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In Case You Missed It: Governor Chris Christie – “These Measures Are About Good, Open And Honest Government....”

Thursday, September 9, 2010 • Tags: [Ethics and Accountability](#)

Governor Christie Unveils His “Common Sense” Ethics Reforms To Create A “Good, Open And Honest Government” In New Jersey...

“These all seem to me like common sense ethical reforms” said the Governor, “that everyone should agree to.” (David Matthau, “Governor Christie Lays Out an Ethics Game Plan for the Garden State,” NJ 101.5 FM, 9/9/2010)

The New Jersey laws that sharply restrict political contributions from state contractors would apply to local government contracting, too, under a set of ethics reforms that Gov. Chris Christie proposed on Wednesday. (Richard Pérez-Peña, “New Jersey Governor Unveils Ethics Reforms,” New York Times, 9/8/2010)

Christie, emphasizing that the “commonsense” reforms will increase transparency in government, urged the Legislature to approve the package that would create new rules for the lawmakers. “Why shouldn’t they vote to apply the same set of standards to themselves?” he asked. “And if they don’t, everybody in New Jersey should ask them why,” Christie said. The new disclosure form would combine parts of both the current state form and the federal form, Christie said. (Michael Deak, “Governor unveils ethics reform package in town hall meeting,” Asbury Park Press, 9/8/2010)

Gov. Christie announced a series of proposals at a town-hall meeting Wednesday that would expand legislators’ financial-disclosure requirements, crack down on conflicts of interest, and close loopholes in campaign-finance laws. (Maya Rao, “Christie unveils package of ethics proposals,” Philadelphia Inquirer, 9/9/2010)

Rolling out a much-anticipated ethics package at his second town hall meeting of the month, Gov. Chris Christie Wednesday set his sights on the Democrat-controlled Legislature. Many of Christie’s reforms — from banning elected officials from holding more than one public job to making lawmakers disclose conflicts of interests on votes — affect the Legislature. (Matt Friedman, “Gov. Christie sets sights on reforming financial disclosure laws for legislature,” NJ.com, 9/9/2010)

Gov. Chris Christie, as part of a statewide tour to outline his fall legislative agenda, has introduced an ethics reform package designed to promote “good, open and honest government,” eliminate loopholes and increase the accountability of elected officials. (Michael Deak, “Governor unveils ethics reform package in town hall meeting,” Asbury Park Press, 9/8/2010)

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie has proposed ethics reforms that would require legislators to disclose more about their assets and income, ban lawmakers from collecting more than one government paycheck and weaken labor unions’ influence in elections. The proposals Christie unveiled Wednesday also include keeping officials from holding more than one elected post and stopping the transfer of political donations to circumvent campaign finance restrictions. Taken together, the governor’s reform package is designed to impose new restrictions on elected officeholders and on political fundraising. The measures require legislative approval. (Angela Delli Santi, “New Jersey Governor Proposes Tougher Ethics Rules,” Associated Press, 9/9/2010)

Governor Christie has laid out a series of ethics reform measures that he says reflect his commitment to change the culture of government in the Garden state, as well as maintain the integrity of office holders - and better serve Jersey residents. (David Matthau, “Governor Christie Lays Out an Ethics Game Plan for the Garden State,” NJ 101.5 FM, 9/9/2010)

These Ethics Reforms Fulfill The Governors’ Longtime “Promise To Clean Up Government”...

“These measures are about good, open and honest government, where the playing field is level for everyone and the rules are unambiguous,” Christie said. Christie said the proposals fulfill a campaign promise to clean up government. (Angela Delli Santi, “New Jersey Governor Proposes Tougher Ethics Rules,” Associated Press, 9/9/2010)

“When I became governor, I made a promise to the people of New Jersey that I would use every power and authority of this office and every ounce of my energy to make their lives better, bring accountability and responsibility to their government and give them hope for a better future in our state,” he said during a town hall meeting in Wayne on Tuesday. “We have made great progress since January, but we can and must go further to fix our state. Today marks the next stage of our efforts to bring reform for a stronger New Jersey.” (Hank Kalet, “DISPATCHES: Showdown at the reform corral? Governor Christie puts tough ethics rules on table,” CentralJersey.Com, 9/8/2010)

The governor had promised ethics reform on the campaign trail while touting his record of prosecuting more than 130 public officials for corruption. He said Wednesday that he had initially worked on “more urgent” issues, such as closing

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the state's multibillion-dollar budget deficit, but that it was time to look at other problems. (Maya Rao, "Christie unveils package of ethics proposals," Philadelphia Inquirer, 9/9/2010)

The Governor's Ethics Reforms Would...

Demand Strict Disclosure Of Legislative Conflicts Of Interest, As Well As Financial Interest.

"I don't want to lower my standards," the governor said. "I want to raise theirs." (Michael Deak, "Governor unveils ethics reform package in town hall meeting," Asbury Park Press, 9/8/2010)

"In my opinion, if you offer yourself for public service, you need to offer (disclosure) so that people have confidence in your decision-making," Christie said. (Sarah M. Wojcik, "Gov. Chris Christie unveils ethics reform package during Hunterdon County visit," The Express-Times, 9/9/2010)

Christie wants the Legislature and its senior staff to file the more detailed disclosure forms required of the executive branch. (Maya Rao, "Christie unveils package of ethics proposals," Philadelphia Inquirer, 9/9/2010)

He also said the increased disclosure requirement for legislators was important because they are part time and the public should know their other sources of income to determine if any conflicts of interest exist. (Michael Deak, "Governor unveils ethics reform package in town hall meeting," Asbury Park Press, 9/8/2010)

During a town hall meeting in Raritan Township, the Governor said he wants all Jersey legislators to be required to file the same detailed financial disclosure statements that he and his staff must now submit - because this would "allow all of you to make a common sense informed evaluation of how your elected officials are conducting themselves, in terms of this very important issue." (David Matthau, "Governor Christie Lays Out an Ethics Game Plan for the Garden State," NJ 101.5 FM, 9/9/2010)

End Dual Government Employment And Dual Office Holding.

