

Governor Phil Murphy

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING: New Jersey Leaders Applaud Governor Murphy's 2025 State of the State Address

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TRENTON – Governor Murphy delivered his 2025 State of the State Address on Tuesday, highlighting seven years of progress under his Administration in raising wages, creating jobs, and unleashing new economic opportunities in emerging industries. He emphasized that his top priority, during his final year, is delivering economic security and opportunity to all New Jerseyans and building a stronger and fairer state for all.

Leaders from across the state offered praise for the Governor's vision for his final year in office:

Legislative Leadership:

Senate President Nick Scutari:

"I look forward to working with the Governor to build upon the progress we have made in making the lives of New Jersey's residents more affordable and improving the quality of life in communities throughout the state.

"We need to maintain our commitment to job creation, public safety, affordable housing, educational excellence, strategic investments that promote economic growth, and services that care for the most vulnerable. We also have to continue to be a national leader in protecting a woman's right to choose.

"I will keep an open mind on the Governor's proposals and work with my legislative colleagues to address the needs and priorities of the people of New Jersey."

Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin:

"I am proud of the progress we've made to keep New Jersey an affordable place to live while meeting our obligations and making prudent investments for the future. From our continued efforts to provide property tax relief and fund programs to help New Jersey families, we have made real strides in improving the quality of life for everyone in New Jersey.

"As the Governor acknowledged, we face challenges ahead, but thanks to sound fiscal management we have been able to improve our credit rating, pay down our debt, and fully fund our schools and the state pension system – achievements that reflect our commitment to responsible governance. We've also managed to cut taxes and avoid taking on new debt. I applaud the Governor for these actions, and support his efforts to address tax fairness.

"While belt-tightening may be necessary, we cannot abandon our commitment to making New Jersey more affordable for the 9.3 million people that call it home. That is why property tax relief remains our highest priority. We will continue to fund the ANCHOR program and are moving forward with the launch of StayNJ – ensuring property tax relief for seniors while building on the affordability initiatives we have already championed.

"We also made New Jersey a safer place to live. I stand with the Governor in extending gratitude to the law enforcement agencies and social justice organizations who, through coordinated efforts, led New Jersey to a



low number of shootings and car thefts this past year. Our shared vision for a safer, more affordable New Jersey is becoming a reality and together through our partnership with the Senate and the Governor, we will continue to build on the momentum we have created.”

On Expanding Paid Family Leave for State Workers:

Former Senate President Steve Sweeney (https://x.com/SteveSweeney_NJ/status/1879252367998321038?mx=2):

“As a dad to a daughter with special needs, I know the challenges that come with balancing raising children and working full-time.

“As Senate President, I was proud to partner with @GovMurphy on the expansion of paid family leave so working families of New Jersey can thrive.”

Center for WorkLife Law Co-Director Liz Morris:

“The adoption of paid family leave for state workers would help address the maternal health crisis, protect the health and wellbeing of babies, and have positive ripple effects across the state. In addition to the health benefits, when employees have access to paid family leave they are more likely to return to work and to be more productive when they do.”

Center for WorkLife Law Co-Director Jessica Lee:

“When working class parents don’t get 100% of their salary covered under a paid family leave program, they can’t afford to take the leave they need. Governor Murphy’s common-sense proposal would close the leave affordability gap for state workers and serve as an example for employers across the state and the country.”

New Jersey Citizen Actions Workplace Justice Program Director Yarrow Willman-Cole:

“We’re pleased Governor Murphy is focusing his attention on paid leave. The action taken by the state acknowledges the connection between paid leave and how equitable access can improve the health of birthing people and contribute to lower maternal mortality rates.

“Paid leave helps prevent workers and their families from experiencing financial instability, and full pay is crucial, especially for lower-income workers. Many employers, including New Jersey Citizen Action, have implemented this practice of making workers’ salaries whole while they are on leave, and we hope this move by the state leads the way for more employers to adopt a similar policy to create a fairer and healthier workforce.

“As New Jersey moves forward with this modest expansion of benefits for state workers, we urge the Governor and Legislature to work together to strengthen job protections when taking leave for all New Jerseyans, so that no family has to risk job loss when they need to care for a new child or ill loved one. Since all workers pay into the state’s paid family leave program, it is essential that these benefits are equitable and accessible for everyone.”

New Jersey Policy Perspective President Nicole Rodriguez

(<https://x.com/NicoleNJPP/status/1879264921281859718?mx=2>):

“Parental leave is important for child development, mother’s recovery, and so much more. Very encouraging to hear @GovMurphy support in providing full wages while state workers are on leave. #njsots”

National Partnership for Women & Families (<https://x.com/NPWF/status/1879266740259193148?mx=2>):

“Today, @GovMurphy announced New Jersey will begin providing 12 weeks fully paid parental leave to state employees! #PaidLeave not only improves maternal health outcomes, it also boosts economic outcomes for both individuals and employers. Congratulations New Jerseyans!”

CWA District 1 Vice-President Dennis Trainor

“CWA appreciates Governor Murphy and the First Lady’s support of family friendly policies like full pay for parental leave and hybrid work schedules for State Workers. These types of initiatives are lower-cost, common sense ways that allow parents to spend important quality-time bonding with newborns without having to make the difficult choice of losing pay or going back to work.”

