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NEWS RELEASE

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Whitman Signs Bill to Help Counties, Towns with Y2K Computer Preparedness

Gov. Christie Whitman today signed legislation to permit counties and municipalities to exempt from their budget caps the costs of Year 2000 computer preparations.

A-2592, sponsored by Assembly Members Sam Thompson (R-Middlesex/ Monmouth), Alan Augustine (R-Middlesex/Morris/Somerset/Union), Gerald Luongo (R-Camden/Gloucester) and Richard Bagger (R-Middlesex/Morris/Somerset/Union), adds another exemption to New Jersey's Local Budget Law which limits increases to municipal appropriations and county tax levies. The bill exempts expenditures made by a municipality or county for the purpose of testing micro-processor based equipment and computer software for Year 2000 (Y2K) computer problems and remediating or replacing any equipment or software that fails in testing for the Y2K transition.

The bill also permits a municipality or county to adopt a special emergency appropriation for these expenditures, allowing the cost of the emergency to be spread over five years to reduce the impact on local property taxes.

The bill expires on Dec. 31, 2000 after solutions to Y2K computer problems are in place.