



## 'TOOL KIT' FLASHBACK

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Finally, Reforms Could Lower Taxes  
Courier-Post

Hard cap on tax increases means real relief for New Jersey taxpayers.

If the pension and benefit reforms signed by Gov. Chris Christie in March were a small first step, his latest proposal for is a record long jump.

Last week, Christie introduced a 33-point package -- a tool kit, as it were, for the state, local municipalities, school districts, public colleges and other government bodies in New Jersey to rein in costs.

The reforms Christie has offered are no joke. They're not like what came out of the dog-and-pony-show special session on property taxes that lawmakers staged in 2006. Then, legislators and Gov. Jon Corzine didn't really have the stomach for the hard reforms needed to actually lower property taxes. So they put on a big event just to nibble around the edges of the problem.

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Flash forward to 2010. The current governor, just four months into office, has put forward bona fide reforms that could actually do the unimaginable and just maybe lower our highest-in-the-nation taxes. Imagine that.

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Other key aspects of Christie's proposal that will help fix this state's broken finances:

An option for towns and counties, by ordinance or referendum, to opt out of the expensive civil service system.

Rule changes that will make it easier for towns, districts, etc. to see immediate savings from mergers.

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Overall, this is the most far-reaching and credible attempt we've seen to improve the financial health of the Garden State and fix the state's biggest problem -- repressively high taxes...

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