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1979 NEW JERSEY DEMOCRATIC
PARTY PLATFORM

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1979 NEW JERSEY DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLATFORM

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PLATFORM CONVENTION
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PREAMBLE

The November election for the General Assembly asks the people to decide which political party should lead the State of New Jersey into the 1980s.

Democrats believe we are the party best suited -- on the record -- to provide leadership for the next decade in New Jersey.

We believe that the party which has demonstrated its ability to manage the state's affairs and produce for people in the 1970s is best equipped to provide the leadership required to face the challenges of the 1980s.

Our record shows that the Democratic Party has delivered in New Jersey.

And we feel confident the voters will decide to let the Democratic team that has done so well through the six difficult years which closed this decade see the job through as we open the next decade.

Our record shows that no political party in the history of the State of New Jersey has achieved so much for our state's citizens in such a short time.

When Democrats assumed office six years ago, New Jersey was perceived -- by its neighbors and its residents -- as a second-class state.

New Jersey has become a first-class state -- a leader in providing expanded and innovative human services while showing the same qualities of leadership by holding the line on government spending.

New Jersey has shown the rest of the nation that it is possible to be compassionate, yet cost-efficient.

The Democratic record compiled over almost six years serves as a solid base of accomplishment from which New Jersey can boldly yet responsibly venture forward into the 1980s.

Let's review that record.

Six years ago, when Democrats assumed the responsibilities of office from the Republican Party, widespread corruption at the state and local level had shaken the public's confidence in government.

Scandals in Trenton and Washington had caused the people of New Jersey to suspect and distrust their elected officials.

The people of New Jersey felt shut out of, and cut off from, their government and the people who had been elected to lead them.

Six years later, Democrats have turned that around.

Democrats have given the people of New Jersey the honest and effective government they deserve, and which they could not expect while the Republican Party controlled the state and the nation.

We have rebuilt public trust and confidence which was lost during the dark days of the Watergate era, and have made it possible for the people of New Jersey to believe in their government again.

Six years ago, New Jersey was on the brink of financial disaster.

Annual state spending was increasing at a rate of over 14 per cent per year.

Annual property tax increases exceeded 11 per cent.

Spending by school boards and county and municipal governments was soaring out of sight.

The state's favorable credit rating was in jeopardy.

The business community seriously questioned New Jersey's ability to govern itself, and doubted New Jersey's ability to create a climate in which business could grow and prosper.

New Jersey's economic outlook was bleak.

Unemployment had risen to a point where hundreds of thousands of people in New Jersey could not find a job.

Almost 30 major firms were leaving the state each year -- taking with them thousands of jobs.

New construction was virtually nonexistent.

New Jersey also was facing a constitutional crisis in financing public education for its school children.

Despite attempts by the departing Republican Administration and Legislature to meet a court mandate to provide every student with a thorough and efficient education, the state was unable to meet its constitutional responsibilities.

Meanwhile, local property taxes levied to finance public schools continued to climb. Public frustration with the costs and quality of education, and the level of taxation required to support public education, was increasing.

Six years later, Democrats have clamped a lid on property tax increases and have imposed tight controls on runaway government spending.

The adoption of the budget cap laws have curbed spending at all levels of government. New Jersey now leads the nation in responsible and workable spending control and tax reform.

Democrats have made the cap laws work.

The growth in state budget increases has been cut in half. State, county, municipal and school budgets have increased by less than half the rate of inflation for the last five years.

Democrats in New Jersey are proud that today total state and local government spending ranks 43rd in the nation per \$1,000 of personal income.

Democrats have stabilized local property taxes. In fact, the amount of local property taxes collected for municipal purposes in 1979 is \$29.5 million less than the total amount collected statewide in 1976, despite the erosions of inflation.

The state income tax, approved as part of a broad tax reform and spending control program, is limited by the State Constitution to direct property tax relief.

Income tax revenues are returned to school districts, local governments, homeowners and tenants in the form of property tax relief.

The income tax has helped finance property tax relief programs including the homestead rebates, statewide revenue sharing and tenant credits.

Since passage of the tax relief and spending control program, \$800 million in homestead rebates has been returned to property taxpayers and \$175 million has been given to municipalities for direct property tax relief under the revenue sharing program.

Democrats are proud that we have entered our fourth consecutive fiscal year without an increase in state taxes -- the longest period without a tax increase in 20 years.

Our ability to avoid raising taxes is a remarkable accomplishment in a period of double-digit inflation.

Democrats have put people back to work, and have attracted new businesses.

Tax reform and the repeal of onerous business taxes have made New Jersey attractive for business development.

Repeal of the sales tax on business machinery and equipment, the unincorporated business tax and the retail gross receipts tax and phasing out the business personal property tax has provided a benefit of almost \$200 million to businesses.

The Economic Development Authority created by Democrats has helped businesses secure long-term, low-interest financing of \$900 million for capital investment and working capital. The result: tens of thousands of new jobs that might otherwise not exist.

The exodus of businesses from the state has stopped. A total of 260,000 more New Jersey citizens are working today than in 1975. A record 3.2 million men and women are at work today in New Jersey.

In fact, the decade-long decline in manufacturing jobs actually has been reversed.

Democrats have run an efficient government.

Careful management and restrained spending have led to restoration of our Triple-A bond rating, saving the state millions of dollars when we borrow money.

New Jersey government is now one of the best bargains a taxpayer can buy.

The state ranks third in per capita income, but is now eighth lowest in per capita cost of government.