State Troopers Fraternal Association President Wayne Blanchard

(https://x.com/STFA_NJ/status/1879313463501291967?mx=2):

“The STFA applauds the initiative and leadership of @GovMurphy and @FirstLadyNJ for their continued vigilant and

unwavering support of New Jersey's state employee working families through the proposed implementation of a fully paid Parental Leave program. This program will empower workers seeking to start or grow their families by relieving the massive hardship of temporary lost wages during an exciting but extremely stressful time. No longer will any state workers be forced to choose between their paychecks and family planning. As this program comes to fruition, we hope to see it embraced across New Jersey to encompass all workers in every sector."

On Expanding Free, Universal Pre-K and Requiring Free, Full-Day Kindergarten Statewide:

Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz:

"I want to commend Governor Murphy for his commitment to helping New Jersey's children and families thrive. His dedication to laying a strong foundation for their future success is evident in the strides we've made together in expanding access to preschool and childcare, one of the most impactful investments we can make in our communities. Continuing to invest in and expand early childhood programs in the next year will be vital to the long-term success of our state,"

Senator Vin Gopal (<https://x.com/vingopal/status/1879270574163452102>):

"Kindergarten is a fundamental part of a child's educational foundation, and it is unacceptable that eight school districts in New Jersey still fail to offer this critical program. As Senate Education Chairman, I stand with @govmurphy in calling for changes to state funding."

Assemblyman Sterley Stanley:

"One of our most significant accomplishments, which I am proud to have been a part of, has been the incredible strides we have made expanding free pre-k for New Jersey's families. Which is why I am incredibly proud to join with my colleague Asw.Katz in putting forth this bill that will ensure that every child is provided with early childhood education so we can minimize any barrier that may stand between children and their ability to flourish into incredible individuals. I look forward to seeing this bill passed and signed into law so that we can bear witness to the extraordinary individuals the children of our State will become with this law protecting their right to education at such a critical time for their development."

Assemblywoman Andrea Katz:

"This is the issue that brought me into the political arena. I wanted to ensure that every kid in New Jersey had access to a great public education. I'm proud to work towards permanent pre-k funding because it just makes sense for New Jersey families and taxpayers."

NJEA President Sean Spiller:

"As he enters the final year of his governorship, Gov. Phil Murphy has made it clear that he plans to sprint to the finish line. We are encouraged by his determination to build on past successes in strengthening our schools, protecting our environment, upholding our democracy and making our state more affordable for the families that call New Jersey home.

"His call to bring full-day kindergarten to every district in New Jersey and to continue making pre-K opportunities available to more students in more communities will pay dividends for decades to come. Dollars invested today in education – especially early education – are repaid many times over in a stronger future economy. New Jersey must continue to be a national leader in all aspects of public education, from preschool through college, and getting a strong early foundation will help us achieve that.

"We also applaud Gov. Murphy for highlighting the concerns that so many educators and parents have about the detrimental effects of cellphones in classrooms. As New Jersey moves to limit the distraction that they pose during the school day, we call on the New Jersey Department of Education to issue guidelines directing districts to work with parents and educators in each community and at each school level to determine what specific policy will best serve students' academic, safety and mental health needs. Shared input and community buy-in will help ensure the success of those policies better than any one-size-fits-all ban imposed from above.

"We also commend Gov. Murphy for his ongoing commitment to funding our pensions. As the first governor in this century to achieve full funding, he has put New Jersey on the road to fiscal responsibility. We look forward to building on that progress by once again making New Jersey's pension system a tool to attract and retain the dedicated professionals who will keep our schools the best in the nation.

"During the coming year, we look forward to working alongside Gov. Murphy and the Legislature to achieve the goals he spoke about today. We also look forward to electing our endorsed candidate, Sean Spiller as New Jersey's next governor, so he can build on that progress and help New Jersey achieve even greater heights."

On Banning Cell Phone Use in K-12 Classrooms and Supporting Phone-Free Schools:

Senator Paul Moriarty:

"I am grateful to Governor Murphy for recognizing the importance of Bill S-3695 in addressing the growing concerns surrounding student use of cell phones and social media platforms during school hours. This bill empowers school districts to develop comprehensive policies to ensure students remain focused on their education while safeguarding their well-being.

"Unrestricted cellphone use in our schools has become a crisis that disrupts learning and negatively affects the mental health of students. Technology plays an integral role in our daily lives, but when misused, it can distract from learning and pose serious risks to students' mental and emotional health. "We are taking a proactive step toward fostering a safer and more productive learning environment by providing schools with the tools they need to create balanced policies.

"This bill reflects our commitment to maintaining the integrity of the educational experience while adapting to the challenges of the digital age. I look forward to working with lawmakers on both sides of the aisle to address these priorities."

Senator Vin Gopal (<https://x.com/vingopal/status/1879268640106963087>):

"I strongly support the cell phone restriction policy emphasized by @GovMurphy in today's State of the State Address. It's time to end the harmful impacts of cell phones on students' mental health, focus, and social skills."

