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NEWS RELEASE

Gov. Christie Whitman today signed the following pieces of legislation:

S-651, sponsored by Senator C. Louis Bassano (R-Essex/Union) and Assembly Member Gerald J. Luongo (R-Camden/Gloucester), provides that bidders on state public work contracts must demonstrate their qualifications 18 months prior to the opening of the bid. Under previous law, anyone who submitted a bid for state and school district public work contracts was required to document their qualifications seven months prior to the opening of a bid. The required documentation includes financial information, a description of the contractor's physical plant and equipment, and relevant work experience. The bill is intended to eliminate duplicative information.

S-1373, amends the Large Site Landfill Reclamation and Improvement Law by expanding the list of gross receipt items for which franchise assessment fees may be levied or collected by a municipality that has created a landfill reclamation improvement district. A franchise assessment is defined as a gross receipts assessment on sales of all tangible property sold by a business in the district, excluding any sales and use tax, or on all rental receipts from the rental of commercial property in the district. The bill expands the list of gross receipt items to include parking, hotel rooms located within a district, admission charges for sporting events, amusements or other forms of entertainment, such as theatrical, operatic or musical performances, and recreational activities.

All fees permitted by the original law and the bill are assessed by and at the discretion of the municipality on activities that occur within the landfill reclamation improvement district. The bill was sponsored by Senator Raymond J. Lesniak (D-Union) and Assembly Members Joseph Suliga (D-Union) and Richard H. Bagger (R-Middlesex/Morris/Somerset/Union).