Democrats have made New Jersey a year-round resort state -- a state for all seasons.

The development of the successful Meadowlands Sports Complex, which the Republicans had given up on at the close of the last term, and of casino gambling in Atlantic City have revitalized tourism and expanded recreational opportunities.

The Sports Complex hosts football and racing which will soon be joined by professional basketball and has become the soccer capitol of America.

As casino development increases in Atlantic City, the entire South Jersey region increasingly benefits in the jobs, housing and economic development generated by the burst of new activity at the shore.

Recreation and tourism now rank among our major industries.

Democrats have done more to educate children.

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The challenge of the constitutional crisis in school financing was met and resolved. Schools are now accountable to taxpayers and parents for educating children. Students will now be required to meet minimum educational standards before receiving a high school diploma.

Democrats have dramatically expanded the state's financial support of local public education.

State support of our schools has risen from 29 per cent of all costs to 41 per cent, and from \$800 million per year to \$1.5 billion in the current fiscal year -- a remarkable increase of 85 per cent.

And while state aid has grown so substantially, local property taxes raised to fund education have increased only six per cent.

Democrats have restored public confidence in government.

Enactment of the "Sunshine Law" by a Democratic Legislature and Governor has opened up government at all levels to public view.

The Legislature has rules that assure public participation in the legislative process and access to the work of its committees. Postcard voter registration has helped thousands of citizens participate in elections for the first time.

Democrats believe open and responsible government is good government.

Democrats do more for people. The characteristic which most distinguishes Democrats from Republicans is the Democrats' willingness to help people.

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And in New Jersey, Democrats have done more for people while controlling government spending.

Senior citizens receive prescription drugs for a nominal charge through the Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged Program, a first in the nation.

This winter, the elderly and disabled will receive a \$100 credit on their gas and electric bills to help them fight the rising cost of heating their homes and apartments -- the result of another first in the nation program which directs casino revenues to help those least able to keep up with inflation.

Health insurance abuses involving senior citizens have been stopped. Senior citizens now receive an additional \$50 in homestead rebates. The elderly, and others who must seek health care, will benefit from the state's success in holding the line on rising hospital costs.

These programs and services for senior citizens, and 300 other services throughout state government, have been established or continued as a result of Democratic concern for the welfare and security of the elderly.

Tenants have been granted new rights and protections. The tax reform program provides tenants a \$65 credit against their income taxes.

Consumers have benefited from Democratic leadership.

As noted, hospital cost increases have been held below the national average. The Department of Public Advocate established by Democrats has saved consumers more than a billion dollars in utility rate increases. State and local consumer agencies have been given the power to stop unscrupulous business practices.

Democrats have worked to protect and improve New Jersey's environment.

The Pinelands, a state and national ecological resource, have been preserved for generations to come. The disposal of hazardous and nuclear wastes has begun to be controlled. The successful Green Acres Program has been expanded. Long overdue flood control projects are off the planning boards.

Democrats have fought crime justly and fairly. A tough, new, comprehensive criminal code has been enacted that requires mandatory sentences for violent crime. The court system has been streamlined to speed up trials and remove overlapping jurisdictions.

Democrats have taken major steps to improve New Jersey's highways and mass transportation system.

Recently, the Legislature created a public transit corporation to design a rational and organized transportation network to replace the disorganized and inefficient bus subsidy program.

As a result of a cooperative effort with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the federal government, New Jersey will receive \$120 million to purchase buses for commuter use.

Money has been appropriated to undertake a program for pothole repair on state roads.

Democrats have kept faith with people by keeping their promises of past elections.

A great historian once said, "The past is prologue". And indeed that is so.

The Democrats of New Jersey have, by their accomplishments of the past, earned the right to lead New Jersey in the future.

For we have not only done much, we have started much that is vital for the future of ourselves and our children.

Governor Byrne and the Democratic majority in the Legislature have not been content to rest on what scholars are already calling the greatest record of accomplishment in the history of our state. This team has undertaken bold and exciting initiatives that should be carried out by those who have done so much, and have shown so much vision.

In the next section of this document, we will present the 1979 Democratic Platform for the General Assembly elections.

Here you will recognize much that has been started -- that must now be completed.

Here you will see the great and dramatic ventures that we are so proud to call New Jersey's -- but they are standing at a crossroads.

Will the Agenda for the 80s be completed with the commitment and efficiency the Democrats have already demonstrated?

Or will these giant steps forward for New Jersey be undermined, even dismantled, by those who have traditionally been a negative force in the public life of our state?

The answer to that lies in the hands of New Jersey's voters this November. We are confident that our electorate will give the Democrats in our State Legislature a resounding message: keep up the great job!

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

During the 1980s, Democrats will continue to provide the leadership to insure continued economic growth and the development of new jobs in the private sector.

We will strive to make our economic climate even more inviting for business and industrial development and to broaden the partnership with business we began to build in recent years.

During the 1980s, our economic initiatives must continue to focus on generating new jobs for New Jersey residents. We must stimulate employment for 3.2 million persons in our workforce today and for tens of thousands more in the years ahead.

Democrats hope to achieve these goals in the 1980s by taking the following initiatives:

We will ensure the continued soundness of New Jersey's financial base. This can be accomplished by encouraging continued prudent spending at all levels of government and by retaining the spending caps through the 1980s.

Democrats also propose to reexamine the State's regulatory procedures.

