

"A Unique Opportunity To Save Lives"

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Governor Christie's "Revolutionary," Bipartisan Expansion Of Mandatory Drug Court "Expands Access To The Life-Saving, Cost-Saving And Crime-Preventing Opportunities"

"Once again by putting people before partisanship, we are providing optimism and hope to individuals and families torn apart by addiction. Once fully phased in over 5 years, this program will provide mandatory drug treatment to appropriate offenders who are not a threat to society and who suffer from the disease of addiction – redeeming lives and healing families."
– Governor Chris Christie, Remarks On Drug Court Expansion, July 19, 2012

Bipartisan Legislative Leaders

Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-Mercer): "By expanding on the success of the voluntary drug court program and reaching even more people through mandatory treatment in their sentencing, we can save taxpayer dollars and, more importantly, help these individuals get their lives back." ("Governor Chris Christie Follows Through on Commitment to Reclaim Lives with Landmark, Bipartisan Mandatory Drug Court Law," Press Release, 7/19/12)

Watson Coleman: "I thank the Governor and my fellow bill sponsors for their work and commitment to making this important reform a reality for our state."

Watson Coleman: "Continuing to look to imprisonment as the only solution for nonviolent drug offenders is not only more costly to our taxpayers, but fails to deal with the underlying problem in these individuals' lives in the first place ..."

Senator Raymond Lesniak (D-Union): "This law expands access to the life-saving, cost-saving and crime-preventing opportunities provided by our drug courts to thousands of criminal offenders struggling with drug addiction."

Lesniak: "Our communities will be safer and taxpayer costs will be saved as our prison population is reduced as a result." (Senate Democrats, "Lesniak-Scutari Drug Court Bill Signed Into Law," Press Release, 7/19/12)

Senator Nicholas Scutari (D-Union): "This law is about spending corrections dollars smarter, and allowing drug-addicted offenders to seek treatment, rather than incarceration ...". (Senate Democrats, "Lesniak-Scutari Drug Court Bill Signed Into Law," Press Release, 7/19/12)

Scutari: "The old criminal justice system failed far many offenders than it helped, and instead of putting the focus on reform and rehabilitation, the focus was on warehousing criminal offenders. This new law puts our priorities back in the right place, and ensures that folks who can be helped by the program will be directed to drug court."

Assemblyman Gordon Johnson (D-Bergen): "Making the program mandatory will not only help these individuals get better, but it would save the state on incarceration costs. It's a win-win." (Assembly Democrats, "Watson Coleman, Johnson & Quijano Bill to Phase In Mandatory Sentencing to Drug Court Program Signed Into Law," Press Release, 7/19/12)

Assemblywoman Annette Quijano (D-Union): "Considering the potential societal benefits, requiring these type of offenders to participate in the program makes sense." (Assembly Democrats, "Watson Coleman, Johnson & Quijano Bill to Phase In Mandatory Sentencing to Drug Court Program Signed Into Law," Press Release, 7/19/12)

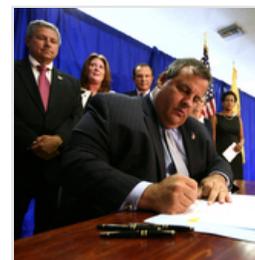
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Assemblywoman Holly Schepisi (R-Bergen): "While we cannot measure the compassion of such a program in dollars and cents, offering help to those in need is a benchmark of our society ..." (Assembly Republicans, "Schepisi's Mandatory Sentencing To Drug Court Program Signed Into Law," Press Release, 7/19/12)

Schepisi: "I have seen first-hand how those suffering from drug addiction can turn their lives around and make a positive contribution to society. I congratulate Governor Christie for bringing this issue to the forefront."

Senator Diane Allen (R-Burlington): "Diverting low-risk, non-violent drug offenders into rehab rather than incarceration gives these individuals a fighting chance at overcoming the disease that is addiction so that they can ultimately lead productive lives ..." (Senate Republicans, "Allen and Bateman Welcome Enactment of Expanded Drug Treatment Options for Nonviolent Offenders," Press Release, 7/19/12)

Allen: "Since drug offenders who go untreated commit more and more serious crimes, dealing with the issue early is a great benefit not only to the drug war, but all of society."

