

Sixth Annual Message

OF

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Governor of New Jersey

TO THE ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOURTH
LEGISLATURE OF NEW JERSEY

January 12, 1960

Trenton, N. J.



**GOVERNOR'S ANNUAL MESSAGE
TO THE LEGISLATURE**

January 12, 1960

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker and Members of the Senate and General Assembly:

The opening of a new session is an occasion to review what has been done, and what remains to be done. It is inventory time. We should take stock of past achievements, of problems old and new. Then, in the coming year we must apply our imagination, ingenuity and initiative in performing our common duty.

It is the genius of the human mind that we learn by experience. We examine the results of the trial-and-error process. We avoid repeating efforts that have not achieved their purpose or are no longer suited to the needs of the day.

Although it may not be as obvious or dramatic as other forms, the most useful kind of progress consists of traveling again over the old roads, making the best improvements we can, leveling the grades, smoothing the surfaces and widening the way.

This, it must be said, is a humble attitude. It seeks to move forward by well-considered steps. Its objective is solid progress. It recognizes the imperfection of all human endeavor.

Still, what we do is important. Democracy is on trial today and the test has world-wide significance. There are many nations yet uncommitted in the struggle between democracy and communism. Some of these nations are in the control of armed forces—what we call dictatorship, but which some contend is “guided democracy.”

The period we live in is one of transition, and we cannot predict which way the pendulum will swing. If we have confidence in our form of government, if we believe it will best preserve the freedoms which we cherish, we must be able to show that democracy works.

It is vitally important that all 50 states in our Union perform their functions capably. In this display of achievement, New Jersey, as one of the original states, is in the forefront. It must be our aim to keep our state, county and local governments alert and up-to-date. They must always perform their services effectively, with minimum waste, and without dislocating or disturbing the patterns of progress.

With these guides in mind, I now turn to what lies ahead at the beginning of the sixties.

THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Three aspects of the legislative process deserve particular attention. The first deals with the inexcusable caucus system in the Senate. The caucus gives one party the power of life and death over all legislation. It can kill a bill known to have the support of the Senate as a whole.

With a Senate divided 11 to 10, this means that as few as six—less than 30 per cent of the entire membership—now hold this unjustifiable power. "Government by the half-dozen" is not our idea of democracy.

This power is a sign of weakness; it reflects an unreasonable fear to stand up and be counted. Should there be any doubt of this analysis, we need only observe that in the last six years, not once has a bill been defeated on a floor vote in the Senate. This is not the kind of deliberative and representative government calculated to win and maintain public respect. It smacks more of comic opera.

This is not a partisan issue. I remind you that in his Annual Message of 1953, Governor Alfred E. Driscoll urged both Houses to adopt a rule to require "each legislative committee * * * to report out any bill upon petition of seven Senators in the Senate or twenty members in the General Assembly." I agree completely.

If the Legislature has the courage to take this action, most of the recommendations in this message will not be brought to your attention again next year. They will have been disposed of through adoption or rejection. I could not ask for more. The people could not ask for more.

The second aspect deals with legislative procedures. The Assembly showed how the problem of identical bills can be solved. It adopted a rule to substitute a Senate bill for a pending Assembly bill. This has helped, but both Houses should enact procedural legislation under which the same bill can be printed once, with both bill numbers. When passed by each House, it will be ready for delivery to the Executive.

I have no doubt that this approach is constitutionally valid. Since it is novel, however, it should be confirmed by an early court test.

The third aspect is the importance of equipping the Legislature with a permanent staff to deal adequately with the technical side of its work. Such a staff could provide better liaison with the executive departments. Facts known to our departments are yours for the asking, but they are now rarely sought out for lack of time. A permanent staff can get this information, so that you will have all the facts and will be aware of all the consequences before you act.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The people have a right to expect that the person they elect to public office will not use it to advance his private interest. Legislation should be adopted to define and preclude activities which conflict with the public trust.

Such legislation also should define and preclude conflicts of interest by State employees. I have gone as far as possible in this direction by administrative action.

ASSEMBLY APPORTIONMENT

"Equitable representation of the people of our State is a key requirement of our republican form of government. While there may be some difference of opinion as to the mathematics of the question, there can be no compromise with the immediate need to reapportion the General Assembly. * * *" These are not my words—they were spoken by Governor Alfred E. Driscoll in 1953.

We are now eight years overdue, and another census will

soon be taken. Its results should be available by the beginning of 1962. The Legislature should agree upon a formula to accomplish a fair reapportionment, and provide for its application upon the promulgation of the next census.

CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING

The present Congressional Districts were established in 1931, more than 28 years ago. Present estimates show that some Congressional Districts have meanwhile grown to more than twice the size of others. For example, the 1st District now has 550,000 people, while the 13th and 14th each have only about 270,000.

Redistricting ordinarily occurs only when the Legislature and the Executive are of the same political persuasion and the result often reflects this affinity. The Legislature this year has an opportunity to adopt a truly bipartisan approach to this always troublesome problem. I urge you to seize this opportunity to develop an equitable proposal.

THE JUDICIARY

Justice is being delayed in our Superior Court. That Court has an unprecedented caseload. Thirty-eight judges cannot possibly handle it with dispatch.

The problem is especially severe because only 30 of these judges are available for work at the trial level. This includes those assigned to matrimonial and general equity matters. The other eight are in the Appellate Division, and they too are faced with an intolerably heavy burden. I earnestly urge that you put aside local considerations and approve the bill to increase the authorized strength of the Court to 44 judges.

A bill to provide the means for a needed revision of the law of evidence will be before you again this year. It commands general professional support and warrants your favorable consideration. It surmounts the problem of the *Winberry* case and preserves the legislative function in this important field.

Lastly, we have the problem of the municipal courts.

There are 501 of these courts, each staffed by part-time personnel and most of them without adequate facilities. Yet, these are the courts where the greatest number of people feel the keen cutting edge of the law. Such courts cannot provide the high level of performance essential to a sound judicial system. The Legislature should seek a practical approach to improvement, perhaps on a transition basis.

PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENTS

A group of bills to change our property assessment law passed the Senate last year by a single vote. It developed that these bills, as they stood, could not win approval of the Assembly. It was also clear that the narrow margin of Senate passage did not allow for modifications considered essential in the Assembly.

All of us must realize that any attempt to revamp our property tax methods is doomed to failure unless it commands more than bare approval. Any formula so narrowly enacted carries with it the seeds of endless controversy.

I therefore suggest that we re-examine the subject and not engage in deadlocked controversy over last year's bills. For this purpose, I submit the following eight points for your consideration:

One: Allow each county to set the assessment level for real property, to be applied uniformly in that county. One could be at 20 percent, another at 40 percent or whatever level is considered best. Equalization of assessments would, of course, continue for the purpose of allocating state aid and for other purposes, as at present.

If the level within each county is uniform, it makes no difference that the level might vary from county to county. Our Constitution directs that real property be assessed "according to" the same standard of value. The universal statewide "standard of value" will always be true value or some similar standard. So long as assessments are made "according to" that same standard, different percentage levels may be used in different counties.

Two: Have the statute set the ratio between business personal property and the county level for real property. Thus, machinery and equipment could be one-quarter of the real property level, and inventory one-tenth.

Three: Eliminate the least productive types of inventory, on which the tax might be burdensome, namely raw materials, work in process, small tools and supplies. Also, the desire of farming counties to set a low ratio for farm machinery and equipment can be accommodated without adverse effect on any other county.

Four: Allow each municipality to decide for itself whether it wishes to impose the tax on household property. In practice, that has been the situation anyhow.

Five: The local press of our State should publish the municipal tax rolls over a six-month period. If the effort proved successful, as it did where it was tried, the Legislature could require such publication regularly. This would be an effective way to get the public to insist on the correction of inequity.

Six: Provide for the professional training of local assessors, for statewide performance standards, and for competent technical assistance when needed. If this is done, there will be no need for the services of commercial firms. We can provide these services for ourselves with better results and at substantially lower cost.

Seven: Permit, on local option, the use of county assessors or the assessment of property by municipalities jointly on a consolidated basis. Some such step is needed if the suggestions already made are to produce more than a temporary victory. The key to the whole problem lies in a high quality of performance in local assessing practices.

Eight: Provide for complete assessment every two or three years, instead of every year.

PROTECTION FOR THE CONSUMER

Last year, I emphasized the importance of legislation for better protection of the consumer. Bills were introduced to regulate installment sales, on which extra charges are now

unlimited. A bill was also introduced to get rid of the "bucket shop" securities salesman. This law is needed so that the State can take affirmative action before the damage is done.

Neither of these subjects received legislative attention. There is no excuse for inaction. In addition to these bills, legislation will be offered to eliminate the unregulated "debt adjuster" with his exorbitant fees, and the "loaded" home improvement project, by which storm windows, siding, fire-alarm systems and the like are offered at attractive prices but with high hidden charges, and other "con game" tricks.

Recent months have seen a growing number of complaints from persons who have been victimized by fraudulent or deceitful selling practices. This problem is not limited to misleading advertising on television. It extends to "bait" advertising in other media, high-pressure promises by door-to-door salesmen, and slick methods for adding on high extra charges.

To combat this evil, legislation is needed to crack down on consumer frauds. It should authorize the Attorney General to restrain these practices, and to subpoena witnesses so that he can get the facts. He is ready to establish a Consumer Frauds Section in his department to administer this law and coordinate prosecution under other statutes.

HOUSING AND URBAN RENEWAL

We must step up our efforts to eradicate blight and to meet the needs of our citizens for adequate housing. In some areas persons of moderate incomes are not able to find decent, safe and sanitary housing suitable to their needs. The problem exists in even greater measure for our senior citizens. Frequently denied an opportunity to work, and forced to live on minimal incomes, a significant number of our half-million citizens over 65 years of age cannot find adequate housing within their means. Neither private industry nor our existing housing programs are capable of fulfilling the need.

My pleas for a permissive rent control law, in areas where it is needed, have been ignored.

The slum is still a problem. Only 25 municipalities are engaged in projects under the federal urban renewal program. In many instances the projects are not of adequate scope. Many municipalities simply cannot afford to do more.

I propose a four-point program of housing and urban renewal:

One: The Local Housing Authorities Law and the Housing Cooperation Law should be amended to enable local housing authorities to build rental housing for families of moderate income.

Two: The credit of the State should be pledged for bonds of the State Public Housing and Development Authority to develop capital for moderate income housing. The proceeds would be made available in long-term loans to private industry for construction of rental housing for moderate income families.

Three: The limited-dividend housing law should be amended to authorize a more realistic dividend on investment and a greater payment in lieu of taxes. Because of the restrictions of the present law only one project has been undertaken in 10 years. The liberalization I recommend will put this law to work.

Four: A state program should be developed to encourage urban renewal efforts in our municipalities and to provide rental housing for senior citizens under Title II of the Federal Housing Act of 1959.

A NEW AID FOR CRIMINAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

Our indictment procedures are now established within the limits of county boundary lines. This system is entirely adequate for most cases, but not for all. In those cases where a network of organized crime reaches beyond county borders, we should be equipped to fight it on equal terms.

The problem of investigation is largely met by the efforts of the county prosecutors and the Attorney General, who meet regularly to discuss such matters. Together, they try to assemble the jig-saw puzzle of evidence which is

distributed among the counties. And, whenever intercounty activities appear to create problems beyond the effective ability of local officials, the State Police are called in to help.

Helpful as this system is, its value is sometimes reduced by the need to break down the evidence into sections limited by county lines for the purpose of indictment and trial.

We can eliminate the problem by a simple mechanism: a grand jury with statewide jurisdiction.

I recommend to you the enactment of legislation to establish such a grand jury capable of returning indictments against the accused on the basis of activity anywhere in the State.

Such a grand jury would be called, as needed, after the request of one or more county prosecutors when they find a situation involving multi-county activity; and if the Attorney General concurs, he would then apply to the court for an order to convene the jury.

The jury itself could be drawn from a panel containing names from every county. The panel might even consist of some of the members of each county grand jury then in session.

It would have the assistance of the county prosecutors as well as of the Attorney General and his staff. It could indict the accused for all violations of the law within the State, even though some things were done in one county and others in another county, in those cases where this cannot be done effectively by a county grand jury.

Its proceedings would be conducted with the traditional secrecy essential to proper grand jury operations, and its indictments could be scheduled for trial according to venue designations made by the court.

OTHER ENFORCEMENT MEASURES

When I took office in 1954, law enforcement was at low ebb. I took stringent measures at that time. New Jersey today enjoys an enviable record. If this record is to be preserved, it is essential that the Legislature act on numerous

law enforcement measures which I have brought to your attention before.

The police training bill will be introduced again. Adequate training of new policemen before they are permanently appointed is a necessity.

A crime reporting system should be instituted without delay. Modern law enforcement requires that we have an accurate and sensitive picture of criminal activity in the State.

