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New Jerseyans Demand Action

Friday, May 04, 2012

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With Just 58 Days For The Legislature To Act, Leaders Across The State Are Voicing Support For Governor Christie's "Bold" Reform Agenda

GOVERNOR CHRISTIE'S TAX CUT PLAN FOR ALL NEW JERSEYANS

BIPARTISAN MAYORS: Tax Relief Is The Result Of "Two Years Of Hard Work And Tough Decisions":

Harrison Mayor Raymond McDonough (D): "Governor Christie's announcement of a 10% income tax cut and a restoration of the Earned Income Tax Credit clearly shows what two years of hard work and tough decisions can deliver for the people of New Jersey."

Old Bridge Mayor Owen Henry (R): "If there was any doubt that Governor Christie's common sense reform are paying dividends for the people of New Jersey, today's announcement of real tax relief for every New Jersey family should end the debate."

Manalapan Mayor Susan Cohen (R): "Very few elected officials make good on their campaign promises, but as the last two years and a 10% income tax cut and a restoration of the Earned Income Tax credit is proof Governor Chris Christie is making good on his."

Dennis Township Mayor Eugene Glembocki (R): "Today's announcement of tax relief for every single New Jerseyan is not just proof that our state is finally out from under this cloud of prior failures, but that Governor Christie's strong leadership and common sense reforms are working. ... This is the New Jersey comeback and it is up to both Republicans and Democrats to keep it moving forward."

Manchester Mayor Mike Fressola (R): "By delivering a 10% income tax cut and a restoration of the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Governor is clearly showing what two years of hard work and making the tough decisions can do for the people of this state."

Galloway Township Mayor Don Purdy (R): "A 10% income tax cut and a restoration of the Earned Income Tax Credit will not only provide immediate help to every single New Jersey family but it sends a clear signal that the Garden State

is moving in the direction of lower taxes, more efficient government and affordability."

Perth Amboy Mayor Wilda Diaz (D): "Governor Christie promised to get New Jersey back on track and after two years of hard work and tough decisions, New Jersey is seeing progress. Now the people of our state will begin to feel the reward as well with a 10% income tax cut and a restoration of the Earned Income Tax Credit."

Egg Harbor Township Mayor James McCullough (R): "Private sector job creation, along with today's 10% income tax cut and a restoration of the Earned Income Tax Credit, are the rewards for embracing common sense reforms and fighting the ideological gridlock that has plagued Trenton for years."

West New York Mayor Felix Roque (D): "Tough decisions and forthright leadership under Governor Christie have put our state in the position to deliver tax relief to all New Jerseyans, including a 10% income tax cut and a restoration of the Earned Income Tax Credit."

BUSINESS LEADERS: "Governor Christie Has Staked Out The Belief That Reduced Taxes Are The Path To Recovery And We Agree":

New Jersey Chamber of Commerce: "The governor's message is simple and direct. We are going to get New Jersey back to greatness. ... What better way to kick-start than to reduce taxes 10 percent across the board, which is a bold, courageous initiative to help set us apart from our competitor states." (New Jersey Chamber of Commerce Press Release, 1/17/12)

New Jersey Business & Industry Association: "Governor Christie's bold plan to cut New Jersey's income tax rates for all New Jerseyans will boost the state's economy and encourage businesses to expand and create jobs for New Jersey workers." (New Jersey Business & Industry Association, Press Release, 1/17/12)

National Federation of Independent Business State Director Laurie Ehlbeck: "This is a major priority for small businesses in New Jersey because they pay the highest income taxes in the region. ... The Governor clearly understands that the personal income tax is really a small business tax, and that it has to be lower if we're going to be competitive." (National Federation of Independent Business, Press Release, 1/17/12)

Chamber Of Commerce Southern New Jersey: "We support the Governor's proposal to reduce taxes for all taxpayers, including for top and low income earners." (Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey, Press Release, 1/17/12)

Meadowlands Regional Chamber Of Commerce Chief Executive Jim Kirkos: "For businesses, it's all about momentum, and continuity and consistency of message ... The idea of building on the momentum already established with a tax cut is proof of the continued commitment." (John Reitmeyer & Hugh Morley, "Christie Proposes Income Tax Cuts In State Of The State," *The Record*, 1/28/12)

Commerce And Industry Association of New Jersey President John Galandak: "The debate is over whether tax cuts, are a stimulus or whether additional taxes are the path to restore New Jersey's economy." (Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey, Press Release, 1/18/12)

"This governor has staked out the belief that reduced taxes are the path to recovery, and we agree."