Assemblyman Cody Miller (https://x.com/Cody_D_Miller/status/1879703706889019777):

"I'm honored to work alongside Assemblywoman Rosy Bagolie, Assemblywoman Carmen Morales, and my colleague and friend, Senator Paul Moriarty, who represents the 4th Legislative District with Assemblyman Dan Hutchison and me, on this common-sense initiative. This legislation is designed to create a more focused learning environment, reduce distractions, and combat issues like cyberbullying in schools. Ensuring our students have the best opportunity to succeed in the classroom is always a top priority."

Assemblywoman Rosy Bagolie (<https://x.com/ASWRosyBagolie/status/1879344778149814723>):

"As a superintendent and as a principal, I know that cell phone and social media usage is rampant in our schools, to the detriment of students' academic experiences. Hopefully thanks to Bill A4882/S3695, which Governor Murphy referenced during his State of the State address, students in New Jersey will be able to put down their phones, focus more on the material in the class, and become better learners."

NYU-Stern Professor Author Jonathan Haidt (<https://x.com/JonHaidt/status/1879307358486360560>):

Bravo @GovMurphy in leading NJ toward phone-free schools! Getting phones out of class time, and then out of the school day, will help New Jersey's students learn and its teachers teach.

On Supporting Public Contracting Reforms that Will Create New Economic Opportunities for Family-Owned and Minority-Owned Businesses:

Senator Nilsa Cruz-Perez:

"Minority-and women-owned businesses deserve a level playing field, but have too long been unfairly overlooked by government when awarding public contracts. Over months of consultation with our state's business community, we have developed a comprehensive and multi-faceted legislative package to truly tackle the inequities that have been exposed in public contracting, and bring equal opportunity to all of our state's businesses."

Assemblywoman Shavonda E. Sumter:

"The findings of the New Jersey Disparity Study revealed undeniable inequities, but history will judge us not by the challenges we identified, but by the decisive actions we take to address them. Last year's release of the Disparity Study was a pivotal moment, exposing the structural barriers that have marginalized communities for far too long. These findings are not just data points; they reflect the lives of real people who deserve equitable opportunities and meaningful change."

Assemblyman Benjie E. Wimberly:

“The disparity study was more than a report – it was a call to action for all of us to reimagine what fairness and opportunity should look like in New Jersey. While the report’s findings paint a clear picture of the challenges we face, we must not - and will not - sit idly and dwell on how we got here. Instead, we must focus on solutions, taking decisive steps to address these inequities and pave the way for a fairer, more inclusive future.”

Assemblyman Sterley Stanley:

“The disparity study revealed that minority- and women-owned businesses have faced significant hurdles in obtaining public contracts, and that’s unacceptable. We have taken important steps to right that wrong, working with stakeholders, our fellow legislators, and government representatives, to create pathways for all businesses to succeed in today’s marketplace and to ensure that New Jersey’s public contracting opportunities reflect the diversity of our communities.”

On Raising the Minimum Wage

Congressman Donald Norcross (<https://x.com/DonaldNorcross/status/1879284373280989484>):

“New Jersey is leading the way on increasing the minimum wage and ensuring workers are fairly compensated. Laws that support working families help ensure people receive a fair day’s pay for a hard day’s work.”

32BJ SEIU New Jersey State Director Ana Maria Hill (https://x.com/AM_Hill1555/status/1879266679513080242):

“Thank you @GovMurphy for putting working families first and doubling the minimum wage since you took office. We are in a better place because of your leadership!”

On Expanding Access to Affordable Housing and Lowering Housing Costs

Senator Troy Singleton:

“Undoubtedly, housing affordability is the most important issue facing New Jersey’s families, and I am heartened by Governor Murphy’s emphasis on housing related initiatives in this year’s State of the State address. Last spring, I was proud to champion the landmark affordable housing law that will enable thousands of new, affordable homes to be built across the state. When combined with the specific, tangible reforms the Governor outlined today – expansion of accessory dwelling units, conversion of vacant and commercial property into housing, and creation of more transit-oriented development – we will continue to meet our housing goals, while also reigniting our local economies and revitalizing our communities.

“Together, these proposals will give municipalities even more tools to meet their affordable housing obligations while cutting needless and outdated bureaucratic rules that have for too long locked families out of communities and out of homeownership. I applaud the Governor’s recognition of this issue and his commitment to tackling it head-on.

“Making housing more affordable must be the foundation of our public policy, because without a safe, secure, and affordable home, none of our other policies can be as effective. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Legislature as well as Governor Murphy over the coming months on these proposals.”

New Jersey Builders Association Chief Executive Officer Jeff Kolakowski:

“On behalf of the residential homebuilding industry, I commend the Governor on encouraging the Legislature to take additional steps to support New Jersey’s housing ecosystem following the historic passage of A4 (the affordable housing law).

“New Jersey has the fastest growing population in the Northeast but suffers from a significant housing shortage that prevents even middle-income New Jerseyans from being able to afford housing. By modernizing our zoning and permitting we can ensure we are using our limited land in a responsible manner that will enable our State to meet demand and lower costs for New Jerseyans. We look forward to working with the Administration and Legislature to modernize our inefficient and inequitable land use laws.”

Fair Share Housing Center Executive Director Adam Gordon:

“We applaud Governor Murphy for his focus on advancing affordable housing in New Jersey, on the heels of landmark legislation enacted last year to streamline and strengthen enforcement of the Mount Laurel Doctrine. The shortage of affordable housing in New Jersey hurts everyone, especially low-income families and people of color.

While the state's new affordable housing law is a crucial step forward, much more needs to be done.

"The proposals Gov. Murphy announced today — such as reforming the state's zoning and permitting laws to create thousands of new affordable homes — are important steps forward."

"We applaud the Murphy Administration for their efforts to invest in affordable homes throughout our communities. Since last year's State of the State Address, Governor Murphy signed landmark legislation into law that empowers the NJ Department of Community Affairs with the authority to facilitate the development of more affordable homes across NJ. Governor Murphy also signed the Community Wealth Preservation Program into law, a tool communities can use to ensure that foreclosed homes stay in the hands of community members, not private equity. We also saw the enactment of legislation to combat racial bias in home appraisals, another step toward closing the racial wealth gap.

The Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey President and Chief Executive Officer Staci Berger:

"Today's message about zoning reform goals is a positive one and we look forward to working with the Administration, Senator Troy Singleton and legislative leaders on these reforms. As housing costs continue to spiral, NJ must continue its important work to rectify the racial wealth gap and the housing crisis with the policies and programs needed to foster homeownership among Black and Brown families.

"This effort includes not only implementing policies like the new affordable housing law or the initiative to address racial bias in property appraisals, but also protecting and expanding the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Program, a significant funding source for community developers seeking to build affordable homes in their neighborhoods. The Network and its membership of over 275 nonprofit organizations look forward to continuing our work with the Murphy Administration, Senate President Scutari, Assembly Speaker Coughlin, and all our state legislators in expanding these efforts to HouseNJ so that all individuals in our state live in decent, affordable homes in safe, healthy neighborhoods."

AARP New Jersey State Director Chris Widelo:

"I applaud Governor Murphy for announcing action on several of AARP New Jersey's priorities in his 2025 State of the State Address, including significant property tax relief, reforming our state's zoning and permitting laws to allow for more affordable housing options, launching RetireReady NJ, and addressing pedestrian safety. These important actions will empower older New Jerseyans to choose how they live as they age.

"Seventy-seven percent of people 50 and older want to age in their own homes; however, New Jersey's high cost of living, including the highest property taxes in the nation, has made it unaffordable for far too many. We applaud the Governor for supporting and highlighting the ANCHOR tax credit. We look forward to working with the Governor and the Legislature to fully fund STAY NJ in the FY '26 state budget and bring this critical property tax relief to our older residents.

"In addition to property tax relief, AARP New Jersey applauds the Governor's proposal to reform our state's zoning and permitting laws to allow for new housing, particularly accessory dwelling units which provide affordable, accessible housing for people of all ages. According to AARP's 2021 Home and Community Preferences Survey, most respondents would consider building an ADU to provide a home for a loved one in need of care.

"We applaud the Governor for making a full payment into the state's pension system for the fourth year in a row. This payment will significantly strengthen the financial health of New Jersey's pension system, which is critical to the retirement security of hundreds of thousands of New Jerseyans and their families.

"AARP New Jersey is pleased that the launch of RetireReady NJ, which is a public-private partnership that allows private-sector workers an affordable, voluntary and portable retirement savings program at work, was highlighted. Financial security in retirement is crucial to helping people remain in their homes and communities and is a core component of our mission to enhance the quality of life for all as we age, including for generations to come.

"AARP New Jersey commends the Governor's proposal to overhaul New Jersey's ten most dangerous intersections in order to keep families safe and prevent avoidable tragedies. This along with updating driver education programs to focus on cyclist and pedestrian safety will help create safer streets for older New Jerseyans to use.

"While we were pleased to hear the Governor announce expanded parental leave, AARP New Jersey encourages

expanding the program to include caring for a loved one of any age. We look forward to working with him and the legislature to ensure all public workers and their families benefit from this needed expansion.

"AARP New Jersey thanks the Governor for supporting real change to help our more than one million Garden State members and all older New Jerseyans age in place. We look forward to working with the Governor and the entire New Jersey Legislature in the coming year."

On Road Safety and Pedestrian Safety Reforms:

Assemblyman David Bailey:

"I want to thank Governor Murphy for recognizing the importance of this legislation. In rural districts like ours people are often forced to walk, run, and bike along narrow roads with no bike lanes, a reality I know all too well as an avid cyclist. There have been several tragic accidents in Salem County this past year that could have been avoided had drivers followed their obligation to share the road. Better education on these laws will save lives."

Assemblywoman Lisa Swain:

"As a longtime triathlete, I've faced my share of dangerous close calls with vehicles on the road and have been fortunate to emerge with only minor injuries. New Jersey must prioritize reducing dangerous accidents and creating safer roads for everyone—drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists alike. My bill, A4765, advances essential reforms to strengthen driver education and enhance protections for all who share our streets. Alongside Governor Murphy and my colleagues in the legislature, we are reducing accidents and building a safer, more inclusive transportation network across our state."

Assemblywoman Heather Simmons:

"I am grateful to Governor Murphy for recognizing A4765 in his State of the State address. This bill is vital for the Third District, where rural roads can pose unique safety challenges for pedestrians and cyclists. The tragic loss of brothers Johnny and Matthew Gaudreau in Salem County last fall underscores the urgent need to improve driver education and roadway safety, making this legislation a top priority for our community."

Metuchen Mayor Jonathan Busch:

"I applaud this decisive action to establish the New Jersey Target Zero Commission. The goal of eliminating all traffic-related fatalities by 2040 is ambitious yet essential. In Metuchen, we are steadfast in our efforts to enhance pedestrian safety, and we deeply value the alignment between our local initiatives and the leadership shown by the Governor and our State legislative delegation. Their work will help us advance our shared commitment to protecting lives and fostering safe, walkable communities."

Clinton Mayor Janice Kovach:

"As leaders, we have a responsibility to prioritize the safety of our communities. Governor Murphy's legislation creating the Target Zero Commission is a crucial step toward eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries in New Jersey. By bringing together experts and stakeholders, we can create safer streets and ensure that every resident can travel without fear. This initiative demonstrates our commitment to building a safer, more sustainable future for all."

Paulsboro Mayor John Giovannitti:

"I wholeheartedly support the Governor's unwavering commitment to road and pedestrian safety. The establishment of the Target Zero Commission marks a pivotal moment in our collective efforts to eliminate fatal and serious injuries on our roads. By prioritizing the safety of all drivers, passengers, pedestrians, and cyclists, we are paving the way for a safer and more secure future for everyone in New Jersey."

Collingswood Borough Mayor Jim Maley:

"We desperately need a focus on pedestrians. It seems since the pandemic drivers are paying less attention to the usual signage and warnings. We need to change our infrastructure to protect pedestrians."

Hamilton Mayor Jeff Martin:

"I want to express my gratitude to Governor Murphy for leading this critical pedestrian safety initiative and to the Legislature for establishing the 'Net Zero Commission. In 2024, Hamilton, like so many communities across the country, faced a tragic record of pedestrian fatalities. Each of these incidents represents a preventable loss, leaving a profound impact on families and loved ones. This initiative is a vital step toward preventing such tragedies and ensuring safer streets for everyone in the future."

Morristown Mayor Tim Dougherty:

"The establishment of the 'New Jersey Target Zero Commission' is a critical step in our state's ongoing commitment to making our roads safer for everyone. This initiative reflects our collective responsibility to reduce traffic fatalities and injuries, while also ensuring that more road users can travel without incident. I applaud the passage of this bill, which paves the way for a safer transportation future for all New Jersey residents."

Princeton Mayor Mark Freda:

"Princeton supports this effort to increase the focus on, and to develop actions, that will help achieve the goal of eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries. Locally we are working on better protecting pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as making vehicle travel safer on our roads and sidewalks."

Atlantic Highlands Mayor Lori Hohenleitner:

"I applaud Governor Murphy's Pedestrian Safety Initiative introduced in today's State of the State. As mayor of a municipality that offers public transportation stops placed along a busy state highway, safe pedestrian access is of the utmost importance. We have a strong relationship with the Department of Transportation and the Governor's office and look forward to partnering with them on this vital project."

East Brunswick Mayor Brad Cohen:

I want to thank the Governor for signing legislation aimed at improving pedestrian and road safety. As our densely populated state continues to see families choose New Jersey to raise their families, we have an obligation to keep folks safe on our roads. Whether it is distracted driving or inattentive pedestrians, this bill will help establish goals and provide initiatives to eliminate traffic related fatalities.

Highland Park Borough Mayor Elsie Foster:

"Traffic safety is a critical issue that affects every community. By prioritizing the study and implementation of effective safety measures, the Target Zero Commission will make it easier for towns to design and build safer streets for all users. In Highland Park, we remain steadfast in our efforts to enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety and ensure that all residents and visitors can navigate our roads without fear.

"I am proud to support this initiative and look forward to collaborating with state and local partners to achieve the ambitious but necessary goal of zero traffic-related fatalities."

Somerville Mayor Brian Gallagher:

"Like many communities across New Jersey, Somerville is faced with increasing pedestrian safety challenges. Being the seat of Somerset County government and home to a major health care facility, Somerville's population doubles in size every day. Somerville is a pedestrian oriented community with a walking school district with numerous public and private schools, park trails that cross many roads, and a destination downtown that has a state highway as its main road. The goal of enhancing that safety is a win, and Somerville looks forward to increased safety for our residents and visitors."

New Jersey Future (<https://x.com/NewJerseyFuture/status/1879297650400567318>):

"Landmark affordable housing legislation was the start. We need tools for towns to develop housing in communities that are walk & bike-friendly. We're happy @govmurphy intends to advance statewide zoning reforms for more housing to be built in the right places & ways."

On Introducing Mobile Driver's Licenses:**Senator Patrick Diegan:**

"Under current state law, motorists are permitted to carry and display an electronic version of their registration and insurance cards. Making that same option available to residents for their driver's licenses by taking advantage of emerging technologies is a logical next step. Any law we can implement to make life more convenient for citizens looking to securely update their licenses and conduct other business makes good sense."

On Making New Jersey's Tax System Stronger and Fairer by Reforming the Farmland Assessment Act:

Senator Joseph Pennacchio:

"New Jersey citizens deserve to know that our State's Farmland Assessment Program is operating in a fair and transparent manner. Working with the Governor's Office we hope to accomplish that."

On Defending Reproductive Rights and Expanding Access to Fundamental Health Care:**Attorney General Matt Platkin (<https://x.com/NewJerseyOAG/status/1879299147674833112>):**

"As @GovMurphy said today, "when it comes to protecting fundamental rights, we will not give an inch." #NewJersey has and will continue to lead the way in safeguarding reproductive rights, no matter what is occurring on the national stage."

Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz:

"Amid an ever-changing and often uncertain national landscape, we have remained unwavering in our defense of women's rights. This is at the heart of who we are, and New Jersey will continue to lead the way in protecting and advancing reproductive healthcare and bodily autonomy. We are committed to ensuring that every individual – regardless of where they live or their personal circumstances – has access to the care they deserve, and that their rights are safeguarded,"

Assemblywoman Lisa Swain:

"Here in New Jersey, women have a fundamental right to their own privacy, their own bodies, their own lifestyles, and their own futures. A4654 supports those rights by making critical expansions in access to family planning, reproductive health, and early infancy care by removing financial barriers to care. While states across the country take steps to reduce or eliminate access to life-saving reproductive healthcare services, in New Jersey we are prioritizing, upholding and bolstering the fundamental liberties that we have worked so hard to protect and preserve."

Assemblywoman Shanique Speight:

"Every New Jersey resident deserves to have access to safe, affordable, and equitable reproductive care – it's fundamental. The progress we've been able to make – to enshrine these rights in law – reflect the power of our collaboration and shared commitment. Together we will continue to protect these rights for all who call New Jersey home."

New Jersey Family Planning League President & CEO Rachel Baum:

"We applaud the Governor's unwavering commitment to continuing to protect and advance reproductive rights in New Jersey. In a time when access to reproductive healthcare is under attack in many parts of the country, New Jersey continues to lead the way by prioritizing accessibility, equity, and autonomy. By stockpiling essential medications and supplies necessary for reproductive health and abortion care, the state is taking proactive measures to ensure these critical resources remain available regardless of external pressures or political challenges. We look forward to working in partnership with the Murphy Administration to ensure all New Jerseyans have access to safe and effective reproductive health care services and supplies.

"In addition, the decision to eliminate cost-sharing for reproductive health services further underscores the state's dedication to breaking down barriers and ensuring that every individual—regardless of income, background, or circumstances—has access to the care they need. This initiative is not just about preserving critical rights - it is about creating a system where those rights can be exercised fully and equitably. We appreciate the commitment of the Murphy Administration and the Legislature to set a powerful example for the nation, reaffirming that reproductive health is essential healthcare and access to it is a fundamental aspect of individual freedom in this State."

Cherry Hill Women's Center Director of Public Affairs Roxanne Sutocky:

"As abortion providers serving southern New Jersey for nearly 50 years, Cherry Hill Women's Center extends our gratitude to Governor Phil Murphy for his unwavering commitment to sexual and reproductive healthcare and maternal health, as highlighted in today's State of the State address. At a time when access to essential health services is under threat across the country—threats deeply tied to the ongoing maternal mortality and morbidity crisis—we are proud to do this critical work in a state that strives to be a safe haven for pregnant and parenting individuals. We understand abortion access as an issue of racial and economic justice. Policies like removing out-of-pocket costs for abortion and stockpiling abortion care medications are vital to ensuring care remains affordable and accessible to all. We are also encouraged by the administration's efforts to strengthen New Jersey's economy and support families' economic security, including the extension of paid parental leave—especially as the majority of those we care for are parents. We are grateful for leaders like Governor Murphy, Senate Majority Leader Ruiz,

Assemblywoman Speight, and Assemblywoman Swain, who are proactive in safeguarding the rights, health, and access of all individuals. We look forward to continuing our work to ensure equitable, compassionate care for every community."

Planned Parenthood Action Fund Vice President of Public Affairs New Jersey Kaitlyn Wojtowicz:

"Following Gov. Phil Murphy's second-to-last State of the State address, we express our deep gratitude for his steadfast commitment to reproductive health and rights, including his efforts to ensure access to abortion and birth control in the state.

"As our country prepares to reckon with an anti-reproductive freedom federal administration, we warn legislators not to rest on their laurels and urge the New Jersey Legislature to act swiftly to ensure the state's commitment to reproductive health remains unwavering.

"The Reproductive Freedom and Health Equity Bill Package includes key provisions aimed at expanding access to reproductive health services, ensuring comprehensive care for all New Jerseyans, and providing protections against potential federal rollbacks of reproductive rights.

"The legislation is an essential step in securing the future of reproductive freedom in New Jersey, particularly as challenges to reproductive health rights continue to grow nationwide."

ACLU of New Jersey Executive Director Amol Sinha (<https://x.com/AmolSinha/status/1879272674171736337>):

"New Jersey must be a safe haven for reproductive freedom. Grateful that @GovMurphy is supporting abortion access for all and that he will be stockpiling mifepristone for those who need it. When the federal government won't protect our rights, New Jersey must lead. #njsots"

ACLU of New Jersey Policy Director Sarah Fajardo:

"In his State of the State address today, Gov. Murphy showed that New Jersey has expanded civil rights and liberties under his leadership, and there is more to be done in his final year as governor. By modernizing the state's parole system, New Jersey will advance justice, promote public safety, and recognize positive conduct. For too long, people have been unnecessarily disrupted in their efforts to rebuild their lives due to technical violations. With these changes, and his commitment to granting categorical clemency for even more people, Gov. Murphy will continue to add to our state's long and transformational history of decarceration. We hope he continues to further reduce New Jersey's prison population throughout the rest of his term.

"As states across the country rollback access to abortion, New Jersey will instead begin stockpiling mifepristone and advancing policies to remove out-of-pocket costs for abortion care – both necessary steps to protecting and expanding reproductive freedom. At the same time, government leaders must also prioritize legislation that will strengthen immigrants' rights, especially as President-elect Trump has promised mass deportations as a top priority of his administration. New Jersey must embrace its chance to be a national leader on every front, and that means adopting a comprehensive approach to advance and defend civil rights – not prioritizing one goal at the expense of another or waiting until it's politically expedient.

"New Jersey has a powerful history of crafting ambitious public policy to build a better future. As the country braces for Trump's next term, our state can and must do more to protect all New Jerseyans. We will continue to work with Gov. Murphy and lawmakers at every opportunity to do exactly that."

Garden State Equality Executive Director Christian Fuscarino (https://www.threads.net/@fuscarino/post/DE5bWg-vtpj?xmt=AQGzbw0vDHYsCpbuqn2yNH3yl6pffh_TPZi-v3vgy2akBA):

"As we brace for the challenges ahead, I'm so grateful for Governor Murphy centering New Jersey values during his State of the State address. New Jersey has stood steadfast in protecting human rights and freedoms, becoming a beacon of hope and equality across the country.

"As @GovMurphy said, we all have a shared responsibility to safeguard the dignity of every person, no matter who they love, where they come from, or how they worship—these are our values because we're from Jersey, baby!"

On Codifying New Jersey's Clean Energy Standard:

Assemblyman Robert Karabinchak:

“The transition to clean energy is not only essential for the health of our planet, but it also creates new opportunities for sustainable economic growth. Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) are a critical tool in accelerating this transition, ensuring a future where energy is both affordable and environmentally responsible. I commend Governor Murphy for making clean energy a top priority in New Jersey. His leadership in pushing for a cleaner, more sustainable energy future is inspiring. As we approach the final year of his term, I look forward to continuing our work together to expand clean energy solutions, support innovation, and make lasting environmental progress for the state.”

New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club Director Anjali Ramos-Busot:

“We thank Governor Murphy for ensuring 100 percent clean electricity is a part of his and New Jersey’s environmental and energy legacy. This standard is one of the most ambitious energy targets in the nation, and secures our state’s position as an environmental leader. Transitioning to clean energy is not only beneficial to the environment, but it will also provide good, high paying union jobs to New Jerseyans, secure our state’s energy independence, and clean our air. The NJ Sierra Club is eager to see the legislature swiftly codify this necessary goal.”

New Jersey LCV Executive Director Ed Potosnak (<https://x.com/NJLCV/status/1879277584598311087>):

“We know that clean energy costs less than dirty oil and gas, and Governor Murphy’s plan to enshrine these goals in law will allow children with asthma and seniors with heart disease to breathe easier – even as we create thousands of jobs here in New Jersey.”

New Jersey Clean Coalition:

“In his State of the State Address, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy doubled down on the Administration’s commitment to clean energy. We commend Gov. Murphy for his continued leadership in advancing bold and transformative clean energy goals in the final months of his term, cementing both his legacy and New Jersey’s as a clean energy leader in the U.S.”

“Under Gov. Murphy’s leadership, New Jersey is prioritizing jobs and affordability by advancing clean energy production. By Executive Order, New Jersey has one of the most ambitious standards in the country, aiming for 100% clean energy generation by 2035. Codifying this goal is the next step to ensuring New Jersey’s energy security,” the statement continued. “Today, Gov. Murphy called on the Legislature to advance legislation to establish a clean energy standard by law. We commend Gov. Murphy for his leadership on this issue and are committed to working with the Administration and the Legislature to advance legislation to protect New Jersey’s clean energy future.”

