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## Governor Chris Christie Eases Access to New Jersey's Medical Marijuana Program for Sick Children

Friday, August 16, 2013

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### ***Calls for Lifting Three-Strain Cultivation Limit, Allowing Edible Consumption for Children and Giving Parents Choice***

**Trenton, NJ** – Acting with the belief that parents, and not government regulators, are best suited to decide how to care for their children, Governor Chris Christie today acted to ease access for sick children to New Jersey's medical marijuana program. The Governor acted to lift the three-strain cultivation limit on authorized growers and to make the treatment available to children in edible form. His actions will provide qualifying minors a wider variety of treatment options under the state's program and empower parents to make choices based on their own reflections, study and physical consultation to provide their children appropriate treatment consistent with their age and medical needs.

"As I have repeatedly noted, I believe that parents, and not government regulators, are best suited to decide how to care for their children," said Governor Christie in his conditional approval of the bill. "Protection of our children remains my utmost concern, and my heart goes out to those children and their families who are suffering with serious illnesses. Today, I am making commonsense recommendations to this legislation to ensure sick children receive the treatment their parents prefer, while maintaining appropriate safeguards. I am calling on the Legislature to reconvene quickly and address these issues so that children in need can get the treatment they need."

Governor Christie added that medical review and doctor sign-off before entering the program should be maintained. Media reports have mischaracterized the current requirements and regulations: while a qualifying minor must be approved by both a pediatrician and a psychiatrist, no additional approvals are required if either one of those physicians is registered with the program. This approach is endorsed by the New Jersey Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Governor believes it should remain in place.

While the Governor believes that children should have access to edible forms of medical marijuana, he made modifications to the bill to ensure that these forms will only be available to qualifying patients who are minors.

A copy of the Governor's message [[pdf 30kB](#)]

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### Transcript From August 16, 2013 Remarks:

**Governor Christie:** Our Administration, both here and under Bill and David Samson's leadership at the Port Authority, will continue to make significant economic progress through direct infrastructure investment projects and public-private partnerships. These include our urban transit hub law that's been a big incentive tool that's been used to date, moving forward with the second phase of Newark's Teachers Village right across the river, making nearly half a billion dollars of grants available for needed construction projects in school districts across New Jersey, and today finally in Harrison after promises from many governors before me, finally the realization of that promise to become a centerpiece for Harrison of a vibrant mixed use transit-oriented development while spurring community revitalization, job creation, and business investment. You know, whether it's here in Harrison with Mayor McDonough, whether it's in Essex County with the county executive Joe DiVincenzo, and the sheriff Armando Fontoura, whether it's in Camden, we're working hard with the Mayor, no matter where it is in our urban areas of the state, we are going to be committed to making sure that we have renewed development, growth, safety, and better education in our state's cities.

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