Regulation for the sake of regulation does not make sense. The degree of regulation state government imposes on an industry or business should be consistent with the public interest being protected --- the greater the public interest, the greater degree of protection and regulation needed. State regulatory policies also must be reviewed to help new or smaller businesses locate or expand in New Jersey.

Democrats pledge continued efforts toward unemployment and worker's compensation reform, and further reforms during the 1980s.

We recognize that inequities exist for both management and labor and we are hopeful that the proposals we present this year will provide meaningful improvements for both.

Democrats will examine the State's tax structure during the 1980s so that it can become a more effective tool in implementing public policy. For example, Democratic policy will be to stimulate greater economic expansion in urban areas where the highest degree of unemployment exists.

Democrats recognize that South Jersey has special needs and special advantages which must be considered in economic development efforts in the southern counties.

The Democratic Party will continue its support for increased tourism and promotion activities and will provide the support necessary for such efforts.

Democrats recognize that preservation of the shore's natural resources is a vital part of an economic development strategy for the shore and will continue beach protection programs and programs to spur continued growth of the state's fishing industry.

Democrats will examine possibilities of Economic Development Authority assistance in the development of a marine processing park and of facilities for marine fisheries.

In cooperation with the state's Congressional delegation, we will continue our efforts to avoid severe economic dislocations which could result from the closing of Fort Dix.

Under Democratic leadership, a veteran's hospital will rise in Camden.

The state will work in partnership with the city of Camden in further development of the Camden waterfront, to build together a center of commerce with port facilities which rival those in the New York-New Jersey harbor.

The 1980s will see the rebirth of Atlantic City, continuing dramatic growth begun in the 1970s under Democratic leadership.

Democrats are determined that the development of casinos will continue to be carefully-planned and carefully-managed so that the benefits of casino gambling are not confined to the industry, but are shared by Atlantic City and other cities in New Jersey.

And we are determined that the successes of Atlantic City be shared by all its residents. We will continue to insist that gambling pays off for Atlantic City residents in the form of new jobs, new housing and a new economic climate.

The growth of casino gambling revenues will, as noted, make possible the financing of new and expanded programs to provide tax relief and utility rate relief for growing numbers of senior citizens and disabled persons.

Working through our congressional delegation, Democrats will advocate changes in federal tax policies so they become more consistent with our state policy of encouraging economic growth in New Jersey -- particularly in areas of high unemployment.

Recognizing that new industries and small businesses often find it difficult to cope with the complexities of the government bureaucracy, the Democrats propose to establish a small business development center to provide technical assistance to businesses.

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Democrats recognize that a climate conducive for business expansion must include housing that people can afford. Democrats pledge to look at innovative ways of providing home mortgages over the long run at reasonable rates.

Democrats will continue their efforts at making New Jersey a leader in international trade. Democrats already have made New Jersey the nation's leader in the number of foreign firms that have located within its borders.

Democrats will continue to work closely with the business community to build upon the favorable impact our first foreign trade mission led by Governor Byrne made earlier this year. We also will continue to expand the world market for the export of New Jersey made products for foreign countries.

If New Jersey is to retain its dominance as a state where business will want to locate and expand, the voters must turn to a party that has a proven record of making New Jersey work again. Democrats have proven they are more capable than Republicans of meeting this challenge.

MEADOWLANDS DEVELOPMENT

When people in New Jersey think of the Meadowlands now, the image of the Sports Complex comes to mind.

And rightfully so.

For under the leadership of the Democratic Party, the Meadowlands Sports Complex has become a first-class sporting facility which is admired and appreciated by sports enthusiasts and participants across the nation.

In the 1980s, when people in New Jersey and throughout the world think of the Meadowlands, their vision will not be of winning seasons for their favorite teams but of New Jersey's success in winning the battle to create a progressive new metropolitan area where swamps once festered.

Indeed, the racetrack and stadium will have been joined by a modern sports arena -- providing a home for the New Jersey Nets, an inviting opportunity for other teams, and a year-around showcase for convention, exposition and cultural activities.

But, under continued Democratic leadership, the Sports Complex will be just part of the success story of the 1980s.

Planning for development of the Meadowlands will lead to the growth of planned and balanced communities in a manner consistent with the state's urban policies.

Housing, shopping and recreational opportunities will be available for the new neighborhoods which will bloom and grow.

Business and industry will thrive, and job opportunities will abound, in this ideal location for growth and development -- minutes from the major financial centers of Newark and New York, and from modern air, rail and sea terminals.

The movement of people and products in and out of the Meadowlands will be speeded by the development of an efficient network of rails and roadways along which a comprehensive and coordinated system of new buses and trains will run.

In the 1960s, Democrats had the vision to recognize the potential of the Meadowlands.

In the 1970s, Democrats had the determination to move ahead in making that vision a reality.

Continued Democratic leadership in the 1980s can make a Cinderella story come true for New Jersey's Meadowlands.

URBAN REVITALIZATION

Democrats recognize that the revitalization of our urban centers is critical for the improvement of New Jersey's economic and social health in the 1980's. A Democrat urban strategy is being formulated by mayors, business leaders, and concerned citizens to meet this challenge.

Instead of treating all cities alike, Democrats believe that unique solutions must be tailored to each city's character -- to each individual neighborhood's needs.

During the late 1970's, a partnership was forged between government and private enterprise to create new jobs and business opportunities in urban communities. Democrats plan to expand those efforts in the coming decade by making state government a catalyst for change.

In the 1980's the Economic Development Authority's first priority will be to provide assistance to urban development.

In addition to attracting new industry, low-interest loans should be made to rehabilitate small shops and stores in downtown areas. Democrats will target state building programs in urban centers.

The Port Authority's urban industrial park program will begin to produce jobs and provide help for our urban centers.

The typical industrial park of 200 acres will employ about 5,000 people at full development -- and could provide annual tax revenues of \$5 million for Jersey City, \$4.4 million for Elizabeth and \$3.6 million for Newark.

Democrats will continue our review of state aid programs to ensure that the neediest communities receive needed benefits.

Democrats will work with the state's Congressional delegation to ensure that federal aid and federal programs are designed to provide aid for New Jersey cities.

The future of New Jersey lies in its cities, and Democrats in the 1980s will provide the leadership to guarantee our cities a prosperous and productive future.

In the 1980s, New Jersey's efforts at waterfront revitalization will lead to a renaissance in the great harbor between New York and New Jersey.

The 14 mile New Jersey riverfront from the George Washington Bridge south through Bayonne is one of New Jersey's most valuable, and least appreciated, natural resources.

The Democratic Party has recognized that development of the waterfront presents an opportunity for New Jersey to create a unique urban, environmental, recreational and commercial resource for our citizens and visitors from other states and nations.

The 1980s will see the completion of the planning process begun this year by a Hudson River Waterfront Study and Planning Commission appointed by Governor Byrne.

The State and local officials and private citizens on that commission will implement the Governor's Executive Order by providing the review of comprehensive regional planning and redevelopment alternatives necessary to formulate a design for development of the area.

Liberty Park, another Democratic success story which provides recreational and cultural opportunities for millions of people in our busy cities and suburbs, will continue to grow according

to a planning process similar to that now underway on the waterfront.

The development and execution of that plan -- and the new initiatives in housing, economic development, shipping and other forms of commerce which depend on it -- requires continued efforts by the Democratic Party in the 1980's to bring life and prosperity to the Hudson waterfront.

TAX REFORM

Despite the successes of the Democratic tax reform program which brought New Jersey fiscal stability and economic growth in the 1970's, there is additional work Democrats plan to undertake to continue reform efforts begun in this decade.

Democrats will increase homestead rebates to help homeowners keep pace with inflation.

Democrats will review state tax policies to find ways to further relieve the tax burden on middle-income families in New Jersey.

Democrats will review municipal assessment practices throughout the state in an effort to ensure fairness and uniformity.

The Democratic leadership which produced the tax and spending reform accomplishments of the 1970's will continue to exert leadership in those areas during the 1980's.

TRANSPORTATION

For New Jersey to work in the 1980's Democrats know the State needs good highways and an efficient mass transportation system.

Democrats have developed a strategy -- and a method of funding -- for highway repairs and rail and bus transportation improvements.

Between 1980 and 1983, \$2.1 billion in state, federal and other funds will be spent on transportation. Democrats anticipate spending another \$2.5 billion from 1984 to 1986, much of it federal funds.

A key part of this program is the \$475 million Transportation Bond Issue Democrats placed on the ballot this November.

This bond issue will provide \$245 million for state highways, \$150 million for public transportation and \$80 million for aid for county and municipal roads.

The Democratic Party supports the passage of this bond issue.

New Jersey will, over the next four years, be able to generate \$900 million in federal highway aid. For the first time in years, local roads will receive badly needed repair funds.

The Transpac program will contribute \$600 million for mass transportation purposes. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey will give New Jersey \$120 million to purchase new buses. The federal government has pledged \$480 million for improvements to commuter rail transportation.

When added to the bond money and other state funds, \$863 million will be spent on mass transit over four years.

The New Jersey Transit Corporation will end the chaos of New Jersey's patchwork bus system. The corporation will stop overlapping routes and other operating inefficiencies. Bus riders will receive better service, and citizens will get more for their tax dollars spent on bus transportation.

Democrats in the 1970s struggled to impose order on a chaotic transportation system inherited from the Republican Party. Years of Republican neglect and inaction have been overcome.

Professional planning and professional performance in the area of transportation will characterize Democratic successes in the 1980s.

GOVERNMENTAL REFORM

Democratic leadership during the 1970s has given the people of New Jersey a state government they can be proud of.

Democrats returned state government to the people -- making government open, responsive and effective.

In the 1980s, Democrats will continue working to encourage public participation in government and politics, and to keep government accountable and open to public scrutiny.

The legislative reforms of the 1970s will continue into the next decade.

The Legislature will build on reforms of the 1970s, further strengthening the legislative committee system, providing greater public notice of and participation in its deliberations, and developing the capacity to function independently in overseeing and evaluating the operations of state government.

Our election laws--which confuse voters and candidates rather than encouraging participation in the electoral process--will be revised. Election law reform will provide a consistent and understandable framework within which elections can take place.

Civil service reform--which preserves the merit system, recognizes the contributions of our veterans and opens up government service to women and minorities--must be accomplished to guarantee taxpayers an efficient and productive state government.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND JUDICIAL REFORM

As the 1970s close, our criminal justice system is working to implement a modern and comprehensive criminal code, and the judicial system is implementing the court merger approved last year.

The 1980s will bring continued attention to the need for a fair and efficient system of courts and a firm and sure system of law enforcement to combat and prevent crime.

Democrats will continue the review and revision of our criminal and civil laws so that we have the necessary legal tools, and the required legal protections, to keep pace with changes in society.

