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## ICYMI: "Gov. Chris Christie Urges Lawmakers To Take Action On Reforms Before End Of Session"

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From The Press Of Atlantic City

By Derek Harper  
November 17, 2011

"Gov. Chris Christie called on state lawmakers to pass at least three more elements of his proposed 'toolkit' of municipal reforms before the current legislative session ends in January.

"Speaking at the state League of Municipalities conference, Christie proposed eliminating sick-leave payouts for future employees before a roomful of largely local officials and employees. ...

"Christie said that in 2010, public employees accumulated \$43 million in sick pay.

"If you are fortunate enough to have your entire career without being sick, the first thing you should do is hit your knees and thank God,' Christie said. 'The next move should not be to put your hand out to the taxpayers.' ...

"Christie also called for additional support for shared services as well as the rights for towns to opt out of the Civil Service system, two issues he said were 'joined at the hip' and were needed to reduce the cost of government. ...

"He touted state economic growth and what he called a partnership with the municipalities.

"We've known all along that we represent some of the toughest, smartest, grittiest people in New Jersey. We've known all along that this state is destined for great things. We just needed to give the people of the state the confidence that comes from real leaders leading together,' Christie said.

"Afterward, officials praised the speech and proposals.

"Bill Dressel, executive director of the League of Municipalities, said his group had supported similar proposals of the governor's for years.

"At least he's focusing on the need for property tax relief,' he said.

"Buena Vista Township Mayor Chuck Chiarello, a Democrat and the league's current president, said the governor's tone seemed more optimistic than his 2009 speech.

"Former Ocean City Mayor Sal Perillo, a Republican, said he was 'very impressed' by the speech, and called the sick-time proposal 'much needed and appropriate.'

"Pleasantville Mayor Jesse Tweedle, a Democrat, said Christie 'was on point with a lot of things.'

"The most contentious session Tweedle attended at the league conference dealt with the 2 percent property tax cap, and said the governor's proposals, including the sick-time changes, would help towns.

"Some people, I wouldn't say they're abusing it, but there is a whole new environment now,' Tweedle said. ..."

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