

State of New Jersey

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Delivers First State of the State Address

01/15/2019

Governor Murphy outlines his vision to reform the State's tax incentives programs and highlights initiatives to continue building a stronger and fairer New Jersey

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today delivered his first State of the State Address at the State House in Trenton. The Governor highlighted accomplishments from his first year in office and outlined priorities for year two to continue building a stronger and fairer New Jersey for all.

"The state of our state is stronger and fairer than it was one year ago, but our work is far from finished," **said Governor Phil Murphy**. "It comes down to this – you can't have economic progress without social progress, and you can't have social progress without economic progress. That's where this journey is taking us – to a New Jersey that is both strong and fair – and I know we can make this vision a reality."

In his address, Governor Murphy reiterated his call for an overhaul of the State's tax incentives programs following last week's audit of the Economic Development Authority's corporate tax incentives program by State Comptroller Phil Degnan. Governor Murphy vowed to create a new tax incentive program with monetary caps, clear eligibility criteria and oversight, and flexibility. The Governor believes that any reformed tax incentive program should include targeted investment in high-wage, high-growth sectors of the New Jersey economy.

"Carefully crafted, properly enforced, and transparent tax incentives have a place in a successful economic program," **said Governor Murphy**. "Tax incentives must be just one tool in our toolbox. Education, infrastructure, workforce development – those are the primary tools for building a stronger and fairer economy and a stronger and fairer New Jersey. Tax incentives should be used strategically and sparingly to get us to our goal."

Governor Murphy reflected on an extraordinarily productive first year of his Administration, working with the Legislature to sign 169 new laws – more than any first-year administration in over two decades – and issuing more than four dozen executive orders to advance job creation, environmental protections, equal rights, and fair pay. In his speech, the Governor highlighted some of his first-year accomplishments, including:

- Increasing pre-k funding by over \$55 million, expanding K-12 funding by \$351 million, and enabling 13,000 students to qualify for free community college;
- Enacting a millionaire's tax on incomes over \$5 million, expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit, and creating a Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit;
- Signing laws to establish an individual health insurance mandate and implement a reinsurance program, lowering health care premiums on the individual market by an average of 9.3 percent;
- Restoring \$7.45 million in funding to Planned Parenthood;
- Signing into law the nation's strongest equal pay law;
- Signing into law one of the most expansive paid sick leave programs in the nation;
- Reforming New Jersey's Medicinal Marijuana Program, more than doubling the number of patients;
- Unveiling a statewide economic development plan to spur job and wage growth and create the country's most inclusive innovation economy;
- Marking 100 percent completion of the Federal Railroad Administration's 2018 year-end milestone for Positive Train Control and more than doubled state operating assistance for NJ TRANSIT.
- Signing into law one of the most expansive Automatic Voter Registration policies in the nation.
- Leading the nation in fighting climate change, from promoting clean energy alternatives to rejoining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI);
- Signing an Executive Order establishing the nation's most ambitious offshore wind goal of 3,500 MW by 2030 and overseeing the nation's largest offshore wind solicitation; and
- Strengthening commonsense gun safety laws.

In addition to outlining his vision for reforming the State's tax incentives programs, Governor Murphy highlighted the following initiatives as part of his State of the State address:

