

# NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE

## SENATE REPUBLICAN OFFICE

NEW JERSEY STATE HOUSE  
P.O. Box 099  
TRENTON, NJ 08625



## ASSEMBLY REPUBLICAN OFFICE

NEW JERSEY STATE HOUSE  
P.O. Box 098  
TRENTON, NJ 08625

September 15, 2021

Honorable Paul A. Sarlo  
Co-Chair, Joint Budget Oversight Committee  
496 Columbia Blvd., 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Wood-Ridge, NJ 07075

Honorable Eliana Pintor Marin  
Co-Chair, Joint Budget Oversight Committee  
263 Lafayette St., 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Newark, NJ 07105

Dear Chairs Sarlo and Pintor Marin:

We are following up with you to again urge the Joint Budget Oversight Committee to meet as soon as possible with respect to its role in directing the use of billions of dollars of federal block grants. Such a meeting is clearly warranted, especially after a recent report that the Governor has failed to use hardly any of the more than \$6.2 billion of funds received more than three months ago. We are additionally asking that JBOC inquire at the meeting as to why the Governor has failed to propose – much less use – a single dime of the \$3.7 billion State-funded New Jersey Debt Defeasance and Avoidance Fund created almost three months ago.

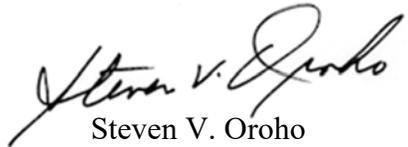
As you know, we believe it is unconscionable that none of the federal funds have been used to staunch a deficit in the Unemployment Insurance Fund projected by the Governor to grow to \$1 billion by year's end or to stop an employer tax scheduled to take effect on October 30. We are equally concerned that the Office of Legislative Services issued a report indicating none of the money already appropriated to help tenants catch up on landlord payments, and only about 2% of funds overall, have been utilized to alleviate suffering or get people back to work. We need to pressure action and consideration of proposals important to our constituents.

Similarly, \$3.7 billion of State funds set aside to retire debt and advance important capital needs without new indebtedness remains unused while we continue to pay interest on debt, miss out on investment opportunities in the pension fund, and increase our debt in the Unemployment Trust Fund (rapidly approaching \$1 billion in debt the Governor has estimated will exist as of June 30, 2021.) Meanwhile, important capital projects that could prevent flooding, improve water and sewer systems, and improve parks and schools sits dormant while we have crumbling infrastructure on top of a 7.3% unemployment rate that is among the worst

in the country.

As we indicated in a letter to you dated August 18, JBOC should aggressively advance the needs and interests of our constituents and not wait for the Governor to finally get around to proposing a plan of action and then rubber stamp it. For the reasons above and those contained in our earlier letter, we again urge you to call a meeting of the Joint Budget Oversight Committee to question representatives of the Murphy Administration and to help spur the use of money to avoid tax increases, alleviate suffering, and get people back to work.

Sincerely,



Steven V. Oroho  
Senate Republican Budget Officer



Harold "Hal" Wirths  
Assembly Republican Budget Officer