The immunity bill will also be resubmitted. This bill will enable a prosecutor to obtain a court order granting immunity to a witness in return for vital testimony now unavailable.

The Criminal Investigation Section's statewide investigation of garbage collection and disposal practices has shown what kind of public controls are needed. There will be bills to require licensing of garbage collection contractors and to regulate garbage dumping practices.

The office of prosecutor is a full-time responsibility, yet our statutes provide for only a part-time official. I suggest that we put county prosecutors on a full-time basis in those counties where it is feasible. The salaries should be adequate to compensate full-time personnel. In one county the salary for two of the assistants is higher than for the prosecutor. In eight of our counties the salary of the prosecutor is less than the minimum salary authorized by last year's law for the prosecutor's chief county detective. I urge you to act promptly to give deserved recognition to the pivotal importance of the prosecutors in our law enforcement mechanism.

AMUSEMENT GAMES

At the November election, the public approved the playing of amusement games at certain restricted locations. The law provides that these games cannot be conducted until a state license, as well as a municipal license, has been obtained.

Before any state licenses can be issued, there must be an Amusement Games Commissioner. I have concluded that the

law can be best administered by the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control. The present Director assures me that he can integrate this assignment with the other work of the Division. In this way, no additional salary for a Commissioner will be required, and the expense for office space, staff and travel will be held to a minimum.

Enactment of this legislation is essential before any of these games can be played anywhere in the State.

OUR INTERSTATE RELATIONS

There are six major subjects dealing with interstate relationships which will require your careful attention at this session.

The first is the Delaware River and Bay Compact. This treaty will be the first establishing a bi-state agency with the State of Delaware. It culminates five or six years of effort by this administration, and was prepared by bipartisan conferees appointed by the Governors of both States. It will begin a period of constructive cooperation and joint effort to deal with common problems affecting the Delaware River and Bay area.

The second subject is the New York income tax. The studies and discussions over the last two years have forcefully shown the injustice of the present tax. We have been ably supported by our legislators and by the State of Connecticut. New York must now search its own conscience and make its own decision. We have presented suggestions and comments, and encouraging progress has been made. What New Jersey should do will depend upon the course which New York selects.

Similar efforts have not yet indicated that the City of Philadelphia, the Borough of Wilson and the State of Pennsylvania are ready to discuss the problem of their municipal wage tax. Their reluctance will not discourage us. Our effort will be continued.

The third interstate matter is a proposed water compact including New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Delaware, as well as the federal government. It proposes a single agency to deal comprehensively with water development and

use in the Delaware River Basin. A draft for distribution has not yet been completed. When it is, you should study it so that you can evaluate its impact on our State.

Next is the suggestion that New Jersey and Pennsylvania should streamline the several fragmentary agencies now existing between them. This calls for a careful analysis of present agreements and a study group to review the matter with Pennsylvania.

Then there is the proposal of the Port of New York Authority to build a new airport. I strongly urge that you become acquainted with the essential facts. Any decision will lie with the Legislature, since the airport suggested cannot be built unless you authorize it by law. I assure you that I do not intend to give my approval unless I am convinced that it embodies a sound and sensible plan.

The sixth subject deals with air pollution. Discussions have led to a proposal that the existing Interstate Sanitation Commission take on the functions of pooled research, development of standards, and gathering of field data. Enforcement of existing law will remain with present agencies having jurisdiction over the source location.

TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS

"Improvement of facilities for carrying the vast army of commuters to and from New York City affects not alone the comfort of those who now are dependent upon such facilities, but measures the success or failure of our future development." These are not my words—they are the words of Governor A. Harry Moore, from his legislative message of 1928. More than 30 years have passed without significant progress on this problem.

Last year, this Administration advanced what I believe was the most effective step yet offered. It would have provided the funds without which any great improvement will be slow and difficult. Unfortunately, the public withheld its approval. Since then the Transportation Division has been engaged in the preparation of other programs. These should be ready for announcement next month.

I still maintain that the commuter problem is part of the national transportation pattern and that it must be

solved, in no small degree, at the national level in much the same manner as assistance is provided to the airways and highways.

Meanwhile, since the Transportation Division and the Bi-State Transportation Agency created last year were given a short statutory life, I recommend that you extend them by an additional year. Also, there must be a supplemental appropriation of \$25,000 to comply with the terms of the compact with New York.

THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

The workload of this department has increased substantially in recent years. The number of matters filed in 1959 was 52 percent higher than in 1955. At the same time, the calendar has been so expedited that 86 per cent more cases were decided last year than in 1955. Most matters are now disposed of within 30 days.

A comprehensive revision of practice rules, administrative orders and suggested procedures, the first since 1911, was adopted last year.

In the most important part of its work, that which deals with rail commutation, the Board has been severely handicapped by the Federal Transportation Act of 1958.

The federal government has taken a completely inconsistent position by refusing to help solve the problem of interstate commutation, claiming that the problem is purely local, but at the same time taking sole jurisdiction to permit the reduction or discontinuance of service in certain cases. In spite of this handicap, the Board is doing all it can and is working closely with the Rail Transportation Division to develop the facts needed for the design of new plans.

A CLIMATE FOR INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

Since my First Inaugural Address, I have repeatedly asked for a state labor-management relations law. A state with an annual growth of more than 100,000 people requires a healthy industrial climate to promote an expanding base of employment opportunity and sustain that growth.

Recent federal legislation relinquishes certain areas

of jurisdiction to the states. We must recognize our responsibility and accept this jurisdiction.

I have asked the Commissioner of Labor and Industry to discuss this matter with leaders of labor and management. I am hopeful that, within the Department, we can devise an inexpensive administrative method of handling a labor-management relations program which will serve the needs of management, labor and the public.

I expect to submit a specific proposal to define certain unfair practices of labor and management and to handle elections to determine proper representation.

OTHER LABOR MEASURES

New Jersey has had in the past a proud and enviable record of enlightened labor legislation. Laws regulating child labor were adopted as early as 1904. In 1911, measures were instituted to safeguard female employees and prohibit oppressive and unreasonable wages for women and children. In 1912, workmen's compensation was established, and, in 1936, an unemployment compensation program was enacted.

The foresight of our predecessors, however, cannot justify inaction. Economic conditions are not static. We have a duty to revise and expand these programs to keep pace with the changes.

Despite my repeated requests since 1954, nothing has been done on a comprehensive minimum wage law. Action must be taken to establish this essential program.

Token increases in workmen's compensation, temporary disability and unemployment compensation benefits were enacted several years ago. But the benefits still fall far short of the 50 percent level advocated by President Eisenhower and Secretary Mitchell. In addition, these programs should be extended to include those who work for employers of fewer than four.

These are not partisan matters and should not be so treated. If the Senate majority believes that these meas-

ures do not command support of a clear majority of that House, then I ask that they defeat them on the floor of the Senate, and not in secrecy behind the Caucus Curtain. Our working people deserve better treatment than that.

OUR TRAFFIC SAFETY PROGRAM

Measured by statistical comparison with other states, our traffic safety record is an encouraging achievement. Measured in human agony, it is appalling.

It now appears that our traffic death rate for 1959 will be about 3.0 per 100 million vehicle miles. This would be a reduction of more than 6 percent from the 3.2 rate of 1958. The accident total for 1959 is expected to be lower than in 1958, the first reduction in a decade; this, despite an increase of more than 7 percent in vehicle mileage. These are heartening improvements. Our enforcement efforts are showing results. But administrative action alone is not sufficient.

I repeat my request for the bill establishing the office of county traffic safety coordinator, and I ask again for approval of the "implied consent" bill. The drinking driver still takes a deadly toll. We need the "implied consent" bill to require the suspected driver to submit to a scientific test.

Our truck safety program has been intensified. The Director of Motor Vehicles is now pressing for reciprocity agreements with neighboring states to improve highway safety. Bills to tighten standards of truck safety equipment will be submitted.

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE AGING

New Jersey has set up a Division of Aging in the Department of State, closely tied to all departments having an interest in this subject. The Division has suggested legislation to prohibit unreasonable discrimination because of age. This suggestion was based upon a comprehensive study which reveals that unjust discrimination does exist. While the intensive educational program now under way should help, it is not sufficient by itself. The State should

also adopt a declaration of policy to aid the employment of the older person. I will submit a bill to accomplish this and to ban various discriminatory techniques.

AGRICULTURE

The enactment of several important bills last year enlarged the field of service of the Department of Agriculture and started new programs of marketing promotion among producers. The program, which included eggs, poultry and white potatoes, was enlarged to add apples and asparagus. Similar legislation for one or possibly two other commodities may be submitted this year, depending on the decision of a majority of the producers.