GOVERNOR'S TEACHER TENURE & EDUCATION REFORM

EDUCATION LEADERS: Governor Christie's Teacher Tenure & Education Reforms Show "Determination, Commitment And Courage":

Rev. Reginald Jackson of the Black Ministers Council: "I thank and commend Gov. Chris Christie for his determination, commitment and courage, in taking on and leading the charge against those who would seek to maintain the status quo, protect the bureaucracy and continually make the children a lesser priority..." (Statement by Rev. Reginald T. Jackson, Executive Director, Black Ministers Council of New Jersey regarding Gov. Chris Christie and Education Reform to the New Jersey Department of Education, 9/27/10)

"The governor has my full support and I am prepared to do all I can to see that his efforts are successful."

New Jersey School Boards Association Executive Director Marie S. Bilik: "We welcome the proposed changes in the current tenure and seniority systems. ... The governor's proposal would enable local school districts to decide personnel matters based on the quality of instruction, unimpeded by restrictive laws that are no longer needed." ("N.J. School Boards Association Backs Governor's Tenure Reform Plan," New Jersey School Boards Association News Release, 4/7/11)

State Director of Democrats for Education Reform Kathleen Nugent: "New Jersey's teacher tenure system is not working for our children, and it's time to turn the page on our antiquated practices and begin a new chapter — where the interests of students are put first." (Kathleen Nugent, "Effectiveness should be measure for tenure in New Jersey," *The Star-Ledger*, 3/2/11)

Excellent Education for Everyone (E3) Executive Director Derrell Bradford: "E3's staff and leadership team wholeheartedly support Governor Christie's efforts to make student learning the key measure by which teacher effectiveness is judged. ... The Christie proposals reflect many of the best practices being embraced by the national education reform community." (Excellent Education for Everyone, "E3 Congratulates Governor Christie on Bold Plan to Recruit, Retain, and Reward Excellent Teachers, and Remove Underperformers Governor's Kids-First Agenda Makes Reform Reality," Press Release, 9/27/10)

"The Governor's focus on hiring and compensating excellent teachers, and removing underperformers, puts kids first, treats teachers like professionals accountable for their performance, and helps pave the way for an aggressive reform agenda."

New Jersey Charter Schools Association President and CEO Carlos Perez: "We support the governor's education reform agenda and welcome his proposals to improve the effectiveness of New Jersey educators in all public schools." ("NJCSA Statement on Governor Chris Christie's Education Reforms," New Jersey Charter Schools Association Press Release, 4/7/11)

New Jersey Catholic Conference: "We support Governor Christie's efforts to provide more flexibility in decisions by site administrators" (New Jersey Catholic Conference Supports Putting New Jersey's Children First, New Jersey Catholic Conference, 4/7/11)

Michael J. Petrilli, Vice President for National Programs and Policy at the Thomas B. Fordham Institute: "The proposals that Governor Christie announced today would instantaneously make New Jersey a national leader in education reform. By putting student achievement and teacher effectiveness front and center, Governor Christie has identified the strongest levers for improving the Garden State's schools." (Statement to the New Jersey Department of Education, 9/28/10)

Lisa Snell, Director of Education at the Reason Foundation: "Governor Christie's education reform proposals should be applauded for recognizing that the most important factor in improving student achievement for every child is to ensure that each child has a high-quality teacher. ..." (Statement to the New Jersey Department of Education, 9/28/10)

"The bottom line is that Governor Christie is working to change the culture of the teaching profession in New Jersey to value each child's performance as most important and to be about outcomes for kids rather than outcomes for adults that work in the schools."

