

# Support open space on Tuesday, Nov. 3

Voters should support the \$400 million open space preservation bond on the statewide ballot Tuesday, Nov. 3.

The vital measure includes \$218 million to purchase open space property, and now is certainly an opportune time to get real value on the investment, with real estate values low.

Another \$146 million would be set aside for farmland preservation purposes, while \$24 million would be used for the Blue Acres floodplain program under which the state may purchase, from willing sellers, properties that are prone to or have incurred flood or storm damage, for open space preservation purposes.

Another \$12 million would go toward historic preservation. A portion of the funds

would be allocated to provide loans and grants to local governments and to provide matching grants to qualifying nonprofit organizations.

It goes without saying that in this densest state in the union, open space and historic preservation provide untold quality-of-life advantages.

There are economic benefits as well, such as increased tourism and the safeguarding of our precarious water supply.

Meanwhile, study after study shows open space is less of a drain on our tax dollar and more than offsets the ratables gained under residential or commercial development and the resultant municipal services they require, from schools to police.

Farmland preservation supports an eco-

nomically viable agricultural industry in this state.

For nearly 50 years, New Jersey voters have shown foresight on the issue of open space and farmland preservation, having approved all 12 of the measures for open space protection that have been placed on statewide ballots since 1961.

Let the results on number 13 be no different.

Some local governing bodies in our local towns, including Readington and High Bridge, have approved resolutions calling for the statewide passage of the open space measure.

We urge voters to do the same. Vote "Yes" on the open space preservation ballot question Tuesday, Nov. 3.