The proposal would mean only one salary for a public-sector employee... "If you want to serve in the true public interest, then serve without a salary," Christie said. (Sarah M. Wojcik, "Gov. Chris Christie unveils ethics reform package during Hunterdon County visit," The Express-Times, 9/9/2010)

...Bar elected officials from having another government job. (Richard Pérez-Peña, "New Jersey Governor Unveils Ethics Reforms," New York Times, 9/8/2010)

He would end the time-honored practice by New Jersey politicians, including the leaders of the Assembly and Senate, of collecting two or more government paychecks at the same time. (Richard Pérez-Peña, "New Jersey Governor Unveils Ethics Reforms," New York Times, 9/8/2010)

Mr. Christie's proposal would end the grandfather clause and go further, barring elected officials from holding any other government jobs. (Richard Pérez-Peña, "New Jersey Governor Unveils Ethics Reforms," New York Times, 9/8/2010)

The elimination of holding dual offices would lead to fewer conflicts of interest, Christie said. The ban on collecting two public salaries also would put an end to a traditional New Jersey practice, he said. "One public salary per person is enough," Christie said, adding that a person "can't serve two masters at the same time." (Michael Deak, "Governor unveils ethics reform package in town hall meeting," Asbury Park Press, 9/8/2010)

But Christie's ethics reform plan includes more than financial disclosure -- it would also mark the end of dual office-holding, or dual government employment, by the end of the 2010-11 legislation session. "It sets up inherent conflicts of interest," Christie said of the practice. "It's not something we can afford anymore." (Sarah M. Wojcik, "Gov. Chris Christie unveils ethics reform package during Hunterdon County visit," The Express-Times, 9/9/2010)

Expand The Reach Of The Pay-To-Play Law.

Gov. Chris Christie wants to restrict local political contributions... The current laws, enacted in stages from 2004 to 2008, were meant to address accusations that a "pay-to-play" culture existed in Trenton. Mr. Christie would impose similar restrictions on counties, towns, school districts and other local agencies in the state. But Mr. Christie, a Republican, would also amend the laws to cover unions, drastically curtailing their political influence — an idea that has met resistance from the Democrats, who control the Legislature and are closely allied with labor. (Richard Pérez-Peña, "New Jersey Governor Unveils Ethics Reforms," New York Times, 9/8/2010)

Christie also wants the Legislature to extend restrictions on campaign donations to labor unions that do public work - a strong source of support for Democratic lawmakers. (Maya Rao, "Christie unveils package of ethics proposals," Philadelphia Inquirer, 9/9/2010)

Closing the loopholes in pay-to-play legislation and expanding the law to apply to everyone, including labor unions, will help "level the playing field," Christie said. (Michael Deak, "Governor unveils ethics reform package in town hall meeting," Asbury Park Press, 9/8/2010)

The governor wants to make unions subject to the same contribution limits that apply to private companies doing business with the state, thereby weakening their influence in state and local elections. (Angela Delli Santi, "New Jersey Governor Proposes Tougher Ethics Rules," Associated Press, 9/9/2010)

[Restrict The Practice Of "Wheeling." Or The Transfer Of Political Donations To Circumvent Campaign Financing Laws.](#)

Other recommendations include limiting how much money county and municipal party committees can "wheel" to other campaign committees, especially those in other counties. Christie said it was a way to hide money and avert the law. (Maya Rao, "Christie unveils package of ethics proposals," Philadelphia Inquirer, 9/9/2010)

The governor also proposed a ban on the practice of "wheeling" political contributions from committee to committee, allowing political parties, particularly at the local level, to mask the sources of their money. (Richard Pérez-Peña, "New Jersey Governor Unveils Ethics Reforms," New York Times, 9/8/2010)

Another proposed measure would crack down on what's known as "wheeling" - where political contributions are funneled through municipal and county organizations - and then made to candidates in other counties. (David Matthau, "Governor Christie Lays Out an Ethics Game Plan for the Garden State," NJ 101.5 FM, 9/9/2010)

[Impose A Uniform Standard For Awarding Contracts At All Levels And Branches Of Government In New Jersey.](#)

He wants to end the current system under which businesses can make campaign contributions to local and legislative elections and receive municipal and county government contracts of more than \$17,500 as long as the agreements are awarded under a "fair and open" process. That means that contracts are publicly advertised and multiple bids are sought for professional services such as legal, engineering, and architectural work, though governments do not have to choose the lowest bidder. The governor wants to bring that contracting process - along with campaign-donation restrictions - in line with far stricter practices in place at the state level. "I'm shocked," Christie said sarcastically of legislators' exemption of their own campaign funds from the state pay-to-play law. (Maya Rao, "Christie unveils package of ethics proposals," Philadelphia Inquirer, 9/9/2010)

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