Elizabeth School Superintendent Pablo Munoz: "Chris Christie is a courageous Governor and an excellent leader as he has been able to move the discussion forward on how to reform public education..." (Brian Thompson, "Teachers React Cautiously to Christie's Tenure Reform Plan," NBC New York, 4/8/11)

OPINION MAKERS: Christie Is Right To Pursue Necessary Changes To Reform Teacher Tenure & Education In New Jersey:

The Bergen Record: "[W]e note that the governor's zeal to reform public education is genuine and his willingness to tackle any obstacle refreshing." (Editorial, "Education matters," *The Record*, 9/5/201)

"The governor has made good headway on superintendent pay, with new caps and bonuses based on merit. Perhaps that can serve as a way forward on merit pay for teachers." (Editorial, "Race is on," *The Record*, 8/1/10)

Though many New Jersey public schools are excellent, far too many, especially in poor cities, are failing their students. Reform must take hold in these communities. It is time to have a serious conversation about how." (Editorial, "Race to blame," *The Record*, 8/26/10)

The Star-Ledger: "[B]uild a data system to track student test scores more effectively so we can accurately assess teacher performance. That effort needs to move forward..." (Editorial, "Own up, Governor: Race to the Top error was New Jersey's, not Obama's," *The Star-Ledger*, 8/26/10)

New York Post: "[A]reas in which Christie insists he has no intention of compromising — like merit pay and abolishing seniority-based layoffs..." (Editorial, "Grade-A governor," *New York Post*, 6/6/10)

"The governor said he was so committed to the items on his reform agenda that 'they should not be compromised to achieve a contrived consensus among the various affected special-interest groups.' Good for him. ..."

"It's refreshing to see a politician who not only understands the need for serious education reform but is wholly committed to it — in action as well as words. Well done, governor."

Philadelphia Inquirer: "Christie vows to proceed with the changes he wants anyway. That could be good since some of his ideas are more in line with the reforms that the Obama administration wants to make to improve public education, including linking teachers' pay to student performance and making it easier to fire bad teachers." ("Editorial: There's a better way," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 6/5/10)

"The plan would also eliminate seniority and use teacher effectiveness to make job cuts. Those are much-needed steps to improve failing schools and hold educators accountable for student achievement. It means rewarding the best teachers and principals."

Asbury Park Press: "Christie is right to pursue some necessary changes, and the union is only hurting itself by fighting the changes at every turn, losing public sentiment along the way." (Christie, teachers need to get along," *Asbury Park Press*, 8/30/10)

Daily Record: "[T]he reforms were good ones. For instance, rewarding our best teachers with bonuses would be beneficial to the teacher, the school and the students." ("The state's \$400M blunder," *Daily Record*, 8/26/10)

GOVERNOR'S MANDATORY DRUG TREATMENT PROGRAM FOR NON-VIOLENT OFFENDERS

NEW JERSEY LEGISLATORS: Governor Christie's Drug Court Initiative Has Bipartisan Support:

Senator Shirley K. Turner (D-Mercer/Hunterdon): "I fully applaud the goal of making New Jersey the first state in the nation to require that non-violent drug offenders enter treatment instead of prison. I look forward to working with the administration to see this vision becomes a reality, so that those afflicted will have every opportunity to restore their

lives and rebuild their families." ("Turner Statement On Christie Proposal To Expand Drug Courts," Press Release, 3/1/12)

Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-Mercer/Hunterdon): "I look forward to working with the Governor on this as we move forward." ("Watson Coleman Looking Forward To Working With Christie Administration To Make Sure Drug Treatment Program Reaches Target," Press Release, 3/1/12)

State Senator Raymond J. Lesniak (D-Union): "I hope to work with him to advance realistic proposals which will result in more nonviolent offenders recovering from their addictions and becoming productive members of society." ("Lesniak 'Cautiously Optimistic' About Governor's Focus On Nonviolent Offenders," Press Release, 3/1/12)

Assemblywoman Holly Schepisi (R-Bergen/Passaic): "I congratulate the governor for bringing this issue to the forefront, expanding the outreach of a successful program to those who may initially resist participating and offering hope instead of despair to those suffering from addiction." ("Schepisi: Expanding Rehabilitation For Non-Violent Drug Offenders Is Sensible And Compassionate Approach," Press Release, 3/1/12)

Assemblywoman Mary Pat Angelini (R-Monmouth): "I commend Gov. Christie for having the vision to assist in breaking the cycle of addiction which will make New Jersey a better place to live and raise our families." ("Angelini Lauds Christie's Proposal Calling For Mandatory Treatment For Nonviolent Addicted Offenders," Press Release, 3/1/12)

Senator Christopher "Kip" Bateman (R-Somerset/Mercer): "A mandatory treatment option is an overdue, necessary alternative to imprisonment." ("Bateman Urges Enactment of Drug Court Expansion to Create Second Chances," Press Release, 3/1/12)

DRUG TREATMENT LEADERS: It Is An "Outstanding Idea" That Has "Superlative Merit" And "Tremendous Efficacy":

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. ... "We call on our state's leaders to join together in a unique opportunity to save lives, save money and save New Jersey." (Debra L. Wentz, "Gov. Chris Christie's drug treatment plan good for jailed people, N.J.," *Star-Ledger*, 1/29/12)

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)

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)

Rescue Mission CEO Mary Gay Abbott-Young: "Christie's focus on treating addiction as a disease that can be successfully treated can have large ramifications." (Andrew Kitchenman, "Addiction Treatment Providers Could Expand Under Christie Proposal," *NJBIZ*, 3/1/12)

Atlantic County Department of Public Safety's John McLernon: "Requiring individuals to substitute rather than incarceration is an outstanding idea, it has superlative merit, tremendous efficacy, the research really does demonstrate that it does work..." (Josh Sims, "Governor Christie Announces Expansion Of Drug Courts," *NBC40 Atlantic City*, 3/1/12)

Executive Director of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Addiction John Hulick: "We've waited for a governor to seize that bully pulpit and bring the focus to this issue that it deserves..." (Joelle Farrell, "Christie: Give Nonviolent Criminal Addicts Treatment," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 3/1/12)

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)

OPINION MAKERS: Governor Christie's "Revolutionary" And "Long Overdue" Drug Treatment Proposal Is Both "Smart" And "Compassionate":

The Star-Ledger's Tom Moran: "The highlight came after Christie called for a revolution in New Jersey's approach to the drug war that would divert non-violent addicts from prison and put them in treatment programs instead. And he did it with characteristic Christie style, in big bold strokes." (Tom Moran, "Focus On Drug War Overhaul A Bright Spot In Gov. Christie's Address," *The Star-Ledger*, 1/18/12)

Philadelphia Inquirer: "Gov. Christie smartly recognizes that addiction is still winning the 40-year-old war on drugs, so he is changing up New Jersey's strategy. ... Pulling drug-crime programs together was a good idea. Making treatment required for all nonviolent offenders is an even better one." (Editorial, "Compassionate Approach To Fighting Drugs In N.J.," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 1/31/12)

Press of Atlantic City: "Prison doesn't help drug addicts. Treatment does. Everyone knows that. Treatment is also cheaper than incarcerating drug addicts. ... [G]ov. Chris Christie, to his credit, says he wants to change that. ... In his State of the State speech last week, the governor called for 'mandatory treatment for every nonviolent offender in New Jersey, not just a select few.' ... That's a revolutionary - and long overdue - proposal." (Editorial, "Christie And Drug Treatment / A Major step," *Press of Atlantic City*, 1/23/12)

Times of Trenton: "As a former prosecutor, and the state's most powerful politician, the governor is not embracing softhearted tactics ... He is embarking on the most enlightened — and practical — approach to dealing with the plague of addiction and its statewide consequences. ... We commend his compassion." (Editorial, "Gov. Chris Christie's Plan To Transform Treatment Of Non-Violent Drug Offenders Deserves Praise," *Times of Trenton*, 1/22/12)

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. ... "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." (Walter Fields, "With Drug Courts, N.J. Could Be Tough And Smart On Crime," *The Star-Ledger*, 2/1/2012)

NJ Spotlight's R. William Potter: "Christie -- by proclaiming that drug addicts are people who deserve a 'second chance' -- has opened the door to a rational and compassionate discussion of our draconian drug laws. Let's walk through it and find what's on the other side." (R. William Potter, "Opinion: Christie's Call For Compassion, A Good First Step," *NJ Spotlight*, 1/31/12)

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