Democratic efforts to streamline the state's court system will continue. Trial delays, overlapping jurisdictions and inefficient management at all levels of judicial administration will be the focus of our efforts to increase judicial efficiency.

The jury selection and compensation system will be improved as the selection process becomes fairer, the compensation more adequate and the incentives to fulfill this important responsibility increased.

Democrats pledge to continue the work begun by our revision of the criminal code by reforming New Jersey's uncertain parole process.

We pledge to rationalize the parole decision-making process and to institute a system which is fair and predictable for the inmate and society -- whether parole is being granted, denied or revoked.

Democratic leadership in the 1970's has brought New Jersey's system of justice into this century.

Under Democratic leadership, we must now prepare during the 1980s for the challenge of the next century.

ENERGY SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Democrats in the 1970s provided national leadership in New Jersey by the state's response to the energy crisis.

In the 1980s, Democrats in New Jersey will continue our leadership in formulating state energy policies, and helping shape national energy policies which ensure energy sufficiency and reduce our dependence on foreign oil supplies.

Under Democratic leadership in the 1980s, New Jersey will implement an energy conservation plan that meets our state goals and provides direction for other states.

While conservation of energy supplies will be our dominant strategy, Democrats in New Jersey will continue exploration of alternative energy sources -- including gasohol, synthetic fuels, wind and solar power, and solid waste energy generation.

In addition, we will provide the necessary state supervision -- and insist on the necessary national vigilance -- to ensure the safe operation of existing nuclear plants and careful, closely-monitored completion of plants under construction.

Democrats will fight for federal policies which reinvest massive amounts of capital in New Jersey and the region, particularly for projects which increase energy efficiency and self-dependence. The proposed windfall profits tax should be utilized to divert capital which would ordinarily add to the capital drain from New Jersey to necessary investment within the state. In the absence of government intervention, this capital would likely be directed to energy-producing regions in the nation or abroad. Examples of capital investment needs which could be funded by the windfall profits tax and related programs include:

1. public transit investment, such as the Northeast Railroad Corridor Improvement Project and new transit capital investment;
2. synthetic fuel projects compatible with the State's resources and environmental constraints, particularly solid waste energy generation and solar energy;

3. urban redevelopment to maintain and encourage energy efficient land-use patterns of high population density.

Democrats will act on a regional basis to stimulate new capital investment in major energy production and conservation projects. Proposals such as the Energy Corporation of the North-east would be part of an overall regional effort to reduce the amount of capital required for energy purchases and recycle capital funds into the region.

Democrats will seek federal action to reduce excess costs paid by New Jersey consumers for out-of-state energy supplies resulting from tax policies of energy-producing states and unnecessary federal subsidies. We will review available political, legal and economic strategies to challenge policies of other states and the federal government which unnecessarily inflate energy costs, weaken New Jersey's competitive economic position and divert capital resources from investment in energy production and conservation.

Democrats will review current public and private capital investment decisions on the basis of energy efficiency. Public infrastructure investment for highways, sewers, housing and other facilities should be assessed in terms of impacts on direct energy consumption and indirect effects on land-use patterns.

In addition, we will encourage expansion of energy-efficient industries, particularly high technology, communications and electronics industries which build on New Jersey's already strong position in this area.

Under Democratic leadership, New Jersey will promote its excellent access to consumer markets and existing transportation network to industries seeking to lower shipping costs.

Democrats will continue to aggressively seek to attract investment from regions benefiting from energy capital transfers. We will develop a comprehensive strategy to attract investment from energy-producing nations and domestic regions.

We will build on our successes in the 1970s to ensure that Democrats provide the leadership New Jersey needs in the 1980's to win the fight for energy self-sufficiency.

SHORE PROTECTION

The Democratic commitment to the protection, preservation and growth of our shore areas -- demonstrated during the 1970s -- will be continued and expanded in the 1980s through several new Democratic initiatives.

The upcoming Governor's Shore Conference -- a summit on shore problems -- will begin the formulation of a shore agenda for the 1980s which will enlist state and local governments, environmental groups and shore residents, and members of the public in major shore preservation efforts.

In order to curb the rate of shoreline erosion, Democrats will propose legislation to facilitate the buildup of dunes along the coast, especially in areas such as Island Beach State Park where erosion is occurring at an alarming rate.

Democrats will also work with the New Jersey Congressional delegation in seeking federal funds to permanently alleviate severe navigational and erosion problems being experienced at several of the state's outlets to the Atlantic Ocean.

The first priority here should be the reconstruction of jettys abutting the Barnegat Inlet, which is given as one cause for the extremely hazardous and shoal conditions experienced daily by fishermen and pleasure boaters who travel that inlet.

To protect ocean waters for bathers and fishermen alike, Democrats pledge to fight for a 1981 end to the dumping of sewerage and sludge in the ocean.

Democrats will also seek passage of legislation aimed at enhancing New Jersey's fishing industry through even stricter enforcement of the 200 mile fishing limit.

In addition, stronger legislation aimed at ending the taking of shellfish from condemned beds will also be enacted by Democrats.

To regulate and protect the entire shore area, Democrats will also seek the development of a coastal plan which would include determination as to how a fund can be created for restoring beaches and boardwalks destroyed by storms.

These efforts to be undertaken under Democratic leadership in the 1980s will assure the protection and preservation of our most beautiful, most precious and most endangered natural asset -- the New Jersey shore.

