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**VIA ELECTRONIC & REGULAR MAIL**

September 21, 2025

Hon. Governor Phillip Murphy  
Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 001  
Trenton, NJ 08625

**RE: CAFRA Permit No. 1303-03-0001.2  
Support for Preservation and Public Display of  
Palace Amusement Building Artifacts, Asbury Park**

Governor Murphy:

On behalf of Preservation New Jersey and community advocates, we are writing to express our strong support for the efforts of Save Tillie, Inc., and to respectfully urge your administration — through the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) — to take immediate steps to enforce the historic preservation conditions attached to the 2004 CAFRA permit issued for the demolition of the Palace Amusement Building in Asbury Park.

As detailed in a recent letter submitted by Save Tillie to Commissioner LaTourette, the DEP made preservation of significant artifacts — including the iconic Tillie mural, metal channel lettering, and several original Palace Amusements features — a specific and binding condition of demolition approval. More than 20 years later, those cultural assets remain hidden away in storage, deteriorating and inaccessible to the public.

These artifacts are not simply remnants of a building — they are emblems of Asbury Park's rich entertainment history and New Jersey's broader cultural legacy. Palace Amusements holds a unique place in the hearts of New Jerseyans and has been featured in numerous films, TV shows, and music. It has become an enduring symbol of the Jersey Shore — most famously associated with Bruce Springsteen, who used the Tillie image throughout his career and helped bring national attention to its cultural significance.

In recognition of the urgent need to protect these relics, **Preservation New Jersey listed the Palace Amusements Artifacts as one of the state's "10 Most Endangered Historic Places" in 2024.** This designation underscores the growing concern among preservationists and the public about the lack of meaningful action to honor and implement the permit's original terms. [Read more: https://preservationnj.org/10-most/palace-amusements-artifacts/](https://preservationnj.org/10-most/palace-amusements-artifacts/)

Despite the clear preservation mandate in the 2004 permit, no development has taken place on the site, and no progress has been made toward integrating or displaying the artifacts as required. This prolonged inaction — now spanning over two decades — has resulted in avoidable degradation, including paint loss, rust, and other structural damage, as confirmed by conservation experts.

**PRESERVATION NEW JERSEY**

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We respectfully request your support in directing the DEP to take immediate and appropriate steps to enforce the CAFRA permit conditions. These should include:

- A professional inspection of the artifacts by a qualified conservator;
- A public update on the condition and location of the artifacts; and
- A specific and time-bound plan for their preservation and public display.

These artifacts deserve better than indefinite storage and slow decay. Enforcing the preservation requirements will not only uphold the law — it will demonstrate the state's commitment to protecting its cultural identity and honoring its past.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Your leadership can ensure that future generations of New Jerseyans — and visitors— have the opportunity to experience and appreciate these historic treasures.

Sincerely



Kelly C. Ruffel  
Executive Director

cc: Assemblywoman Luanne M. Peterpaul, Esq.  
Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette, NJDEP  
Bob Crane, Save Tillie, Inc.  
Timothy P. Malone, Esq.