

## Office of the Governor

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### NEWS RELEASE

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Gov. Christie Whitman today signed the following pieces of legislation:

**S-1789**, the New Jersey Homeless Youth Act, sponsored by Senators William L. Gormley (R-Atlantic) and Joseph F. Vitale (D-Middlesex) and Assembly Members Kenneth C. LeFevre (R-Atlantic) and Francis J. Blee (R-Atlantic), appropriates \$1 million to the Department of Human Services (DHS) to establish and support a comprehensive program for homeless youth. The Commissioner of the DHS will develop rules and regulations for the licensing of street outreach, basic center shelters and transitional living home programs.

Street outreach will enhance the homeless youth's accessibility to resources by locating, contacting and providing services to the youth through community-based, mobile outreach. Services may include assistance in finding shelter, food, clothing, medical care and counseling.

The basic center shelter program will provide a homeless youth with 24-hour, seven-day-a-week access to a stable out-of-home placement. Services may include family reunification, counseling, food, clothing, medical care, educational services and recreation. The shelter will help reunite the family unless it is not in the youth's best interest.

The transitional living home program will provide residential care and treatment services for up to 18 months to homeless youths between the ages of 16 and 21 who demonstrate the maturity to function with minimal adult supervision. The goal is to prepare the youth for independence and self-sufficiency. The legislation also eliminates the requirement in current law that prohibits homeless youths from obtaining emergency shelter without first obtaining either a court order or a guardian's permission.

**S-160**, sponsored by Senators Joseph M. Kyrillos, Jr. (R- Middlesex/Monmouth) and Joseph A. Palaia (R-Monmouth) and Assembly Members Joseph Azzolina (R-Middlesex/Monmouth) and Steve Corodemus (R-Monmouth), authorizes certain federal law enforcement officers to make arrests for violations of New Jersey law. The bill expands the list of federal law enforcement officers authorized to make arrests when serious state crimes are committed or about to be committed in their presence to include the Department of the Interior special agents, investigators, park police and park rangers and the United States postal police. The power of postal police officers is limited to offenses occurring on postal property while they are on duty.

**S-995**, sponsored by the late Senator Wynona M. Lipman (D- Essex/Union) and Senator Ronald L. Rice (D-Essex) and Assembly Member William D. Payne (D-Essex/Union), allows for the extension of property tax exemptions for certain non-profit housing corporations beyond the 35 year limit set by the 1991 Long Term

Tax Exemption Law. The bill applies only to limited-dividend and non-profit housing corporations. This bill would allow a municipality to extend the term of any such tax exemption to coincide with the term of the housing corporation's mortgage financing. The mortgage duration and the terms of any such extension shall be set forth in an agreement between the developer of the housing corporation and the affected municipality.

**S-1133**, sponsored by Senators Peter A. Inverso (R- Mercer/Middlesex) and Anthony R. Bucco (R-Morris) and Assembly Members Charlotte Vandervalk (R-Bergen), Steve Corodemus (R-Monmouth) and Neil M. Cohen (D-Union), provides a tax deduction to self-employers for 100% of the cost of health insurance. Under previous law, self-employers were treated the same as individuals could only deduct premiums in excess of 2% of their income as medical expense. This will change the tax treatment for self-employers to make it analogous to corporations. Under the law, corporations may deduct 100% of the cost of providing employee health insurance from their corporate income for the purpose of calculating the Corporate Business Tax.

**S-585**, sponsored by Senator Bernard F. Kenny, Jr. (D-Hudson) and Assembly Members Raul "Rudy" Garcia (D-Hudson) and Nicholas R. Felice (R-Bergen/Passaic), makes religious organizations, fraternal organizations, and certain educational institutions eligible for funding from the New Jersey Green Acres, Cultural Centers and Historic Preservation Bond Act of 1987, in addition to non-profit cultural centers that are currently eligible.

**S-1448**, sponsored by Senator Diane B. Allen (R-Burlington/Camden) and Assembly Members Rose Marie Heck (R-Bergen) and Jerry Green (D-Middlesex/Somerset/Union), appropriates \$95,000 to establish a permanent Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education with the State Employment and Training Commission. The new council will help ensure that federal and state gender equity initiatives are implemented effectively in communities, schools and public agencies.

**S-1960**, sponsored by Senators Henry P. McNamara (R-Bergen/Passaic) and Robert E. Littell (R-Sussex/Hunterdon/Morris) and Assembly Members E. Scott Garrett (R-Sussex/Hunterdon/Morris) and Guy R. Gregg (R-Sussex/Hunterdon/Morris), formalizes and makes permanent the municipal financial aid offset formula and program for the loss of property tax revenue as a result of the moratorium on the sale of watershed lands. For the last several years, the offset has been provided for through language inserted in the state annual Appropriations Act.

The amount of aid to be provided annually to every municipality where property is subject to the watershed moratorium is based on a formula of \$68.50 per acre of such lands in the municipality, to be adjusted annually by reference to the Consumer Price Index. The bill also appropriates \$3.4 million from the General Fund to the Department of Community Affairs for the purpose of providing watershed moratorium offset aid to qualifying municipalities for Fiscal Year 2000.

SCS for **A-1983** and **S-1237**, sponsored by Assembly Members Francis J. Blee (R-Atlantic) and David W. Wolfe (R-Monmouth/Ocean) and Senators Wayne R. Bryant (D-Camden/Gloucester) and John J. Matheussen (R-Camden/Gloucester),

creates the Higher Education Incentive Funding Program Act and appropriates \$5 million for state matching funds. The bill establishes within the Department of Treasury a program under which New Jersey's public and private institutions of higher education that receive substantial gifts of cash or marketable securities would qualify for state funds partially matching those gifts. The amount of matching funds payable would depend upon whether the gifts were endowment contributions or donations, and also upon the type of institution to which the gifts are made.

**S-1074**, sponsored by Senators Donald T. DiFrancesco (R-Middlesex/Morris/Somerset/Union) and Joseph M. Kyrillos, Jr. (R-Middlesex/Monmouth) and Assembly Members Joseph Azzolina (R-Middlesex/Monmouth) and Anthony Impreveduto (D-Bergen/Hudson, provides expanded sales and use tax exemptions for the film and video industry. Under current law, film production equipment including cameras, lighting equipment, sound recorders and film are exempt from the sales tax. This legislation expands the list to mirror those exempted in New York by exempting all products used and consumed directly and primarily in the production of a film. Newly tax exempt products include cars, lumber and supplies used in the production of a film. Tangible personal property incidental to the making of a film such as accommodations, prepared foods, and other products used by the film crew and actors and actresses would continue to be taxable.