Senator Christopher Bateman (R-Somerset): "This overdue law will make societal contributors out of people who pose no public safety threat and have committed drug offenses simply to support their addiction ..." (Senate Republicans, "Allen and Bateman Welcome Enactment of Expanded Drug Treatment Options for Nonviolent Offenders," Press Release, 7/19/12)

Bateman: "It will channel nonviolent drug offenders toward treatment they probably would not otherwise pursue, away from a life of crime. It will also decrease court case loads and otherwise annually save taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars, as it costs about \$28, 000 more per year to incarcerate rather than treat a nonviolent drug offender."

Assemblywoman Mary Pat Angelini (R-Monmouth): "The drug court program offers those suffering from addiction the chance to turn their lives around and overcome this disease ... Instead of being locked up in prison, non-violent addicts deserve an opportunity to be rehabilitated." (Assembly Republicans, "Angelini Lauds Signing Of New Drug Court

Policy Experts And Community Leaders

Delia Bass-Dandridge, president of the Rescue Mission's Board of Directors: "We believe, as [Governor Christie] does, that everyone deserves a second chance," she said. "No life is dispensable." (Melissa Hayes, "Christie signs bill mandating drug offenders seek treatment," *The Record*, 7/19/12)

NJ Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies CEO Debra L. Wentz: "Christie's initiative is right on time to strengthen New Jersey and address a widespread health issue." (Debra L. Wentz, "Gov. Chris Christie's drug treatment plan good for jailed people, N.J.," *Star-Ledger*, 1/29/12)

Wentz: "Christie's revolutionary policy will pave the way for fiscal relief by slashing in half the money spent incarcerating thousands of nonviolent offenders and by saving millions of corrections dollars."

Wentz: "We call on our state's leaders to join together in a unique opportunity to save lives, save money and save New Jersey."

John Hulick, Executive Director Of The Governor's Council On Alcoholism And Drug Abuse: "With today's signing, non-violent offenders assessed with an addiction, who heretofore could deny a course of treatment, will now be provided an opportunity to also recover even if they are at first unwilling." (Bill Mooney, "Drug court bill signed into law," *PolitickerNJ*, 7/19/12)

Judge Glenn Grant, administrative director of the courts: "We're talking about changing lives, changing communities ..." (Bill Mooney, "Drug court bill signed into law," *PolitickerNJ*, 7/19/12)

"Participants will have a support team to get them back on track. And by slowly rolling the program out over five years, at the end of which time it will be present in every county, the state will make sure the infrastructure is in place to ensure the program's success, he said."

Sherry Sandler, New Jersey State Parole Board: "The New Jersey State Parole Board 'fully supports the governor's proposal ...'" (Kevin Riordan, "Christie's Comment On Treating Drug Abuse Stirs Hope," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 2/12/2012)

Sandler: "We've always had the position that treatment works. And New Jersey's success in reducing the prison population is partially related to our use of treatment."

New Jersey Coalition of Community Corrections Providers President Patricia McKernan: "We're hopeful about the governor's proposal ... Expanding treatment options is great..." (Kevin Riordan, "Christie's Comment On Treating Drug Abuse Stirs Hope," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 2/12/2012)

Cumberland County's Seabrook House Vice President Stephanie Loebs: "The governor gets it..." (Kevin Riordan, "Christie's Comment On Treating Drug Abuse Stirs Hope," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 2/12/2012)

Loebs: "The social stigma [is] that addiction . . . is an issue of morals, or a lack of intestinal fortitude, or a lack of willpower ... Addiction is a chronic illness."

Former New Jersey NAACP Political Director Walter Fields: "With drug courts, we can reduce the number of crime victims, alleviate human suffering and save taxpayer dollars. That's what I call being tough — and smart — on crime." (Walter Fields, "With Drug Courts, N.J. Could Be Tough And Smart On Crime," *The Star-Ledger*, 2/1/2012)

"We should treat, rather than incarcerate, nonviolent drug offenders. That's the straightforward policy behind so-called drug courts."

"For his part, Gov. Chris Christie proposes to take a good idea and make it better by expanding the number of drug court participants and making enrollment mandatory, not merely voluntary."

"By almost any measure, drug courts make sense. ... Thus, if we treat the root causes of drug-related crimes — substance abuse and addiction — we can reduce the likelihood of crimes being committed in the first instance."

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