ReThink Energy NJ (<https://x.com/rethinkenergynj/status/1879576000922865881>):

“Grateful to @GovMurphy for prioritizing #cleanenergy in his final year. Codifying NJ’s 100% clean energy goal by 2035 is critical for combating #climatechange and ensuring a livable future for all. #NJSOTS”

New Jersey Sustainable Business Council (<https://x.com/NJSBCouncil/status/1879598531360731188>):

“@GovMurphy’s #StateoftheState underscores his commitment to pushing NJ forward in #sustainability! With bold goals like 100% #cleanenergy by 2035, we must work together to codify this vision and secure a healthy, bright future for all. #NJSOTS”

Tri-State Transportation Campaign (https://x.com/Tri_State/status/1879278315049025752):

“Today, @GovMurphycalled for bold legislation to establish NJ’s 100% clean energy goal by law. As we approach the Gov’s final year in office, we must double down to secure NJ’s energy future. Together, we can ensure NJ remains a national leader in clean, affordable energy!”

On Expanding Voting Rights by Allowing 16 and 17-Year-Olds to Vote in Local School Board Elections:

Senator Raj Mukherji:

“Governor Murphy’s State of the State address underscores the bold leadership and forward-thinking vision that New Jersey needs as we continue to build a more inclusive, resilient, and prosperous future for all Garden State residents. The Governor’s commitment to take bold steps that strengthen our democracy – making same-day voter registration a reality and enfranchising 16- and 17-year-olds in school board elections as numerous other jurisdictions have done successfully – is what our state needs to empower our young people and ensure we hear every voice. We are building a more inclusive and engaged future for all. I look forward to working alongside Governor Murphy and my fellow legislators to turn these goals into lasting progress for our communities.”

On Reforming Penalties for Technical Parole Violations:

Returning Citizens Support Group Executive Director Edwin Ortiz:

"The Returning Citizens Support Group support Governor Murphy's initiative to reform the handling of technical parole violations. We believe that no individual on parole should be sent back to prison for a technical violation unless a new crime has been committed. Technical violations—such as leaving the state without prior permission, testing positive for substance use, failing to report a change of address, or being unable to pay court-imposed fines or penalties—should not result in incarceration. These actions do not pose a direct threat to public safety but instead highlight systemic issues such as economic hardship, substance use disorders, or a lack of access to resources."

New Jersey Institute for Social Justice (https://x.com/NJ_ISJ/status/1879291292481712266):

"First, we agree that ensuring the economic security of New Jersey families must be a priority, and we hope to see deep investments in closing the racial wealth gap and ensuring that our most economically vulnerable families have the resources they need to thrive."

"Governor Murphy is correct—public officials "all bear a responsibility to correct the failures and injustices of the past." That is why we launched the New Jersey Reparations Council. The Council's mission is to finally confront and repair New Jersey's deep and often overlooked involvement in slavery and its lasting impact on the contemporary life of Black people in our state."

"We also appreciate Governor Murphy's focus on affordable housing and expanding housing supply to reduce housing costs in the state, but policy and program design must be well-targeted. Despite his focus on property tax relief, we know that the greatest benefits of StayNJ will go to the wealthiest families in our state."

"Finally, we believe Governor Murphy is right in calling for much-needed parole violation reform. Thousands of New Jerseyans are faced with seemingly insurmountable barriers to successful reentry, and the arbitrary rules surrounding parole make the journey to reintegration that much harder."

New Jersey Policy Perspective Senior Policy Analyst Marleina Ubel (<https://x.com/NJPolicy/status/1879296281081954672>):

"This announcement marks a critical step toward building a more equitable and effective justice system in New Jersey. By reducing the number of individuals re-incarcerated for technical violations, this policy would address a key driver of unnecessary incarceration, promote stability for individuals reentering their communities, and improve government efficiency by significantly reducing the number of people entering the New Jersey Department of Corrections."

"We look forward to hearing how this policy would extend relief to the over 1,000 people currently incarcerated for such violations. We commend the governor's leadership in advancing this reform, which reflects a commitment to justice, fairness, and second chances."

4 C's Coalition/Friendship Baptist Church Pastor John Taylor:

"It was a privilege to attend the State of the State Address, where Governor Murphy outlined several important initiatives aimed at advancing justice and equity. Among the key topics discussed were clemency, addressing technical parole violations, and the release of the disparity study highlighting the allocation of investments to Black, Women, and minority-owned businesses. The Governor urged the legislature to pass his bill package to address these inequities and promote greater economic inclusion. These initiatives reflect a thoughtful approach to reform, and I appreciate the Governor's continued commitment to promoting fairness and opportunity for all New Jersey residents. Thank you, Governor Murphy, for your leadership on these critical issues."

Communities in Cooperation Pastor Pamela Jones:

"Thank you, Governor Phil Murphy, for your insightful State of the State Address. The proposed bill to reduce penalties for certain parole violations is a significant step toward providing rehabilitative support rather than punitive measures."

"As Martin Luther King Jr. stated, 'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.' This legislation embodies that principle by fostering a more equitable and compassionate justice system."

Princeton Policy Founding Director Udi Ofer (<https://x.com/udiofer/status/1879527135230193722>):

“Sending a person to prison for a technical violation of parole, which is not a crime, is often a grave injustice that doesn't make society safer. Thank you, Governor Murphy, for supporting these smart reforms to the parole system.”

Governor Phil Murphy

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