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Governor Christie Continues Taking Action to Ensure Accountability and Oversight in Use of Sandy Relief Funds with Bipartisan Integrity Oversight Monitor Legislation

Wednesday, March 27, 2013

Tags: [Hurricane Sandy](#)

Signs Into Law Legislation to Increase Transparency & Accountability of Disbursement of Taxpayer Dollars in Sandy Reconstruction Projects

Trenton, NJ – Building on his commitment to secure the responsible, transparent and accountable use of taxpayer dollars, Governor Chris Christie today signed into law bipartisan legislation to provide integrity oversight monitors in the implementation of recovery and rebuilding projects. This bill, Assembly Bill 60/Senate Bill 2536, takes aggressive, meaningful steps to ensure that federal funds targeted for recovery and rebuilding projects from Superstorm Sandy are being used for their intended purpose. The legislation strengthens the Governor's record of establishing an independent, legal review, led by the State Comptroller, of the procurement process for state contracts using federal reconstruction resources, a network of Accountability Officers across State government to facilitate the review, and a transparency website for all such contracts. Those protections were provided for in the Governor's Executive Order 125.

"As we continue working together to rebuild New Jersey, it's critical that taxpayers across our state and country know that their dollars are being spent wisely," said Governor Christie. "This bipartisan legislation puts in place independent watch dogs to ensure that the scarce resources that New Jersey has been entrusted with are being used effectively and efficiently for their intended purpose – rebuilding our communities in the aftermath of Sandy. As Governor, I am committed to transparency, accountability and the most effective use of public money in all facets of government, and am pleased to sign this bipartisan bill into law, building on the proactive steps we have already taken to ensure proper use of these funds."

Under the legislation signed today, the State Treasurer is authorized to establish a pool of pre-approved oversight monitors via an ongoing, competitive procurement process and, subject to the availability of federal funding, to assign such monitors for oversight and review in two classes of recovery and rebuilding projects: those involving State contracts and those not involving State contracts. For those rebuilding projects involving State contracts, the bill authorizes the State Treasurer to make the use of an oversight monitor a contractual condition to ensure efficiency and transparency. For recovery and rebuilding projects not involving State contracts, the bill also authorizes the State Treasurer to require the use of an oversight monitor to equally ensure efficiency and transparency in those projects as well.

The Treasurer will assign monitors to any rebuilding projects totaling more than \$5 million, and any under that threshold at his discretion. In addition to immediately reporting any examples of waste, fraud, or abuse to the Attorney General and State Comptroller, every three months the State Treasurer will provide a report to the Governor and the Legislature on the findings of their oversight monitors. The names of these oversight monitors will be available on a public web site.

The legislation was sponsored by Assemblywoman Sheila Oliver, Assemblyman Louis Greenwald, Assemblyman John Wisniewski, Assemblyman Thomas Giblin, Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly, and Senator Stephen Sweeney, Senator Robert Gordon, Senator Loretta Weinberg, Senator Nia Gill, and Senator Linda Greenstein.

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PHOTO CAPTION:
First Lady Mary Pat Christie honors Purple R.E.I.G.N. founder and CEO Asia D. Smith as her 19th New Jersey Hero. Pictured (left to right) are Esney Mae Sharpe, President & CEO of the Bessie Mae Women's Health Center, First Lady Mary Pat Christie and Asia D.

Smith, Purple R.E.I.G.N. founder.

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