RESOLUTION NO. 05-10

Opposition to Forced Local Government Mergers and Consolidations

A RESOLUTION of the Township of JACKSON County of CAMBRIA, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in opposition to forced mergers and consolidations of local governments in Pennsylvania.

Whereas, townships are excellent fiscal stewards that have been doing more with less ever since the days of William Penn and are run by elected officials that live and work in the communities they represent, and are more committed to pinching pennies and working together to stretch tax dollars than anyone else in government today; and

Whereas, various special interests suggest that there are too many local governments in Pennsylvania and that by reducing this figure through forced boundary change will somehow lead to greater economic conditions and the better delivery of services in the Commonwealth; and

Whereas, no one has ever proven that bigger, centralized government is better or even more cost-effective than township government; and

Whereas, governments that rely on consolidated county-based governments generally have higher tax burdens than smaller governments; and

Whereas, recent reports of financially distressed municipalities in Pennsylvania are largely contained to the Commonwealth's large cities and urban areas; and

Whereas, HB 2431 *(Session of 2010)* would, if adopted, would change the Pennsylvania Constitution and establish the county as the basic level of local government in Pennsylvania, with municipalities existing only under the jurisdiction of the county and having only those duties and responsibilities as determined by the county; and

Whereas, SB 1357 *(Session of 2010)* would, if adopted, establish an unelected, statewide boundary commission to review and make conclusions to the General Assembly for the merger, consolidation, or annexation of municipalities; and

Whereas, the township supports the voluntary merger or consolidation of local governments if the process is initiated at the local level and it has the support of the majority of the residents of all affected municipalities; and

Resolved, that the Township of JACKSON, County of CAMBRIA, opposes any measure, initiative, or plan that mandates the forced merger or consolidation of local governments; and be it further

Resolved, that the General Assembly be urged to oppose HB 2431, SB 1357, and any similar kind of legislation that has been, or may be introduced in the future to weaken the responsiveness and effectiveness of local government.

Adopted by the Board of Supervisors of Township of JACKSON, County of CAMBRIA, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, this 29TH day of JULY, 2010.

APPROVED
JACKSON TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS

Bruce Beck

John Dull

Mark Westrick

David M. Ricko – SECRETARY