

**TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL
MERCER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

R E S O L U T I O N #25-310

**RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE FORMATION OF A
REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY AS THE PROVIDER OF DRINKING WATER
SERVICES TO HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES**

WHEREAS, the Township of Hopewell relies upon Trenton Water Works (TWW), a municipal utility operated by the City of Trenton, as the primary provider of drinking water for its residents and businesses; and

WHEREAS, over the past several decades, Trenton Water Works has faced numerous challenges related to aging infrastructure, delayed capital improvements, chronic staffing shortages, and repeated violations of state and federal water quality standards, which have caused concern among Hopewell Township residents regarding the safety and reliability of their drinking water; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU), and other regulatory agencies have taken enforcement action against TWW for its failure to meet operational and compliance standards, and continue to monitor the utility under administrative consent orders; and

WHEREAS, Hopewell Township has no direct authority over the governance, management, or budgetary decisions of Trenton Water Works, despite the fact that over 60% of TWW customers reside outside the City of Trenton in suburban municipalities including Ewing, Lawrence, Hamilton, and Hopewell Township; and

WHEREAS, independent third-party evaluators authorized by NJDEP have found that TWW is at extremely high risk of systemic failure and that the City of Trenton does not possess the requisite technical, managerial, and financial capacity to properly address these risks and ensure TWW's long-term operational continuity; and

WHEREAS, these evaluators also recommended that a wholesale restructuring of TWW as a regional utility capable of modernizing system assets and professionalizing system operations at every level is necessary; and

WHEREAS, a regional water authority would provide a more equitable governance structure, allowing all participating municipalities to have a voice in decision-making, oversight, and accountability, ensuring that ratepayer dollars are invested efficiently and transparently; and

WHEREAS, transitioning to a regional model would improve service delivery, enable long-term capital investment, and enhance compliance with environmental and public health regulations, while restoring public confidence in the water utility; and

WHEREAS, several neighboring jurisdictions, including the City of Trenton itself, have expressed interest in exploring regional governance solutions, and enabling legislation and planning support from the State of New Jersey may be necessary to facilitate this transition; and

WHEREAS, NJDEP solicited proposals for regionalization support services (a public process facilitated by a neutral third-party expert that would help the City and surrounding communities explore and establish the parameters for any restructuring of TWW), with the input and agreement of the TWW serviced towns; and

WHEREAS, in order to select a regionalization support services provider and begin the 18-to-24-month process of establishing a regional utility, each municipality must commit to its engagement in the process.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Hopewell, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, that:

1. The Township of Hopewell supports the creation of a regional water authority to assume responsibility for the operation, governance, and maintenance of the water utility currently operated by Trenton Water Works; and
2. Hopewell Township urges each of the communities serviced by TWW to support this approach in order to ensure safety and reliability of our citizen's drinking water; and
3. The Township implores the State of New Jersey, including the NJDEP, NJBPU, and the Office of the Governor, to work collaboratively with all affected municipalities and the City of Trenton to develop and implement a transition plan to regional governance; and
4. The Township calls for all planning efforts to include robust public engagement, transparent financial analysis, and equitable representation of all municipalities currently served by TWW; and
5. A certified copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to Governor Phil Murphy, Senate President Nicholas Scutari, Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin, members of the Mercer County legislative delegation, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Trenton, and the governing bodies of all municipalities currently served by Trenton Water Works.

Date Adopted: August 11, 2025

CERTIFICATION

I, Jessalyn Walters, Deputy Municipal Clerk, of the Township of Hopewell, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Township Committee at the regular meeting held on the 11th day of August 2025, in the Municipal Building Auditorium, Hopewell Township, New Jersey and via Zoom Video Communications.



Jessalyn Walters, RMC
Deputy Municipal Clerk