

**NEW JERSEY COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS
RESOLUTION OPPOSING PRESIDENT'S PROPOSED
BUDGET CUTS FOR E.E.O.C./F.E.P.A. EFFORTS**

RESOLUTION OF APRIL 10, 2007

WHEREAS, President George W. Bush has submitted his budget proposal to Congress for the federal fiscal year 2008 budget; and

WHEREAS, the President's budget for FFY 2008 includes a cut in funding of the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) budget, which will result in funding for the local Fair Employment Practices Agencies ("FEPA's") of only \$28 million for FFY 2008, which is only about 10% of the EEOC's total enforcement budget; and

WHEREAS, in FFY 2006 the FEPA portion of the EEOC budget was \$33 million, the bulk of the proposed cuts for 2008 total about \$5 million, an unprecedented reduction in FEPA funding, and this would be felt by State and Local programs and agencies with whom EEOC contracts to investigate dual-filed charges of unlawful employment discrimination in State, County, and Municipal jurisdictions throughout the United States, arising out of violations of Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Equal Pay Act, and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; and

WHEREAS, State and Local enforcement agencies, known as FEPA's handle about 40 percent of the total caseload for the EEOC nationwide, yet, these State and Local FEPA's are being asked to absorb more than 60% of the proposed Presidential budget cut; and

WHEREAS, this is disproportionate at best and a deliberate effort to cripple enforcement at the local level, at worst, and will result in a substantial reduction of federal aid for civil rights enforcement, and the \$5 million reduction calculates to a 15% reduction in capacity for FEPA cases, meaning that more than 7000 cases will go unresolved due to the Presidential budget cuts; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights has had a long-standing relationship with the EEOC, having investigated dual-filed cases for the Commission for nearly 30 years, and in that period of time having completed more than 35,000 investigations for the EEOC as New Jersey's only FEPA; and

WHEREAS, preventing unlawful discrimination and bias is a key element of this body's goals and initiatives for reducing unlawful employment discrimination; and

WHEREAS, by taking needed moneys away from State and Local FEPA's, there will be increased discrimination against employees nationwide, backlogs will develop in investigating cases which hurts both victims and employers, and the impact on our communities will be detrimental; and

WHEREAS, now that President Bush has submitted his budget proposal, Congress begins its responsibilities by holding hearings and drafting, considering, and ultimately passing legislation for the President's signature to enact the federal budget for fiscal year 2008; and

WHEREAS, federal fiscal year 2008 begins on October 1, 2007,

THEREFORE, on this 10th day of April, 2007,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the New Jersey Commission on Civil Rights, in a unanimous vote, strongly opposes these proposed cuts to civil rights enforcement and will use all of its power and abilities to ensure that they are not enacted; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Jersey Commission on Civil Rights strongly urges the United States Senate and the United State House of Representatives to reject these proposed cuts and, in fact, to increase funding for FEPA's through EEOC's State and Local Program, in the final version of the federal fiscal year 2008 budget, to meet the increased needs and dwindling budgets facing these EEOC offices and FEPA's around the United States, including the only FEPA in New Jersey, the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights.