

## Office of the Governor

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### NEWS RELEASE

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#### **GOVERNOR SIGNS BILL EXPANDING DEFINITION OF DATE RAPE DRUGS**

Gov. Christie Whitman today signed legislation, which expands the definition of controlled dangerous substance to include any substance that metabolizes into a controlled dangerous substance after ingestion.

The bill, S-1734, sponsored by Senator William L. Gormley (R-Atlantic) and John A. Girgenti (D-Passaic) and Assembly Members Kenneth C. LeFevre (R-Atlantic) and Sam Thompson (R- Middlesex/Monmouth), was introduced in response to a number of incidents in which individuals required hospitalization after ingesting a substance know as GBL. Once ingested, GBL metabolizes into GHB, one of the date rape drugs that can cause amnesia and loss of motor control.

While the criminal code previously prohibited GHB, GBL was a legal substance and substance abusers, who used the drug themselves or gave it to others, were able to substitute GBL for GHB without violating the law. The bill also amends the definition of controlled dangerous substance to include the so- called date rape drugs, GHB and flunitrazepam, which are prohibited under the Criminal Code.

"The bill makes it abundantly clear that despite the way it is ingested, GBL is just as dangerous as any other so-called date-rape drug," Gov. Whitman said. "It has caused the hospitalization of many individuals who ingested it, resulting in many serious health problems."

Senator Gormley said, "Let those who would distribute this dangerous substance to others or use it themselves be warned that from now on they will be subject to the same penalties under the law as users and purveyors of other illegal substances."

Assembly Member LeFevre said, "This legislation seeks to protect individuals who may unknowingly become the victims of those using GBL to cause them harm."