PINELANDS DEVELOPMENT

In the 1980s, the 1,500-square-mile area known as the Pine Barrens will remain the valuable natural resource it is today, thanks to the implementation of the Pinelands building moratorium imposed by the current Administration and Legislature.

By September, 1980, a comprehensive management plan will be in place, prescribing minimum standards for county and municipal master plans and zoning ordinances for the development and use of land in this area.

Any development in the interim will have been scrutinized by the Pinelands Commission, with building continuing only where the ecology of the area --- including the largest untapped pure water supply in the nation --- is not adversely affected.

Any further development in the 1980s will be more carefully scrutinized than it was in the 1970s, thanks to the mandate for municipal and county master plans and the continued oversight of the Pinelands Commission.

Democratic foresight has saved the Pinelands from further rapid and uncontrolled expansion.

And Democratic initiative in the Pinelands will mean that during the 1980s, the rare natural qualities of this area will be preserved.

HAZARDOUS AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

In the 1980s, even greater strides must be made to protect the air and environment from the detrimental, and possibly fatal, effects of careless and unrestricted disposal of hazardous, atomic and solid waste.

To this end, Democrats pledge comprehensive legislation that will provide even greater incentives for the recycling and reclamation of garbage. Democrats also will examine options for development of solid waste recycling systems, such as sludge farming.

The lack of adequate facilities for storage of atomic wastes is a matter of great concern to Democrats.

In the 1980s, Democrats will seek alternatives to the current practice of storing nuclear waste in facilities adjacent to nuclear reactors.

The careless storage of hazardous waste, which has led to substantial air, land and water pollution, will continue to be fought by Democrats through stricter laws and the enforcement of current regulations.

Democrats will also seek an expansion of the Spill Compensation Fund to assure that adequate funds are available to cleanup the discharge of hazardous waste.

AGRICULTURE

Firmly convinced that the state's agricultural economy and production must be preserved and enhanced, Democrats pledge a number of actions for implementation in the 1980's.

Foremost consideration will be given to ways in which farmland can be purchased, and thus preserved from development.

One method the Democrats will continue to pursue is the concept known as the transfer of development rights (TDR), under which municipalities may have development rights transferred to them for the preservation of properties having environmental or economic significance.

Democrats will study ways in which the farmland assessments can be changed to give farmers added incentives to remain in agriculture.

A review of possibilities for special farmland zoning techniques will continue as part of our efforts to encourage preservation of agricultural land.

In the 1980's, Democrats will encourage the establishment of food distribution centers and of direct markets, where farmers sell their produce directly to consumers.

EDUCATION

The thorough and efficient system of education enacted by a Democratic Legislature and Administration is becoming a model for the nation.

As public education in New Jersey moves from the 1970s into the 1980s, continued efforts by state and local officials, the educational community and parents and concerned citizens will be required to ensure that our schools serve the needs of the state's 1.4 million school children.

One way in which New Jersey's students will further benefit from this new system of education is through the imposition of testing requirements for high school graduation scheduled to begin in 1984.

This testing procedure, coupled with the existing minimum basic skills testing, should assure parents and taxpayers that graduates of New Jersey schools are equipped with a sound knowledge of the basic reading, mathematical and --- as of next year --- writing skills.

As a companion to graduation testing, Democrats will seek a revision in the current standards for graduation which currently require only two years of American History and a course each semester in physical education and health.

Democrats propose to strengthen these requirements by requiring minimum amounts of coursework in English, mathematics and social sciences.

Democrats also will seek to extend the benefits of the T & E law to students enrolled in special education programs who are not now assured of receiving the best and most appropriate education to which they are entitled.

Another group of the student population which needs and deserves additional attention is the gifted children. Democrats pledge to begin identifying these children and to seek the additional state and federal funds needed to provide the gifted with appropriate educational programs.

Realizing that the skyrocketing costs of utilities and other mandated costs are placing strains on local school districts that must provide money for educational programs, Democrats will

look at ways of easing this burden -- such as the formation of a state-supported insurance fund which could assist school districts in securing adequate, but far less expensive, insurance coverage.

Because of our concern about school vandalism that causes millions of dollars in damage a year, Democrats will seek even further promotion of the community school concept, which brings the community into the schools, fosters a sense of pride in the maintenance of school buildings, ensures their maximum usage and provides a base for a broad range of social and cultural programs to serve all segments of the community.

SENIOR CITIZENS

During the 1980's, Democrats will build on the many excellent programs and services developed for senior citizens during the past six years.

To help senior citizen homeowners keep pace with inflation, Democrats pledge to support legislation to increase the property tax exemption the elderly now receive, and to raise the income levels for eligibility.

We also will support legislation to increase the homestead rebates for the elderly and disabled, periodically to reflect increases in the cost of living.

One of the most significant programs begun this year by Democrats is the new utility lifeline program.

As casino gambling receipts increase, Democrats intend to expand this program to benefit more elderly and disabled persons and to increase the amount of the utility credit as home heating costs increase.

Democrats will continue our review of utility rate restructuring as a possible means of providing even further utility rate relief.

Democrats believe that too much of the lifetime earnings and savings of senior citizens is turned over to the government in the form of taxes.

Accordingly, we propose to increase the exemption on state inheritance taxes from the present level of \$15,000.

Democrats also pledge to seek funds to determine if the present half-fare bus program for the elderly can be expanded by further lowering fares.

As a result of Democratic initiative, New Jersey has the only Pharmaceutical Assistance program for the Aged in the nation.

