



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

### NEWS RELEASE

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## Gov. Whitman Took Action on Legislation

Gov. Christie Whitman today took action on three pieces of legislation.

Gov. Whitman conditionally vetoed **S-1683**, sponsored by Senators James Cafiero (R-Cape May/Atlantic/Cumberland) and William Gormley (R-Atlantic) and Assembly Members Nick Asselta and Jack Gibson (R-Atlantic/Cape May/Cumberland). The legislation would enable the Greater Wildwood Tourism Improvement Development Authority to receive one-third of the six percent State sales tax and two percent of the local tax collected on predominantly tourism-related retail in the Wildwood tourism and development district. The revenues would be used primarily for tourism projects, including the construction of a convention center facility.

The Governor's conditional veto recommends that in lieu of the sales tax dedication, the construction and operation of the convention center be funded through the following sources: proceeds from the current two percent tourism tax in Wildwood and proceeds from the issuance of contract bonds by the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority. The conditional veto recommends that the Sports and Exposition Authority be authorized to take full responsibility for construction of a new convention center and for the operation of the facility.

Gov. Whitman also conditionally vetoed **S-2169**, sponsored by Senators Louis Bassano (R-Essex/Union) and John Scott (R-Bergen/Essex/Passaic) and Assembly Members Kevin O'Toole and Joel Weingarten (R-Essex/Hudson). The legislation would waive the \$12 million debt owed to the state by Essex County in connection with maintenance costs for indigent mentally ill patients and developmentally disabled clients residing in state institutions.

The Governor's conditional veto recommends that Essex County be provided a structured repayment schedule to be determined by the Commissioner of Human Services and the Treasurer. The repayment schedule shall begin no sooner than January 1, 1999 and shall be for a period of not less than five years to allow the county an opportunity to plan for repayment.

Gov. Whitman vetoed **S-1269**, sponsored by Senator Edward O'Connor (D-Hudson) and Assembly Members Michael Arnone (R-Monmouth) and Gary Stuhltrager (R- Salem/Cumberland/Gloucester). The legislation would enable certain retired Supreme Court justices and Superior Court judges to serve as counsel before State and local administrative agencies and before auto arbitration panels.

The Governor vetoed the legislation based upon concerns that it would encroach upon the New Jersey Supreme Court's exclusive authority to regulate the practice of law by retired judges.

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