SOIL CONSERVATION

Some local soil conservation districts have undertaken flood control and watershed projects with the help of the State Soil Conservation Committee and the federal government. In most instances, the essential land grants and easements have been obtained by voluntary agreement. Several essential projects, however, have been stalled by the refusal of a local landowner to cooperate with these projects on any basis.

Legislation will be submitted to grant the power of eminent domain to the local soil conservation districts, subject to approval by the Secretary of Agriculture and the Commissioner of Conservation and Economic Development.

STATE AND LOCAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

A concerted effort is being made to prevent the recurrence of the rare encephalitis attack which we experienced last year.

The State is well equipped to deal with this problem, especially with the virus laboratory in the Department of Health. It was that unit which identified last summer's outbreak.

These facilities and services, however, are not fully effective unless local health officials do their job. The concerted effort of the Rutgers Experiment Station, the Departments of Health, Agriculture and Conservation, the state and county mosquito commissions and the United States Public Health Service will be largely wasted if we do not have competent local health officers making reports and sending in specimens at the early stages. A fast start is essential for effective prevention and control.

Instead, we find that there is not one licensed health officer in all of Ocean County. There are but five part-time officers for all of Atlantic County. This situation must be remedied promptly. If it be argued that some municipalities cannot afford a full-time official, the remedy lies in the 1951 statute which provides for local health districts on a county or consolidated basis. So far, no use has been made of this law.

This spring the Department of Agriculture will undertake to vaccinate all pheasants and horses as a part of its encephalitis control program. The state and county mosquito commissions are planning to increase direct mosquito control measures.

The Department of Health is cooperating with the various county and local authorities to get improved local control and enforcement. It will establish and maintain a broad program to get good local performance through a full-time public health co-ordinator.

I will make some further recommendations for mosquito control in my budget message.

BANKING AND INSURANCE NEEDS

A recent investigation by the Department of Banking and Insurance revealed a clear need for tighter controls over the surplus lines insurance business. An eight-point legislative program to provide these controls will be submitted to you early in the session.

I will also submit a bill to provide better balance in

the representation on the Blue Cross governing board, and a bill to authorize broader public supervision of the Blue Shield plan.

EMERGENCY CIVIL GOVERNMENT

A commission was established last year to recommend means for the continuation of civil government in the event of nuclear attack.

A constitutional amendment will be needed to carry out its recommendations. In this case, we pray that our efforts will not be needed, but we must be prepared.

INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES PROPOSALS

Three commissions have recently reported on studies of the work of this Department.

The Commission on Public Medical Care recommends a revision of the administration of public medical assistance. It urges county administration of all existing medical assistance, and it proposes a new program of assistance to the "medically indigent." This would cover the person who, though normally self-supporting, is met with large medical expenses beyond his means.

The Alexander Commission surveyed all areas of the Department's work and called for major changes. It recommends far-reaching changes in welfare administration; equally broad changes in correction and parole; a shifting of emphasis in the care of the mentally ill and mentally retarded, and a significant reorganization of the structure of the Department.

The Commission on Mental Health has given us a preliminary report of its studies. Judging from this report, we may soon expect to receive important final proposals on the spectrum of problems involved in the hospitalization and treatment of mentally disordered persons.

The significance of the recommendations of these com-

missions cannot be overestimated. Of course, we cannot possibly treat every recommendation in one session. I am pleased to report that several of the proposals have already been put into operation by executive action, but the more important ones will require legislative action. Some of these will have to be carried out gradually over a period of time; adjustment in administrative structure will have to precede the effectiveness of others. But all deserve your immediate attention and careful study. They are the considered recommendations of qualified people who have devoted painstaking effort to find paths for improvement in our state government. I believe you will find that many of them hold real promise for the advancement of the public interest.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COSTS

The rising cost of local government is a matter of concern for all. While it is mainly a problem for local officials, the State must do all it can to help them achieve efficient operation. Laws to permit consolidated services and pooling of operations are helpful.

Savings can be realized in the cost of equipment and supplies through the State Division of Purchase and Property. That Division obtains open-end bids for many items ranging from pencils to automobiles. As a result, state agencies obtain the benefit of the low prices. This same advantage can and should be made available to counties, municipalities and school districts on an optional basis. They could then purchase from a state bid list without advertising, or reject all bids after advertising and buy through the state list when that would bring a saving. The effect would be to establish a ceiling for standard supplies and to permit local officials to reduce costs. It can be as easy as buying through a mail order catalog.

