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In Case You Missed It: Governor Chris Christie – “The Time For Reform Is Now...”

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On The Urgent Need For A Bold Reform Agenda To Rebuild New Jersey, “We Can’t Wait Any Longer For These Reforms To Be Done”...

“We can’t wait any longer for these reforms to be done,” Christie told about 250 people at the Packanack Lake Country Club in Wayne. “We are in a crisis and we can no longer afford to keep digging this hole deeper and deeper or we’ll never get out of it.” (Matt Friedman, “Gov. Christie pushes reform agenda for N.J. ethics rules, pension and health benefits,” NJ.com, 9/8/2010)

“The time for reform is now,” said Christie, who established the 107 days remaining in the legislative session as his deadline. (Rob Jennings, “Gov. Chris Christie kicks off town hall meetings in Wayne, NJ; plans pension reforms,” Daily Record, 9/8/2010)

The Governor added “there is a sense in New Jersey that the time for reform is now- that we are in a crisis, and we can no longer afford to keep digging this hole deeper and deeper, or we may never get out of it...I’m going to do what needs to be done- I’m going to break the eggs that need to be broken, I’m going to step on the toes that need to be stepped on, and I’m going to make the tough decisions that need to be made...it’s about fixing the problems that need to be fixed, and I’m not going to miss this opportunity by playing Mr. Nice Guy.” (David Matthau, “Gov Christie Begins Reform Campaign in Wayne,” NJ 101.5 FM, 9/8/2010)

The governor said he wants education and ethics reforms voted on by the legislature before Christmas. (“Christie Slams N.J. Teacher Union, Calls For Ed. Reform,” CBS-2 New York, 9/7/2010)

On Pension And Benefit Reforms, “If We Don’t Change The Rules Of The Road, That Pension Is Not Going To Be There For You”...

Christie said his plans for pension and health benefits include changes for those currently enrolled in the system, increases in health insurance contributions, and a crackdown on disability pension fraud. (Matt Friedman, “Gov. Christie pushes reform agenda for N.J. ethics rules, pension and health benefits,” NJ.com, 9/8/2010)

Already, he’s calling for employees of state and local governments to be required to contribute to the cost of their health insurance and has reduced pension benefits for new employees. He said more changes need to be made for current employees and even retirees because the state’s future pension liabilities are now \$46 billion more than what’s expected to be available to pay them. “We’d better get reforms of this system,” he said. “If we don’t do it, we’ll go belly up.” (Geoff Mulvihill, “NJ governor says he’ll start laying out reforms,” Associated Press, 9/7/2010)

He said New Jersey public employees pick up only 8 percent of the cost of their health care, compared with 34 percent for federal employees. “It doesn’t make sense. We can’t continue to do it,” Christie said. He described the pension system as “on the brink of insolvency” and charged that future retirees are at risk of losing their payouts entirely “if we don’t change the rules of the road here.” (Rob Jennings, “Gov. Chris Christie kicks off town hall meetings in Wayne, NJ; plans pension reforms,” Daily Record, 9/8/2010)

“If we don’t change the rules of the road, that pension is not going to be there for you.” He said a \$46 billion pension deficit will nearly double when retirees come calling, even if the state fully funds the system from now on. He blamed past officials who “made promises with their mouth that they couldn’t keep with their wallet.” (Timothy J. Carroll, “Christie reform: ‘cleaning up the empties,’” PolitickerNJ, 9/7/2011)

He said he wants to bar retired public workers from receiving a disability pension while working at another job seemingly requiring the same level of exertion. (Rob Jennings, “Gov. Chris Christie kicks off town hall meetings in Wayne, NJ; plans pension reforms,” Daily Record, 9/8/2010)

On Ethics Reform And Government Transparency, “...This Is All About Getting The Public Trust Back”...

Christie said he wants to completely ban dual office holding, limit officials to one public salary, and toughen financial disclosure requirements for lawmakers. (Matt Friedman, “Gov. Christie pushes reform agenda for N.J. ethics rules, pension and health benefits,” NJ.com, 9/8/2010)

Christie was suggesting going ever further and cracking down on a common practice, where officials have multiple posts for multiple government agencies, for instance drawing salaries and pension benefits for serving as part-time judge in

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several communities. "Nobody should have two offices. Nobody should have more than one public salary," he said. "That seems to me to make common sense." (Geoff Mulvihill, "NJ governor says he'll start laying out reforms," Associated Press, 9/7/2010)

He signaled he would seek an end to dual-office holding, stating, "Even in New Jersey, people should be able to make do with one public salary." (Rob Jennings, "Gov. Chris Christie kicks off town hall meetings in Wayne, NJ; plans pension reforms," Daily Record, 9/8/2010)

The governor also wants legislators to disclose their personal financial statements like he has, saying elected politicians shouldn't hold more than one government job. ("Christie Slams N.J. Teacher Union, Calls For Ed. Reform," CBS-2 New York, 9/7/2010)

He said he intends to push for tougher financial disclosure rules for state lawmakers, because "it seems to me that since they want to be equal partners in making the laws, they should be equal partners in disclosing everything they have... they're going to have to answer to members of the public about whether all of the things that they say all the time about wanting to have real ethics reform in New Jersey is something that they're really willing to stand behind and vote for, or whether it's something they think should only apply to other people." "...this is all about getting the public trust back, and then giving everybody the tools to make sure that we keep it." (David Matthau, "Gov Christie Begins Reform Campaign in Wayne," NJ 101.5 FM, 9/8/2010)

On Education reform, "The Idea Is To Hold Educators Accountable"...

On education, he said he wants to change the tenure system and reiterated his support for teacher pay based on student performance. (Matt Friedman, "Gov. Christie pushes reform agenda for N.J. ethics rules, pension and health benefits," NJ.com, 9/8/2010)

Among the ideas the governor is pushing is paying for teachers based on their performance. ("Christie Slams N.J. Teacher Union, Calls For Ed. Reform," CBS-2 New York, 9/7/2010)

As an example of the need for education reform, he pointed at Newark, spending \$24,000 per student – mostly state funded per the Abbott ruling – yet has a 50 percent dropout rate. He pitched a new teacher merit pay system, among other things. (Timothy J. Carroll, "Christie reform: 'cleaning up the empties,'" PolitickerNJ, 9/7/201)

...He called for paying teachers partly based on how well their students perform. The idea is to hold educators accountable... (Geoff Mulvihill, "NJ governor says he'll start laying out reforms," Associated Press, 9/7/2010)

On Economic Development Reform, "...Make New Jersey More Attractive Place To Private Businesses"...

Christie said he and Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno had reached out to CEOs every week for input on how to make New Jersey more attractive place to private businesses. (Matt Friedman, "Gov. Christie pushes reform agenda for N.J. ethics rules, pension and health benefits," NJ.com, 9/8/2010)

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