Rufus I. Johnson, Freeholder Robert Mercado of District 1, and Freeholder At-Large Leby C. Jones. PHOTO BY MEDINAH MUHAMMAD

(Newark, NJ) – During a special presentation at the Hall of Records on January 24, 2018, the Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders honored Freeholder Britnee N. Timberlake amid her resignation as a Freeholder and transition to the statehouse as a member of the New Jersey General Assembly. Freeholder Timberlake was sworn-in to her position as Assemblywoman in the 34<sup>th</sup> District on Monday, January 29, 2018, at the New Jersey State House in Trenton.

In November 2014, at the age of 29 Timberlake became the youngest Freeholder elected in the State of New Jersey, and after being named President in 2014, she became the only African-American female Freeholder President in the state at the time. During her tenure, she represented Essex County's third district, an area that includes parts of Newark's West Ward, East Orange, Orange, and South Orange. As the District 34 Assemblywoman, she

will continue to represent these areas, now at the state level where she plans to advocate for changes that will benefit all of New Jersey, especially in her home of Essex County.

During her tenure as Freeholder President, she spearheaded countless initiatives that uniquely made improvements to the quality of life of Essex County residents. In 2015, she drafted a law requiring banks the county holds taxpayer deposits with to come before the Board to show proof of their efforts to reduce foreclosures, provide loans to entrepreneurs, assist low-to-moderate-income communities, and maintain vacant homes they own.

In 2016, Timberlake spearheaded the Essex County Clean Jobs Initiative, a law expected to create both job training and placement for Essex County's unemployed and underemployed residents in the highly specialized and lucrative trade of environmental lead, asbestos, and contamination remediation.

In 2017, to level the financial playing field, she wrote an affirmative action law with the support of numerous NAACP chapters, local clergy, nonprofit organizations like New Jersey Working Families and Blue Wave NJ, Veterans organizations, and elected officials from different levels of government. The law established a set-aside and joint venture program to increase economic opportunity for women-owned, minority-owned, and veteran-owned businesses and remove historical blockades that have prevented companies from being competitive in the government bid process in Essex.

In response to the rising cost of living and stagnant wages, she was the first elected official in New Jersey, with the support of the Freeholder Board and Working Families, to unanimously pass a Resolution supporting increasing the statewide minimum wage to \$15.00 an hour. Furthermore, in a time where public safety has been a national focus, Timberlake successfully advocated for the Sheriff's Department to obtain body cameras for officers.

During her tenure, she also established a Freeholder Citizen Immigration Services Committee to warmly welcome people of all nationalities to Essex. In collaboration with Congressman Donald Payne, Jr., she raised support for efforts to end the horrific acts of Boko Haram (a Nigerian terrorist group). She has hosted parliamentary committee members of Ghana, West Africa, and forged deeper relationships to better bridge dialogue between Ghana and the county when she honored their invitation to visit Ghana's Parliament in 2016. Timberlake also frequents the United Nations for cultural celebrations and conferences and has given talks there about poverty, women's rights, and youth empowerment solutions. Outside of government, in 2007, she traveled as a church leader with Calvary Baptist Church of East Orange to do missionary work in Jamaica.

Aside from being an elected official, Timberlake is the founding Executive Director of a non-profit affordable housing organization called the Essex Community Land Trust (ECLT). The ECLT strengthens communities by providing permanent affordable housing and financial empowerment opportunities for working families and individuals throughout Essex County. She has leveraged over two million dollars used to create affordable for-sale housing in suburban communities for low-to-moderate-income households. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Political Science with a minor in Religious Studies and a Master's degree in Public Administration all from Seton Hall University.

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