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Four Years In A Row Governor Christie Delivers A Budget That Restores Fiscal Sanity To Trenton, While Protecting Critical Investments And Laying The Groundwork For A Stronger New Jersey

"We have turned Trenton upside down. We have gotten the budget under control, and have begun to address the long-term health of pensions. We have spurred a wave of over 100,000 new jobs. And we have taken the steps to hold down property taxes and improve our schools at the same time. Let's not stop now. Let's not turn back. Let's not fail to be bold with the challenges ahead. Let's finish the job."

– Governor Chris Christie, Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Address, February 26, 2013

When Governor Christie took office in January of 2010, New Jersey's fiscal house was broken - decades of gross mismanagement and shortsighted budgeting practices in Trenton had left the state on the brink of catastrophe. Without wasting any time, Governor Christie acted decisively to bring the state's budget back into balance and put New Jersey on a difficult, but necessary course that focused on building the budget from the bottom up while implementing aggressive reforms that fundamentally change the way government operates.

Building on this foundation of fiscal restraint and responsibility, Governor Christie has provided the leadership needed to put forward bold solutions to the state's biggest challenges, forge a path to bipartisan compromise and fund programs that protect New Jersey's most vulnerable when they need it most.

In the fiscal year 2014 budget, Governor Christie continues to implement his vision for a smarter, more efficient government that focuses resources and services on individuals and outcomes. While maintaining fiscal sanity and avoiding the pitfalls of the old ways of Trenton, Governor Christie is outlining a bold agenda to lay the groundwork for New Jersey's recovery from Super Storm Sandy, provide unprecedented investment in our state's future, extend historic support for our schools and higher education system, advance a reform agenda focused on middle-class interests, and protect our state's most vulnerable citizens.

Restoring Fiscal Sanity To Trenton With A Fourth Consecutive Balanced Budget:

A Responsible Budget With An Appropriate Surplus. For the fourth consecutive year, Governor Christie has put forward a responsible budget that funds key priorities while ensuring New Jersey has the resources available for unforeseen circumstances. The fiscal year 2014 budget is a balanced \$32.9 billion plan which also provides for a responsible surplus of \$300 million.

Holding Spending Below Fiscal Year 2008 Levels. Governor Christie's budget reinforces his commitment to never return to the reckless spending and fiscal irresponsibility in Trenton that brought New Jersey to the brink of catastrophe, holding spending below 2008 levels.

The Largest Pension Payment In State History. Building on the sweeping, bipartisan pension and benefit reforms and Governor Christie's commitment to restoring solvency to New Jersey's pension obligations, the fiscal year 2014 budget will make a **\$1.676 Billion** payment to the state's pension funds.

A Smaller, More Efficient State Government. Governor Christie has acted on his commitment to building a more common-sense state government that works smarter and better. The Christie Administration's government reorganization in fiscal year 2013 focused resources and services on the individual, creating new reformed agencies to provide for the holistic needs of New Jersey's most vulnerable populations:

[The Division of Aging Services](#) provides a single point of entry for senior long-term care services.

[The Division of Children's System of Care](#) holistically addresses the needs of families with children with developmental disabilities and other complex needs in one place.

The Division of Family and Community Partnerships acts as the agency responsible for all domestic violence and child abuse services.

The federal Centers for Disease Control recently recognized New Jersey as a national model in protecting women and preventing sexual violence whose innovations can guide reform efforts in other states.

The Division of Child Protection and Permanency focuses exclusively on child protection, providing safety, permanency and well-being to New Jersey's most vulnerable children and families.

Focusing Hospital Funding On Quality In order to focus resources on the most effective programs and maximize New Jersey's share of federal matching funds, funding distribution is calculated to reimburse hospitals based on the level and quality of care provided.

The fiscal year 2014 budget provides **\$966 million** in hospital funding.

Governor Christie's efforts have resulted in a more efficient and streamlined state government. There are currently **5,200** fewer state government employees than when the Governor took office.

Historic Reductions In The Reliance On One-Shot Revenue. The last budget passed by Trenton prior to Governor Christie taking office relied on non-recurring revenues for **13 percent** of its funding. The Governor believes this over-reliance on one-shot revenue was short-sighted and today his budget proposal holds such funding to just **3 percent**.

Laying The Groundwork For New Jersey's Recovery:

Securing the Resources New Jersey Needs to Rebuild. Governor Christie worked closely with the Obama Administration, Governors Andrew Cuomo of New York and Dannel Malloy of Connecticut, and New Jersey's own Congressional Delegation to secure the necessary federal disaster assistance our state will need during the recovery. The result was passage of a relief package of **\$60.4 billion** in federal relief to help the region rebuild after Super Storm Sandy.

