

## Office of the Governor

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### NEWS RELEASE

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#### **Governor Whitman Embarks on Two-Day Tour of Monmouth and Ocean Counties**

Gov. Christie Whitman today embarked on a two day tour through Monmouth and Ocean counties and presented grant awards for historic and farmland preservation.

Gov. Whitman kicked off her shore tour at Monmouth University in West Long Branch, where she toured the historic mansion and auditorium that is currently being restored. The NJ Historic Trust is helping to fund the renovations.

The national historic landmark was built on the site of Woodrow Wilson's 1916 summer White House.

During the visit to the mansion, The Governor also signed two bills which appropriate a total of \$11, 493, 259 for historic preservation projects throughout New Jersey.

"Preserving our historic treasures isn't just about the past. It's about the future," Gov. Whitman said. "For every historical site that is saved, we are investing in the future by ensuring that our children and grandchildren will be able to appreciate all New Jersey has to offer the same way we do."

S-1153 appropriates \$7,894,438 from the Green Acres, Clean Water, Farmland and Historic Preservation Bond Act of 1992 and the Green Acres, Farmland and Historic Preservation, and Blue Acres Bond Act of 1995 for historic preservation projects in Northern New Jersey. The legislation was sponsored by Senators Richard J. Codey (D- Essex) and William E. Schluter (R-Warren/Hunterdon/Mercer) and Assembly Members Leonard Lance (R- Warren/Hunterdon/Mercer) and Kevin J. O'Toole (R-Essex/Union).

S-1154 appropriates \$3,599,211 from the Green Acres, Farmland and Historic Preservation, and Blue Acres Bond Act of 1995 for historic preservation projects in southern New Jersey. The bill was sponsored by Robert W. Singer (R-Burlington/Monmouth/Ocean) and John O. Bennett (R- Monmouth) and Assembly Members Melvin Cottrell (R- Burlington/Monmouth/Ocean) and Nicholas Asselta (R-Cape May/Atlantic/Cumberland).

A list of the projects to be funded is attached.

The Governor moved on to the National Guard Base in Sea Girt to observe 157 state police recruits in training. The Governor told the recruits that she recently signed legislation that will equip each one of them upon graduation with a lap-top computer to be used in the field.

At the Governor's final stop of the day, at Delicious Orchards in Colts Neck, she presented a farmland preservation check for Monmouth County farms totaling \$4.2 million for six farms.

In the past 15 years since the Farmland Preservation Program began, 311 farms have been preserved covering more than 48,000 acres. Of those, 5,100 acres on 33 farms have been preserved in Monmouth County

"Part of New Jersey's beauty and character comes from our farm heritage. We must do all we can to ensure that more of this heritage last forever," Gov. Whitman said. "Thanks to the Legislature's actions yesterday, New Jersey citizens can vote this November to renew the Farmland Preservation Program and reach our goal of preserving 1 million acres of open space and farmland within the next decade."

The Legislature approved putting a ballot question to voters in November, asking citizens to approve the Governor's plan to spend nearly \$100 million per year for ten years to preserve half of the state's remaining 2 million acres of open space.

The Governor will continue her tour of the two shore counties tomorrow, when she will bicycle through several beach communities, visiting several boardwalks along the way. The Governor's more than 30-mile bicycle tour was postponed from today because of the forecast of rain.

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