



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

NEWS RELEASE

PO BOX 004
CONTACT: Pete McDonough
Julie Plocinik
(609) 777-2600

TRENTON, NJ 08625
RELEASE: January 12, 1998



Gov. Whitman Files Conditional Veto of A-731

Gov. Christie Whitman today filed a conditional veto making recommendations for improvement and clarification of the following bill:

A-731, sponsored by Assembly Members Guy Gregg (R- Sussex/Hunterdon/Morris) and Michael Carroll (R-Morris) and Senator Dick LaRossa (R-Mercer), which would raise the speed limit to 65 miles per hour on certain New Jersey highways. The Governor's conditional veto recommended that the increased speed limit be implemented on a trial basis along with an eighteen month study period to enable the state to determine the implications and effects of the new speed limit. The Governor also recommended that the new speed limit be accompanied by enhanced penalties for aggressive driving and for speeding 10 miles per hour over the speed limit.

Within four months of the effective date of the legislation, the Commissioner of Transportation, in consultation with the Attorney General will designate the approximately 400 miles of eligible public highways on which the increased speed limit will apply. The Commissioner will have discretion to increase or decrease the number of eligible miles where the speed limit will apply.

The increase in the speed limit would be accompanied by an eighteen-month study period. Within three months of the conclusion of the study, the Commissioner of Transportation, in consultation with the Attorney General, will submit a report on the effects of the increase and make recommendations for any necessary improvements to the law. The report will consider public safety and environmental and cost issues, including accident rates, fatalities, enforcement and air quality.

The Commissioner of Transportation would implement the recommendations contained in the report unless the Legislature, acting by Concurrent Resolution, disapproves any part of the recommendations within 60 days of the submission of the report.

The Governor's conditional veto would double traffic fines for driving 10 miles per hour or more over the speed limit in 65 mile per hour zones and 20 miles per hour or more over the speed limit in any other zone. Traffic fines would also be doubled for aggressive driving, including tailgating and improper lane changing in 65 mile per hour zones. The stiffer penalties are intended to better ensure drivers' safety by discouraging drivers from traveling at dangerous speeds.

####

njhome