New Jersey has already been approved for **\$1.83 billion** in first phase funding through the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.

A Contingency Fund For Super Storm Sandy Rebuilding. To ensure that New Jersey can move forward with the rebuilding process, the Governor's budget responsibly proposes a **\$40 million** contingency fund to ensure that expenses not reimbursed by the federal government can be met without reducing resources for other key priorities.

Training The New Jersey Heroes Of Tomorrow. Super Storm Sandy highlighted the bravery, professionalism and dedication of our state's emergency responders and medical personnel. To honor their service, and to ensure New Jersey is always well-served by such heroes, Governor Christie is proposing to provide \$750 per trainee to support the training of the emergency medical personnel of tomorrow.

Investments In New Jersey's Future:

Job-Creating Business Tax Cuts. The fiscal year 2014 budget provides an additional **\$213.5 million** in business tax relief for a total of \$540 million in the third year of bipartisan, job-creating business tax cuts to help businesses remain and grow in New Jersey.

Since Governor Christie took office, New Jersey has added over **103,000 private-sector jobs**, and 2011 and 2012 were the best two years of private-sector job growth in over a decade.

Providing Funding To Maintain Critical Programs In The Event Of Sequester. With uncertainty and partisan bickering dominating our nation's capital, the Christie Administration is dedicating **\$3 million** in funding to ensure that the potential budget sequestration does not impair our ability to provide critical services.

Two New Classes Of New Jersey State Troopers. Governor Christie is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure the New Jersey State Police remains one of the nation's premier law enforcement agencies. The fiscal year 2014 budget provides **\$3.4 million** for the 154th and 155th Classes of State Troopers.

Building Our Future Bond Act. In November 2012, voters approved the issuance of \$750 million in bonds to provide matching grants to colleges and universities to build, equip, and expand higher education. Fiscal year 2014 anticipates the issuance of **\$100 million** for the initial round of shovel-ready projects to begin on our campuses across the state.

Largest Funding For Capital Projects In Years. The fiscal year 2014 budget is investing **\$10 million** to make life-safety improvements and repairs at state-owned offices and facilities throughout New Jersey.

Historic Support For Education:

Historic State Funding For Schools. For the third year in a row, Governor Christie is increasing state spending for education. The Governor's proposed increase of \$97.3 million would bring total state aid to schools to nearly **\$9 billion**, marking the third year in a row of setting a historic high. No school district will receive less K-12 formula aid than the amount provided in fiscal year 2013.

Funding For Opportunity Scholarship Demonstration Grants. Acting on his belief that every New Jersey child deserves a high quality education regardless of zip code, Governor Christie is providing **\$2 million** in scholarship grants to allow children in chronically failing schools to attend out-of-district public schools or nonpublic schools.

The Education Innovation Fund. As part of Governor Christie's commitment to creating high quality school options for all students, the budget provides **\$5 million** for an Education Innovation Fund to help schools and educators implement new and innovative instructional models including the use of new teaching technology and online resources.

An Increase In Funding For Tuition Aid Grants. Governor Christie is increasing assistance for the neediest college students through Tuition Aid Grants. After increasing funding by \$31.5 million last year, the fiscal year 2014 budget proposes an additional **\$17 million** for nearly \$353 million in total funding.

Funding For Independent Colleges. Acting on his commitment to New Jersey's higher education system, Governor Christie's budget proposal provides **\$1 million** to independent colleges and universities.

A Firm Commitment To Our State's Most Vulnerable Citizens:

Expanding Health Care Access Through Medicaid. Governor Christie is taking action to expand health care coverage for New Jersey's most vulnerable citizens through Medicaid. New Jersey already has one of the most expansive and generous Medicaid programs in the nation, including the second highest eligibility rate for children. Expanding Medicaid will mean that more New Jerseyans at or near the poverty line will have access to critical health services, while saving New Jersey taxpayers approximately **\$227 million** in fiscal year 2014 alone.

Bold And Innovative Medicaid Reform. Recognizing the Christie Administration's vision for bold and innovative Medicaid reform, New Jersey has received approval of its Comprehensive Medicaid Waiver. This waiver allows the state to move forward with Medicaid reforms that are already resulting in more compassionate and effective care for our state's most vulnerable residents and will help to preserve the program over the long term while at the same time reducing costs to New Jersey taxpayers. New Jersey is one of very few states across the country that advanced Medicaid reform without affecting eligibility, imposing co-pays or cutting optional services.

Increasing Support For Uninsured Children. The Christie Administration has demonstrated its commitment to providing subsidized health coverage for uninsured children and has even been recognized for performance excellence in enrolling children in the FamilyCare program. Proposed funding for children in FamilyCare is increased by **\$47 million**, and will support coverage for over 164,000 children.