Democrats pledge to expand that program by increasing eligibility levels so that inflation does not disqualify current recipients and more of the elderly who need benefits can be included.

Democratic leadership has helped the elderly in New Jersey realize their dreams for the future without suffering economic nightmares caused by rising costs for health care or shelter.

Democrats in the 1980s pledge to continue our efforts to guarantee the elderly the future they have worked for and they deserve.

SERVICES FOR HANDICAPPED AND MENTALLY RETARDED

Democrats will remain unswerving in their commitment to the segment of the state's population that most needs the services and benefits government can offer --- the mentally retarded and handicapped.

In the 1980s, Democrats pledge to increase staff and improve facilities at Intermediate Care Facilities for the Mentally Retarded so that fifty per cent funding for these facilities can be recovered from the federal government.

The state's Division of Mental Retardation will also promote the development of community residential placement centers for the mentally retarded as an alternative to institutionalization.

By the next decade, the state's plan for 11 regional day schools for the handicapped will be well on its way to completion. These regional centers will house the most severely handicapped --- the severely emotionally disturbed, the deaf, blind/deaf and multiple handicapped --- who now are institutionalized.

Also by the 1980s, construction of new facilities for the blind and the handicapped should be near completion. The building is the result of monies appropriated this year by the Democratic Legislature.

Democrats also will enact the necessary legislation to include the disabled in the state's pioneering pharmaceutical assistance program.

The Democratic Party in New Jersey remains committed to adopting an automobile insurance reform program which will guarantee that automobile insurance will be available to our residents at affordable costs.

Democrats have identified the problems which exist in our present system: an ever-increasing assigned risk plan which results in higher rates for people who are not high-risk drivers; unfair rates based on questionable classifications and territorial distinctions; and a no-fault system instituted by Republicans that isn't doing the job.

The Democratic Party supports legislation to:

- create a joint underwriting association to replace assigned risk plan.
- establish a nondiscriminatory merit rating system.
- establish procedures to speed the rate approval process.
- establish a Division of Fraud Prevention in the Department of Insurance to confront aggressively the problem of insurance fraud and reduce the amount of premium dollars used to pay fraudulent claims.
- establish a Division of Property-Casualty Rating in the department to provide additional professional personnel to conduct in-depth reviews of all rate filings and to establish time periods for the review of filings.
- adopt necessary amendments to the no-fault law.

Democrats recognize that health care places serious financial strain on New Jersey's families. Aggressive action by the Democratic Party will help hold down the cost of seeing a doctor or staying in a hospital.

New Jersey will continue to lead the nation in holding the line on spiralling hospital cost increases. The Hospital Rate Setting Commission, recently created by a Democratic Legislature and Governor, will review and set reasonable and fair hospital charges.

Democrats expect New Jersey's hospital cost increases to continue at well below the national rate.

Democrats are encouraged by the performance of Health Maintenance Organizations. Their role must be expanded to enable people to receive high quality health care at low cost. This concept should be extended to include dental services.

The Democratic Party pledges to develop a comprehensive plan to provide quality health care in medically underserved areas of New Jersey.

As a start, graduates of New Jersey medical schools will soon be able to work off their school loans by practicing in medically needy communities.

In the 1980's, Democrats will work to guarantee every citizen to have access to quality medical care.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Democrats have long fought to protect the rights of all citizens to enjoy the many benefits and opportunities afforded by our nation, regardless of race, sex, religion, age, nationality or physical handicap. In the 1980s, Democrats will continue to fill this long-standing commitment.

Job and promotional opportunities for minorities in the public sector will be increased, with the Division of Affirmative Action made a permanent watchdog over state hiring practices.

Contractors for public-supported construction projects will be even more carefully monitored to assure that they are meeting the state's affirmative action requirements.

Minority youth unemployment will be combatted through the improvement and expansion of summer job and internship programs. In addition, more financial aid for college will be made available to New Jersey's minority students.

Also in the area of education, Democrats will work with the Department of Education in the development of basic skills tests in languages other than English. The Democratic Party will also work to see that bilingual education programs, as well as English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, are expanded and improved.

Democrats, who created the Office of Hispanic Affairs to make sure that employment and educational opportunities are not restricted because of language or cultural differences, pledge to expand the scope of this office.

Steps already taken by the Democratic Legislature and Administration in support of women's rights will be expanded.

Programs of the Division on Women, created by the Democrats, will be given the support to better serve the women throughout the state.

Displaced homemaker programs, approved by the current Democratic Legislature, will be in place to help the countless women who find themselves without the jobs or training necessary to survive on their own.

In the 1980s, shelters for women who are victims of domestic violence should be in place.

And steps will be taken to implement recommendations made by the commission to study sex discrimination in the statutes, once its final report is issued.

Democrats further pledge continued support for adoption of the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution.

PLANNING

The preceding are just some of the plans Democrats are working on for the future. While Democrats are the party of action, we do not have all of the answers, but will seek solutions by examining and discussing problems with our fellow citizens. Recently, Governor Byrne held two major issue summits -- one on jobs, the other on energy. These meetings have developed strategies to solve specific problems.

During the next two years, Democrats will hold more issue summits to further plans for the 1980s. Some of the major topics will be: shore protection, hazardous waste disposal, the use of nuclear power, election law revision, insurance reform, economic development and farm land preservation.

