

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Strengthens COVID-19 Pandemic Task Force on Racial and Health Disparities Legislation to Include Additional Members

05/5/2021

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today conditionally vetoed A4004/S2410, which would create the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic Task Force on Racial and Health Disparities. Governor Murphy returned the bill to the Legislature with recommendations to add additional members to the task force, including representation from the Division on Civil Rights and the Division of Consumer Affairs, both in the Department of Law and Public Safety.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected our minority and vulnerable communities and we must explore ways to eliminate the existing disparities in health care," said Governor Murphy. "In order to address this complex public health challenge, we must bring together all of the relevant expertise and perspectives to the table in order to carry out our mission of reaching health care equity. These recommendations are made to further strengthen the bill and help us achieve meaningful reform. I thank the sponsors for supporting these revisions and look forward to signing this bill into law."

"Over the past year, the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected minorities throughout the United States," said Senator Sandra Cunningham. "Predominantly Black counties account for only 30 percent of the U.S. population, and yet they were the location of 56 percent of COVID-19 deaths. In order to effectively help these communities, we must understand why the pandemic is hitting them so hard and come up with successful and long-lasting strategies to eradicate this disparity."

A copy of the Governor's conditional veto may be found here (https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20210505/35/73/99/4c/1564262d80741b55606e1e94/A4004CV.pdf).

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