

COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Distribution List

DATE: January 24, 2020

FROM: Linda M. Zembo

SUBJECT: 2020 CCAP Priorities

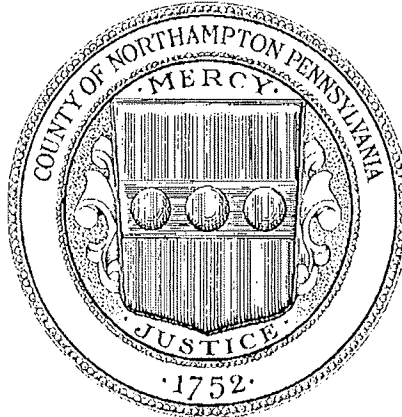
Please be advised that at the meeting held January 23, 2020, the Northampton County Council adopted a resolution to support the 2020 CCAP Priorities. Attached is a copy of resolution #10-2020 concerning this matter.

Distribution List:

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THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON



RESOLUTION

Number 10-2020

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, SUPPORTING THE 2020 PRIORITIES OF THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania counties have selected five priority issues that will be the focal point of Counties' proactive agenda for 2020; and

WHEREAS, these priorities showcase Counties' commitment to the core services they provide to the people and communities of Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, achieving these five County priorities underscore the critical need to redefine, reinvigorate and emphasize the State-County partnership in service delivery; and

WHEREAS, the top priority for Pennsylvania Counties in 2020 is increased funding for mental health services; and

WHEREAS, Northampton County has invested in community-based mental health services that coordinate and invest in programs and services that meet the needs and challenges of local communities, including an extensive range of services. Northampton County Mental Health provides outpatient treatment clinics where individuals can receive medication and therapeutic intervention; multiple levels of assistance within the community

such as ACT teams and Peer Support; a variety of MH Housing options to assist those with mental health diagnoses in living successfully in the community; a number of services geared toward assisting those with mental health diagnoses who come in contact with the Criminal Justice system to include the MH Treatment Court); supported employment opportunities; and other services focused on helping an individual living their best life in their community while struggling with a mental illness; and

WHEREAS, a key objective under this priority is the preservation of the successful Behavioral HealthChoices program, which has allowed each county the flexibility to deliver mental health and drug and alcohol services to individuals enrolled in Medicaid that meet local needs and challenges; and

WHEREAS, Counties will need collaboration between the legislature and administration to work closely with them on a targeted, strategic investment of dollars into community mental health services at the county level in order to continue the existing safety net and bolster the availability of mental health services to those who need them as vital steps in the right direction; and

WHEREAS, Counties' second priority is solutions to the Emergency Medical Services crisis, to address current system funding needs and identify potential areas for County involvement and assistance including retention and recruitment, reimbursement rates, funding, coverage, service models, risk reduction, EMS Act and regulations, technology support and training requirements; and

WHEREAS, there is a critical need to address the decline of emergency services in communities and build off the work done in the 2004 SR 60 and 2018 SR 6 reports to improve overall emergency service delivery; and

WHEREAS, County property tax reform is Counties' third priority, emphasizing the need to include County property tax in discussions on comprehensive property tax reform; and

WHEREAS, Northampton County depends on property taxes as the only source of locally generated general fund tax revenues, creating an unfair burden for property taxpayers to fund critical programs and services, including election administration, services for seniors, support services for children, crisis intervention, court services, preservation of farmland and open space; and

WHEREAS, Counties seek options to levy a County sales, personal income or earned income tax to reduce reliance on the real property tax; and

WHEREAS, Counties have chosen rural broadband expansion as their fourth priority, addressing the immediate need for infrastructure that is critical to economic vitality and personal quality of life; and

WHEREAS, in Northampton County, approximately 20% of our residents do not have reliable internet service, missing opportunities to access educational tools, health care, emergency services and other key parts of their everyday lives; and

WHEREAS, increased State funding support for County adult probation services that correspond with the growing need is counties' final priority; and

WHEREAS, the expectations of the County probation system are increasing while State funding has been stagnant for the past six fiscal years; and

WHEREAS, additional State funding will still be necessary for Counties to continue keep pace with the growing need for adult probation services programs as part of a comprehensive criminal justice system;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS, THEREFORE, RESOLVED that Northampton County stands ready to work with the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania and Counties throughout the commonwealth in support of these priorities for 2020.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that these priorities emphasize the important role Northampton County plays in improving our communities and the well-being of our residents.

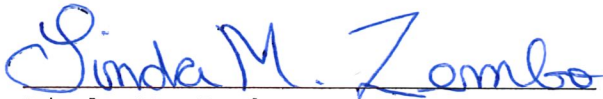
IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that Northampton County calls upon the General Assembly and the Administration to work together in partnership with Counties to jointly determine the most effective ways to continue meeting the needs of Pennsylvanians.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that collaboration between County government and the commonwealth on these priorities will lead to solutions that improve stewardship of taxpayer dollars, reduce cost, increase local flexibility and assure the quality of services counties provide.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Northampton County legislative delegation, to Governor Wolf and to the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania.

ATTEST:

INTRODUCED BY:



Linda M. Zembo
Clerk to Council

John Cusick

The above resolution was adopted by the Northampton County Council at the meeting held January 23, 2020.