



## State of New Jersey

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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CHRIS CHRISTIE  
Governor

July 11, 2017

The Honorable Vincent Prieto  
Speaker  
New Jersey General Assembly  
P.O. Box 098  
Trenton, NJ 08635

Dear Speaker Prieto:

Thank you for your letter dated July 7, 2017.

It was perplexing to read your request that I use "executive authority" to compensate State government workers who did not work on Monday, July 3, 2017.

As you know from being Speaker of the General Assembly for several years (and Budget Committee Chairman before that), it is the Legislature's responsibility to pass an annual appropriation act and present it to the Governor for signature prior to the end of the fiscal year.

If this does not occur, non-essential functions of State government must be shut down until such time as an appropriation law is enacted. This result is not optional, but rather is compelled by the New Jersey State Constitution, Article VIII, Section 2, Paragraph 2.

As recognized by legislative leadership and the Governor following the State government shutdown in 2006, a specific legislative appropriation is necessary to authorize payments to involuntarily furloughed State government workers for the period during which no general appropriations act was in place.

You could have passed an appropriation bill in a timely manner, or you could have included an appropriation for this purpose in the bill you belatedly sent to my desk, like the Legislature did in 2006. Instead, you ignored the issue altogether in your budget bill and then sent me a letter that erroneously asks me to do something that is unlawful.

The Senate has already scheduled a voting session on a supplemental appropriation like you should have included in your budget bill - (S-3422) (Amends Fiscal Year 2018 annual appropriation act to ensure involuntarily furloughed State employees receive retroactive salary payments for State government budget shutdown). Joining the Senate in enacting an appropriation would be the most responsible way to resolve this issue. Your request to me to exert gubernatorial authority which I do not have is unlawful. As such, your request is denied, as it should be.

I look forward to seeing this bill up for a vote in the General Assembly very soon.

Sincerely,



Chris Christie  
Governor