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Governor Christie Continues Commitment To Providing Life-Changing Drug Treatment and Addiction Services

Signs Legislation to Improve Prison Drug Treatment Programs and Help Continue Breaking Cycle of Recidivism

Thursday, April 17, 2014

Tags: [Addiction Taskforce](#)

Signs Legislation to Improve Prison Drug Treatment Programs and Help Continue Breaking Cycle of Recidivism

Trenton, NJ – Governor Chris Christie today signed legislation that would allow the licensure of certain drug treatment programs to operate in State correctional facilities and county jails.

"Far too many drug users end up in jail as a result of actions fueled by their addiction," said Governor Christie. "Today, I am signing a bill to improve drug treatment programs in our State that clarifies our current law and increases opportunities and services available to inmates who are showing a commitment to turn their lives around by graduating from these licensed drug treatment programs prior to release from incarceration. Those opportunities will help these individuals in their recovery and reintegration after incarceration and help reduce the likelihood they fall back into the cycle of addiction and criminality."

The new statute also addresses a longstanding issue that prevented just-released prisoners from eligibility for General Assistance. It ensures that incarcerated individuals who participate in and complete drug treatment programs, which meet or substantially meet licensure requirements, are not denied eligibility for general public assistance benefits upon release from incarceration.

Governor Christie has long spoken of his firmly held belief that no life is disposable and everyone deserves a second chance through treatment if they haven't committed a violent crime. Today's bill signing is one of several initiatives the Governor has advocated to support the recovery of individuals battling addiction, continuing his commitment to fundamentally change the conversation and policies toward addiction and treatment.

Last year, Governor Christie followed through on his commitment to take a smarter and more effective approach in how the State treats drug-addicted offenders by signing into law two landmark, bipartisan bills that put in place a statewide, mandatory drug court program and provide legal protection to people trying to help a drug overdose victim.

And most recently, he announced the formal launch of a pilot program in Ocean and Monmouth counties that will train and equip police officers to administer the antidote Narcan to people experiencing an overdose of heroin or prescription narcotics.

Primary sponsors for A-2295/S-686 included Senators Raymond Lesniak and Nicholas Sacco, and Assemblymembers Vincent Prieto, Angelica Jimenez, Carmelo Garcia, Bonnie Watson-Coleman, and Raj Mukherji.

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Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-292-6000