- **Fixing NJ TRANSIT** for the nearly one million New Jerseyans who depend upon it every day. NJ TRANSIT's full focus this year will be on improving customer communications, service, and reliability.
- **Fighting the opioid epidemic** and dedicating resources to better strategic use, through access to treatment and recovery programs, careful data compilation and analytics, and helping law enforcement keep fentanyl and other dangerous drugs out of our communities.
- **Encouraging companies to invest in New Jersey's communities and Opportunity Zones.**
- **Leveraging a new Evergreen Innovation Fund to grow the next generation of innovative companies.**
- **Establishing a \$15 per hour minimum wage** that will give more than one million families a stronger foothold in the middle class, and allow those who aspire to enter the middle class the means to do so. Doing so will allow us to invest more in education, in infrastructure, and in other critical needs. A higher minimum wage strengthens all of New Jersey.
- **Legalizing adult-use marijuana** so that we can reverse the inequality and unfairness left from years of failed drug policies and shift public safety resources to where they can do the most good. This will also allow New Jersey to broadly benefit from creating an entirely new and legal industry.
- **Rebuilding New Jersey's water infrastructure network** to ensure the delivery of clean water to every child and family.
- **Expanding access to democracy** by allowing residents to register to vote online and at the polls on Election Day; enacting early, in-person voting; allowing 17-year-olds to register and vote in June primaries if they will turn 18 by the November general election; and restoring voting rights for individuals on probation or parole, to further their reentry into society by allowing them to exercise the right to vote.
- **Allowing all residents, regardless of status, to obtain a valid New Jersey driver's license** to make roads safer for all drivers and stimulate the economy.

For the Governor's full address, click here (https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__t.e2ma.net_click_bqon4_rmopcv_vhvqfg&d=DwMFaQ&c=4BTEw-1msHjOY4ITcFLmDM6JB8x6ZgbU2J24IH0HZLU&r=7Kcdje2C2zbHtP_ktStW5KjJULYJ13qmrJqY5U5RtHE&m=wJL7ZA8Gz__ktaQs0_OUYPKKhKsZuzAxfqiddChTms&s=qTihhh1pbAzEmTrw7kLK2wOl2qK7fsojvJFT1qq&e=)).

For a list of Governor Murphy's first year accomplishments, click here (https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__t.e2ma.net_click_bqon4_rmopcv_bawqfg&d=DwMFaQ&c=4BTEw-1msHjOY4ITcFLmDM6JB8x6ZgbU2J24IH0HZLU&r=7Kcdje2C2zbHtP_ktStW5KjJULYJ13qmrJqY5U5RtHE&m=wJL7ZA8Gz__ktaQs0_OUYPKKhKsZuzAxfqiddChTms&s=uq62OEh3zKr7GFERgq9_LX6e6Rg&e=).

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[Back to Top](#)

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Governor Phil Murphy

Home (</governor/>)

Administration

- [Governor Phil Murphy \(/governor/admin/about/\)](/governor/admin/about/)
- [Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver \(/governor/admin/lt/\)](/governor/admin/lt/)
- [First Lady Tammy Snyder Murphy \(/governor/admin/fl/\)](/governor/admin/fl/)
- [Cabinet \(/governor/admin/cabinet/\)](/governor/admin/cabinet/)
- [Boards, Commissions & Authorities \(/governor/admin/bca/\)](/governor/admin/bca/)
- [Internship Opportunities \(/governor/admin/internship.shtml\)](/governor/admin/internship.shtml)
- [Governor's Residence - Drumthwacket \(http://drumthwacket.org/\)](http://drumthwacket.org/)

Key Initiatives

- [Economy & Jobs \(/governor/initiatives/#Economy\)](/governor/initiatives/#Economy)
- [Education \(/governor/initiatives/#Education\)](/governor/initiatives/#Education)
- [Environment \(/governor/initiatives/#Environment\)](/governor/initiatives/#Environment)
- [Health \(/governor/initiatives/#Health\)](/governor/initiatives/#Health)
- [Law & Justice \(/governor/initiatives/#Justice\)](/governor/initiatives/#Justice)
- [Transportation \(/governor/initiatives/#Transportation\)](/governor/initiatives/#Transportation)

News & Events

- [Press Releases \(/governor/news/news/562019/approved/news_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/news/562019/approved/news_archive.shtml)
- [Public Addresses \(/governor/news/addresses/\)](/governor/news/addresses/)
- [Executive Orders \(//nj.gov/infobank/eo/\)](http://nj.gov/infobank/eo/)
- [Statements on Legislation \(/governor/news/statements/approved/statements_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/statements/approved/statements_archive.shtml)
- [Administration Reports \(/governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml)
- [Transition Reports \(/governor/news/reports/approved/reports_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/reports/approved/reports_archive.shtml)
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