

## Office of the Governor

### NEWS RELEASE

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RELEASE: December 21, 1998

Gov. Christie Whitman today signed legislation, which provides for an interest-free loan of up to \$5 million from the Department of Health and Human Services to Coriell Institute - New Jersey Cord Blood Resource Center upon Coriell's entering into cooperative agreements with other qualified cord blood facilities in New Jersey.

The legislation, **A-1959**, incorporates the recommendations the Governor made when she conditionally vetoed a bill, which would have appropriated \$5 million in State general funds to the Coriell Institute. The Governor, recognizing that the program is expected to be fiscally self-supporting, had suggested that an interest-free loan would be more appropriate for the program rather than a grant.

In her conditional veto the Governor noted that the establishment of a statewide allogeneic cord blood bank is a worthy objective that would benefit many New Jersey residents. She stated that cord blood transplantation has been proven to be a less intrusive alternative to bone marrow transplantation for those suffering from a variety of cancers, blood diseases and genetic disorders. Furthermore, the Governor said, cord blood transplants can be performed at a lower cost than bone marrow transplants.

**A-1959** was sponsored by Assembly Members Paul DiGaetano (R-Bergen/Essex/Passaic) and Jack Connors (R-Atlantic/Burlington./Ocean) and Senators Gerald Cardinale (R-Bergen) and Robert W. Singer (R-Burlington/Monmouth/Ocean).