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New Jersey Highlands Coalition Action Alert

Governor Christie's Highlands Council Appointments Threaten State's Drinking Water, Urge Senate to Reject His Nominees

Governor Christie has proposed a slate of appointments to the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council that shows his administration has no commitment to protecting the clean drinking water supply for 5.5 million New Jersey residents and the State's largest industries. **His nominees include several individuals who in the past have called for the repeal of the Highlands Act and the disbanding of the Highlands Council.** The proposed slate lacks representation for the 4.6 million water consumers outside the Highlands Region who are dependent on Highlands water. Additionally, the Governor has failed to appoint elected officials from the Highlands Counties of Bergen and Passaic.

We must take action NOW to prevent Highlands Act opponents from becoming Council members!

All appointments to the Highlands Council must be approved by the State Senate. Contact Senate President Stephen Sweeney, Senator Tom Kean Jr., Judiciary Chair Senator Nicholas Scutari, and your Senate representative and **urge them to oppose the appointments of Highlands Act opponents** Roxbury Mayor James Rilee, former West Milford Planning Board Chair Michael Tfrank, Sussex County Freeholder-elect Richard Vohden, and White Township Committeeman Samuel R. Race to the Highlands Council. These individuals have repeatedly stated their opposition to the Highlands Act, DEP Highlands Preservation Area Rules, and the Regional Master Plan in the past and would undermine the further protection of Highlands resources if allowed to serve on the Council. Our clean drinking water, pristine wetlands, few remaining contiguous forests, and vital critical habitat would all be placed at risk!

Of the 8 announced appointments only two have backgrounds advocating for the protection of Highlands resources, Michael Sebetich, an aquatic biologist and Professor at William Paterson University, and Tim Dougherty, the Mayor of Morristown. The Governor's other appointments must be rejected in favor of similar nominees who will uphold the Highlands Act and protect our critical natural, historic, and cultural resources.

Urge the Senators to oppose these destructive appointments and the Governor's insidious attempt to undermine the Highlands Act. Demand better representation for Highlands water users across the state on the Council.

Call Senator Sweeney at (856) 251-9801 or email him [here](#).
Call Senator Tom Kean Jr at (908) 232-3673 or email him [here](#).
Call Judiciary Committee Chair Senator Nicholas Scutari at (908) 587-0404
or email him [here](#).
Visit the [State Legislature Website](#) to find contact
information for your local Senator

The Governor's nominees are:

Elected Officials

- Morristown Mayor Timothy P. Dougherty to replace Mayor Marceil Letts
- Hunterdon County Freeholder Robert G. Walton of Hampton to replace Bergen County Freeholder Elizabeth Calabrese, who resigned
- Roxbury Mayor James Rilee to replace Chester Township Mayor William Cogger

Public Members

- Michael Tfank, former Planning Board chairman of West Milford, to replace Morris County Freeholder Jack Schrier
- Michael J. Sebetich, an aquatic biologist and professor at William Paterson University, of Hawthorne to replace former Hunterdon County Freeholder Erik C. Peterson
- Sussex County Freeholder-elect Richard Vohden of Andover to replace Timothy P. Dillingham, who resigned
- White Township Committeeman Samuel R. Race to replace Tracy Carluccio

Learn more about the [Governor's proposed appointments](#).

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