

Office of the Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

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GOVERNOR SIGNS LEGISLATION FOR BUSINESS CHILD CARE INCENTIVE DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

Gov. Christie Whitman has signed **A-1323**, sponsored by Assembly Members Rose Marie Heck (R-Bergen) and Neil M. Cohen (D-Union), and Senators Diane B. Allen (R-Burlington/Camden) and Louis F. Kosco (R-Bergen), which establishes a three-year Small-Medium Business Child Care Consortium Incentive Demonstration Program in conjunction with the Division of Family Development (DFD) in the Department of Human Services.

The bill is designed to benefit children and families in obtaining quality child care services, and to assist small and medium businesses in providing such services to the children of their employees.

"This legislation addresses a major need cited by many workers and their families - the need for adequate child care facilities," the Governor said. "Through this legislation, we will be able to develop, implement and monitor demonstration programs to help those workers in need of quality care for their children and for the many small-to-mid-size companies that need, or desire, to start child care programs for their employees."

The program will involve businesses interested in establishing cooperative partnerships to develop child care centers, and require the director of the DFD, in consultation with the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (EDA), to designate three consortia for a three-year demonstration program. To implement the demonstration program, the EDA may make available up to \$300,000 in assistance to qualified consortia participating the program, which shall be funded by monies from any sources of funds or programs administered by the EDA that the EDA determines is necessary to effectively implement the program. No later than six months before the program's expiration, the director of the DFD, in consultation with the EDA, shall report to the Legislature and the Governor on the effectiveness of the program and present recommendations regarding the advisability and feasibility of expanding the program. The bill is part of a package of legislative initiatives resulting from a series of public hearings on child care issues which were held by the General Assembly Advisory Council on Women in 1996 and 1997. On May 6, 1999, the Governor signed a related bill, A-1669, which established the Neighborhood and Business Child Care Tax Incentive Program.

The Governor also signed the following pieces of legislation:

A-53, sponsored by Assembly Members Jack Collins (R-Salem/Cumberland/Gloucester) and Joseph V. Doria, Jr. (D-Hudson), and Senators Diane B. Allen (R-Burlington/Camden) and Senator Joseph F. Vitale (D-

Middlesex), creates a State Council for Adult Literacy Education within the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) in the Department of Labor. The purpose of the council will be to facilitate statewide and local policy development, planning and oversight in consultation with appropriate stake holders in the area of adult literacy education. The 27-member council will consist of the following ex-officio members: the commissioners of Labor, Human Services, Education, Community Affairs and Corrections, the secretary of the Commerce and Economic Growth Commission and the executive director of the SETC. Additionally, the council will include one member of the Senate appointed by the Senate President and one member of the Assembly appointed by the Speaker. The council also will include 17 public members as follows: five public members appointed by the Governor, including a member of a Workforce Investment Board literacy committee, a state or national adult education expert and three representatives of the business community; six members appointed by the President of the Senate, including a student or former student who received adult literacy services and a representative from each of the following: a county college, a four-year institution of higher education, the State Library or a local library, an adult education provider of basic adult education programs, general educational development programs or English as a second language program funded by the Department of Education, and a community-based organization which is an adult education provider. The council will also include six members appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, including a representative from each of the following: a vocational school providing adult academic education programs, a trade union, the New Jersey Network, the New Jersey Association of Lifelong Learning, the Literacy Volunteers of America and the New Jersey Education Association. Members of the council will serve without compensation and report annually to the Governor and the Legislature.

ACS for **A-1607**, sponsored by Assembly Member Steve Corodemus(R-Monmouth), and Senator Peter A. Inverso (R-Mercer/Middlesex), establishes an 11 member Liquefied Petroleum Gas Education and Safety board within the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to give advice to the commissioner of the DCA concerning rules and regulations affecting the storage, handling and distribution of liquefied petroleum gas. The board will be appointed by the Governor and consist of: (1) three non partisan public members, two of whom shall be professional firefighters or other safety professionals; (2) one representative from the environmental community; (3) one representative from a consumer group; (4) five members of the liquefied petroleum gas industry all of whom must be recommended by the board of directors of the New Jersey Propane Gas Association; and (5) one representative of a gas public utility involved in the storage of liquefied petroleum gas.