

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 4870

To the General Assembly:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Assembly Bill No. 4870 without my approval.

The bill represents the ongoing attempt by members of the Legislature to move piecemeal legislation that serves the interests of only a few solely to pander to the unions that support them. Without any supportable justification, this bill would require the payment of the prevailing wage rate for a "Guard 1" -- \$17.98 per hour -- to a group of privately-subcontracted individuals, including ticketing agents, concession service workers, and cleaning service workers, at Newark Liberty International Airport, Newark Penn Station, and Hoboken Terminal. Similarly, this bill would mandate benefits and paid time off.

While the sponsors of this bill advocate for parity between airports in New York and New Jersey, the terms of this bill go far beyond those notions of parity and underscore the lack of reasoning behind this hastily-passed bill. Indeed, the minimum wage for the same subcontracted workers in New York are dictated by the minimum wage for the State of New York, a minimum wage rate that applies to all private employees in the State, not to a specialized group of individuals represented by an influential union that focuses its efforts on lobbying to receive benefits that it failed to obtain during the collective bargaining process. I refuse to act as another puppet of the labor organizations, the lobbying efforts of which have long resulted in bad legislation and fiscal irresponsibility that takes from the pockets of all citizens in New Jersey.

When I vetoed the bill that would have increased the minimum wage to \$15 in New Jersey last year, I explained the impact of such a drastic increase, especially in light of New Jersey's constitutional amendment. Businesses, especially small businesses, will not be able to absorb such sudden and significant increases to labor costs and will have to pass those costs onto consumers, lay off workers, leave New Jersey, or close altogether. These results would be devastating not only to individual businesses, but also to the economic recovery realized in New Jersey over these past seven-and-a-half years.

Newark Liberty International Airport, Newark Penn Station, and Hoboken Terminal are not immune from the same market forces that compelled me to veto the minimum wage bill, and the consequences of signing this bill would be similarly troubling. It is time for the Legislature to stop focusing on the requests of the members' union patrons and instead focus on the financial well-being of the entire State.

Accordingly, I herewith return Assembly Bill No. 4870 without my approval.

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Respectfully,
/s/ Chris Christie
Governor

Attest:

/s/ James J. DiGiulio
Chief Counsel to the Governor