BOATING SAFETY

New Jersey is encompassed by 300 miles of navigable waterways and has more than 600 square miles of bays, harbors and lakes. This enviable natural asset has given

impetus to pleasure boat activity on a large scale. Rapid development of this activity in the past decade, however, has intensified the need for some regulation.

If our citizens are to enjoy this pastime with reasonable safety, the State should establish a program for boat safety and numbering. If action is not taken by April 1st, the federal government will pre-empt the field. We have the ability to protect our citizens who want to enjoy the pleasures of boating; we should not shirk the responsibility. I urge the Legislature to take immediate action.

FISH AND GAME

The Division of Fish and Game has done excellent work over the last six years by assuring the protection of adequate recreational areas in all parts of the State. This task will become increasingly difficult in coming years as new subdivisions spring up to house our growing population.

Long-range planning to acquire adequate reserves for future needs is essential now. The State Fish and Game Council, whose members represent the hunters, fishermen and farmers, has recommended that there be a modest increase of license fees so that the program can be started.

Since this program is self-supporting and since those who pay the fees will receive a direct benefit, I consider this proposal sound and request your approval of a suitable bill.

THE WORLD'S FAIR

The New York metropolitan area has been selected as the site of the 1964 World's Fair. By reason of the celebration of our 300th anniversary in the same year and our proximity to the site, New Jersey should be a major participant in this event. There is much in our past and present of which we can be proud. We should have a fine exhibit.

The Legislature should prepare for this event by establishing a commission to cooperate with the Fair officials.

Since the activities of such a group will have to be coordinated with the work of the New Jersey Tercentenary Commission, you might consider adding this function to the present Commission.

STATUTE REVISION

As a result of years of neglect and hodgepodge legislation, the bulk of our statutes is a jungle of confusion, unintelligible to lawyer and layman alike. A substantial quantity of statute revision work is underway in the executive departments and in special revision commissions. This work is painstaking, slow and difficult. It deserves every aid we can provide.

The first report on the revision of Title 40 (Counties and Municipalities) will be submitted soon. It will cover the Local Bond Law, the Local Budget Law, and Fiscal Affairs. It will be of great value to local officials and should be adopted promptly.

There will also be submitted, as soon as ready, the revision of Title 18 (Education). We also hope to have the revision of Title 48 (Public Utilities). Work on the General Corporation Act, Title 14, is well along and the result should go far in demonstrating the favorable business climate in our State.

Other work of this kind has been prevented by the obstinate refusal of the Senate to provide essential research funds. Neither the Insurance Law revision nor the Uniform Commercial Code study can be completed without financial support. I urge the Senate to approve the necessary appropriations.

ELECTION LAWS

The last revision of the election laws was made in 1930. Despite my repeated requests, the Legislature has shown no interest in a thorough revision. Consideration should be given to eliminating at least the more troublesome problems.

Voting machines should be required in all counties.

Thirteen counties are now using them. The well-known abuses and inconveniences of paper ballots should not be tolerated any longer.

An arrangement for registration at evening hours would be of considerable assistance to our citizens. If we are to make the ballot accessible to everyone, provision for evening registration is indispensable.

A third measure I have repeatedly urged would provide a mechanism for removal of members of county election boards. Previous bills would have granted this power to the Governor. Apparently this approach is not satisfactory. I will accept any workable solution that will close this void in our election laws.

CONCLUSION

All of the members of this Legislature will serve for the next two years. Many of you are newly elected to office.

The problems I have sketched are important and challenging. You will need to apply yourselves industriously so that when you do act, you can act with the confidence of sound understanding and reason.

I urge the two Houses to work together closely, putting aside partisanship and competition. The facilities of all the executive departments are at your disposal and you will find all of them helpful. My own office and staff will remain available for your assistance, as it has been since I first took office.

You will find that frank discussion and full communication pay good dividends. Make use of these processes. Be sure you have the facts. Be guided by your consciences and resist the pressures of special interests. You will have my full co-operation in your endeavors.

Respectfully submitted,
ROBERT B. MEYNER
Governor

Attest:

H. CURTIS MEANOR

Acting Secretary to the Governor.

Special Message

ROBERT B. MEYNER
GOVERNOR OF NEW JERSEY

To the Legislature
April 25, 1960

