

SENATE BILL NO. 1246

To the Senate:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Senate Bill No. 1246 without my approval.

I am strongly supportive of collective bargaining and workers' rights. Accordingly, my Administration has consistently negotiated in good faith and come to agreements with unions that have saved taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars while protecting workers' benefits. I view the collective bargaining process as the right forum to address issues such as workers' benefits and working conditions.

However, this bill circumvents that process by requiring the New Jersey Turnpike Authority ("NJTA") to implement specific work rules. NJTA is currently in the process of negotiating collective-bargaining agreements, and work rules are part of those negotiations. Signing this bill would undermine that process by directing NJTA to institute work rules that are currently being negotiated. More broadly, this bill would set a precedent that a party can seek legislation whenever it does not like the negotiation process or its results. Such a precedent would run counter to the very notion of good-faith bargaining efforts. While the bill we are discussing today takes the union's side, it is easy to imagine future legislation that would codify management's preferences, especially in sectors where unions have been weakened due to decades of ideological attacks. I consider it unwise and dangerous to start down a path where we subordinate collective bargaining to legislative politics.

Accordingly, I herewith return Senate Bill No. 1246 without my approval.

[seal]

Respectfully,

/s/ Philip D. Murphy

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Matthew J. Platkin

Chief Counsel to the Governor