



## STATE OF NEW JERSEY

**DR. MARGIE DONLON**  
Assemblywoman, 11<sup>th</sup> District

**VIN GOPAL**  
Senator, 11<sup>th</sup> District  
Majority Whip

**LUANNE PETERPAUL, ESQ.**  
Assemblywoman, 11<sup>th</sup> District

Dear Governor Murphy:

We are writing in support of Save Tillie, Inc.'s efforts to preserve the historic artifacts previously located at the now-demolished Palace Amusement building in Asbury Park. We respectfully request that you compel the Department of Environmental Protection to take immediate enforcement action to ensure the preservation of these artifacts as required by the DEP, and we encourage you to support historical preservation in the City of Asbury Park.

Asbury Park is in the heart of our Legislative District 11. The city is one of the Jersey Shore's oldest and most storied coastal resorts. Save Tillie, Inc., is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of the 31 surviving Palace Artifacts, which include the famous Tillie mural and several other murals that are deteriorating in storage. This in spite of the DEP's permit expressly requiring the developer of the Palace Amusement building, Asbury Partners - now Madison Marquette - to provide evidence of ongoing preservation or treatments and efforts to preserve and reuse the artifacts.

When examined by an independent third party, a former president of the American Institute for Conservation, in 2014 and 2016, paint loss from the wall murals was so severe that they were in danger of losing visual integrity. The metal letters from Palace Amusement signage that are among the artifacts were rusting in danger of complete loss. If action is not taken now, nearly a decade later, the artifacts will be lost forever.

The Palace Artifacts are the surviving elements of an historic beachfront attraction with a vibrant history rooted not only in the great tradition of American amusements but also motion pictures, television series, and popular music, all of which combined to bring generations of tourists from here and abroad to Asbury Park. The surviving artifacts are an iconic representation of the history of the Jersey Shore and are an important part of New Jersey's identity. The Tillie mural is widely regarded as Asbury Park's most recognizable icon. It was the backdrop for a famous early publicity photo of Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band and images of the Palace appear on merchandise in stores throughout Asbury Park and surrounding communities.

**In 2024, New Jersey's leading preservation organization, PreservationNJ, listed the surviving artifacts as being among New Jersey's most endangered.** The DEP permitted the



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Palace Amusement Building, which had been listed in both the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places, to be demolished in a 2004 Coastal Area Facilities Review Act permit issued to the City and the developer. The permit expressly required preservation of the Palace Artifacts. To satisfy the DEP's Historic and Archaeological Resources Rule, the DEP said Asbury Partners must "identify certain parts of the existing Till[ie] mural and Palace Amusements building that will be relocated and preserved" and that those artifacts must be "incorporated into a new hotel development or retail development at this location as part of the lobby wall."

But more than 20 years later, no structure has been developed on the location of the former Palace Amusement Building and no use has been made of the 31 surviving Palace Artifacts.

The deteriorating condition and historical significance of the Palace Amusement Artifacts require your urgent attention and support. We request that you intervene and take whatever action is necessary to insure DEP takes immediate enforcement action to ensure the Palace Amusement Artifacts are preserved and the city's history is protected.

If you would like to discuss that matter further, please contact us at [SenGopal@njleg.org](mailto:SenGopal@njleg.org), [AswDonlon@njleg.org](mailto:AswDonlon@njleg.org), [AswPeterpaul@njleg.org](mailto:AswPeterpaul@njleg.org), or (732) 704-3808.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vin Gopal".

Vin Gopal  
Senator  
11th District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margie M. Donlon".

Margie Donlon  
Assemblywoman  
11th District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luanne Peterpaul".

Luanne Peterpaul  
Assemblywoman  
11th District