Building On Commitment To Individuals With Developmental Disabilities Or Mental Health Issues. Governor Christie has long spoken of the state's moral imperative to recognize the individuality and unique needs of every New Jerseyan with a developmental disability or mental health issue and is committed to helping them lead richer lives. The Governor's budget proposes to increase funding by **\$95.8 million** for community placements and related services.

Expansion Of The Drug Court Program. Last year, Governor Christie signed into law landmark, bipartisan legislation to help individuals dealing with drug addiction reclaim their lives with treatment, rather than warehousing them in prison. In fiscal year 2014, Governor Christie further acts on his commitment by proposing to increase funding by **\$4.5 million** for drug court treatment services.

Greater Support For Veterans Haven North. The Christie Administration is providing greater support for the expanded Veterans Haven program. Veterans Haven is a pair of facilities for homeless veterans. The Governor's budget increases the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA) funding to **\$644,000** as the north facility continues to move toward full occupancy.

Helping Struggling Families Stay In Their Homes. The Christie Administration focused its efforts to make the NJ HomeKeeper more efficient and responsive while expanding access to help as many families as possible. New Jersey HomeKeeper has provided approximately **\$96 million** in assistance, with an average loan of \$40,900.

Giving Families The Tools To Succeed. Family Success Centers are community-based grassroots organizations that provide services to meet basic needs ranging from day care and parenting classes to more complex needs such as accessing mental health support, domestic violence prevention and substance abuse services. Governor Christie protected funding at **\$9.7 million** in state funds along with \$2.5 million in federal funds. The number of Family Success Centers in New Jersey has increased from 42 to **50**.

Protecting Funding For Cancer Screening. The New Jersey Cancer Education and Early Detection Program provides cancer outreach, screening and follow-up services. Governor Christie preserved fiscal year 2013's \$3.5 million funding increase for a total of **\$12 million** in state and federal support.

Newborn Screening. Every baby born in New Jersey is eligible to be screened for 54 disorders that can cause serious health problems. With state investment and implementation of Emma's Law, the number of screenings will be 60. In recognition of Emma's Law, which was signed by Governor Christie in January of last year, the fiscal year 2014 budget increases funding for newborn screening by over **\$1.6 million**.

Increasing Funding For Compassionate Care. Governor Christie has taken a responsible approach to administering medical marijuana for select New Jerseyans. Following the opening of the first medical marijuana dispensary, the fiscal year 2014 budget proposal increases funding by **\$823,000**.

Ensuring The Safety And Dignity Of Seniors. To ensure that timely and thorough investigations continue to be performed in all cases of suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation, an additional **\$1 million** has been proposed for Adult Protective Services agencies located throughout the state.

Continued Funding For The Senior And Disabled Citizens' Property Tax Freeze. The **\$214.2 million** included in the fiscal year 2014 budget proposal will continue to allow benefits to grow for over 159,000 current beneficiaries. It will also allow an expected 34,000 new seniors and citizens with disabilities to claim their first year of benefits.

A Reform Agenda Focused On The Middle-Class:

Building On Success In Reining In Property Taxes. Governor Christie has taken bold, historic action to rein in out-of-control increases in New Jersey's highest-in-the-nation property taxes. From **\$120 billion** in pension and benefits reform and three consecutive years of the largest appropriation of education aid in state history, to the property tax cap and interest arbitration reform, Governor Christie has made property tax relief for New Jersey families a priority.

As a result, New Jersey homeowners in 2011 saw a statewide average rise of 2.4 percent in residential property taxes, “the smallest increase in nearly two decades.”

In 2012, New Jersey did even better, with a statewide average increase of just 1.4 percent.

Shared Services And Civil Service Reform. Governor Christie conditionally vetoed Democrats’ empty ‘reform’ bill and called on the Legislature to give municipalities greater flexibility in order to remove barriers to sharing services. After nearly two years of legislative inaction, New Jersey taxpayers continue to wait.

The Property Tax Tool Kit. In May 2010, Governor Christie put forward a bold reform agenda for controlling property taxes, including a 33-measure package of reforms and a cap on property taxes. To date, legislative inaction has allowed only six of the 20 bills comprising the tool kit to be signed into law.

Ending Sick Leave Payouts. Accumulated sick and vacation payout liability for municipalities statewide is currently \$880 million. This contributes to the high cost of government. Governor Christie urged the Legislature to end the practice of distributing cash payouts for sick days for government employees.

Closing Property Tax Cap Loopholes. Governor Christie has called on the Legislature to prevent municipalities from increasing user fees as a way of circumventing the 2% property tax cap. This legislation will apply to funding for traditional services that were previously included in the local budget.

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