1. TAX REFORM, SPENDING CONTROL AND FISCAL STABILITY

a. THE BUDGET CAP PROGRAM: This program, one of the first of its kind in the nation, imposes constitutional and legislative spending limits on municipal, school, county and state budgets.

Enactment of the "cap" laws was a responsible answer to the public demand for an end to uncontrolled government spending and escalating property taxes -- voluntarily undertaken by a Democratic Legislature and Governor before the groundswell of tax-cutting efforts surfaced in other states.

The budget cap program has been effective in reducing the growth of government spending and taxes, without dramatic disruptions of vital public services.

Since the imposition of budget caps in 1975, the annual growth in the state budget has been cut in half. Democratic budgets have increased by an average of seven per cent annually -- compared to the 15.6 per cent average increases endured during the previous Republican administration.

This dramatic containment of state spending is a remarkable accomplishment in a period of double-digit inflation which has made government and household budgets difficult to manage.

The institution of budget caps in New Jersey also has affected local property taxes, which were increasing at average annual rates exceeding ten per cent during the previous Republican administration.

During the first year (1976-1977) the caps were in place, local property taxes actually dropped by two per cent.

Since then, only modest increases have occurred -- 2 per cent in 1977-78 and 4.9 per cent in 1978-79.

When the \$800 million in Homestead Rebates, returned to taxpayers over the past three years in average payments of \$185, are taken into account, it is clear that the local property tax burden has been eased substantially.

The budget caps have held the growth of state, county and municipal budgets to less than the rate of inflation for five consecutive years. In fact, the New Jersey Taxpayers Association has reported that because of the cap laws, county property tax increases during 1978 were only 4.6 per cent -- the lowest percentage increase in 23 years.

In short, the caps have produced tight budgets for governments at all levels throughout the state.

The dramatic decline in property tax growth is demonstrated by a New Jersey Taxpayers Association report that total property taxes throughout the state for municipal purposes in 1979 are still \$29.5 million lower than in the last year before the tax reform and spending control program was enacted.

b. HOMESTEAD REBATE PROGRAM: Democrats proposed and supported the amendment to the New Jersey Constitution which requires that the proceeds of the gross income tax must be set aside in a special fund and used only for property tax relief.

This means that not a single cent of income tax revenue can be used to support the operations of state governments.

The major form in which direct property tax relief has been provided is the Homestead Rebate Program, under which \$800 million has been returned to New Jersey homeowners in amounts averaging \$185 per year.

Senior citizens or disabled persons, or their surviving spouses, receive an additional \$50 rebate which increases their total average benefit to \$235 per year.

Every year, the State of New Jersey sends a rebate check to qualified homeowners, providing direct property tax relief and tangible evidence that the tax reform and spending control program is paying off for the people of New Jersey.

c. REVENUE SHARING PROGRAM: A total of \$175 million has been sent back to municipalities for reductions in individual property taxes under the State Revenue Sharing Program, yet another part of the property tax relief program.

d. STATE SCHOOL AID: Perhaps the most dramatic effect of the state income tax program is the money it has helped provide for education. Before this new system of funding education was initiated by the Democratic Administration and Legislature, state school aid totalled slightly less than \$800 million.

This year approximately one-third of the state budget -- \$1.5 billion -- will be distributed in state school aid, an 85 per cent increase since the passage of the Thorough and Efficient Law.

At the same time, however, statewide property taxes for school purposes have increased by only 6 per cent. This again represents a reversal from the double digit increases of previous years.

e. IN-LIEU-OF TAX PROGRAM: Another result of the property tax relief package was the institution of payments in-lieu-of taxes on state property. These payments are for local services to state property. In 1978 alone, municipalities received \$10.9 million in-lieu-of payments that help keep local property taxes down.

f. ELIMINATION OF SEVERAL BUSINESS TAXES: Enactment of the tax reform program has made New Jersey a significantly better place for businesses to locate, develop and expand.

The program included the repeal of millions of dollars in regressive and counterproductive taxes imposed on businesses while instituting a progressive, broad-based gross income tax. This action eliminated tax burdens which stifled economic growth, and enabled businesses to plan more realistically for future growth.

The business tax reform program included repeal of the sales tax on business machinery and equipment, the unincorporated business tax, the retail gross receipts tax and phasing out of the business personal property tax.

In a report issued in June, the Legislature's Joint Committee on Tax Policy estimated that the repeal of these taxes has resulted in a loss of state tax dollars -- and a benefit to business -- of \$193.3 million dollars during the 1978, 1979 and 1980 fiscal years.

The tax reform program also resulted in an overall reduction of \$88.5 million in local property taxes during 1977, the program's first full year of existence. It is estimated that approximately one-third of that reduction went to businesses -- followed by one-third of the property tax relief in succeeding years.

g. SUMMARY: The tax reform and spending control program implemented in 1976 has created a healthy fiscal environment in New Jersey.

The state enjoys the highest possible credit rating -- Triple A -- which saves millions of dollars when we borrow money. That bond rating, which New Jersey holds alone in the Northeast, is testimony to the stable fiscal foundation on which our government and economy are now based.

While some may criticize the tax reform and spending control package, the benefits are obvious.

Property taxes have declined, and their growth has been contained in a responsible manner. The Homestead Rebate is a fact of life, and puts cash in the hands of taxpayers. Government spending has been curtailed without loss of vital services. The burden of supporting government has been shifted from low and middle-income families to those better able to pay their share. And the state's economic climate has been dramatically improved.

As a result of the tax reform program and the improvement in the state's economy, New Jersey now ranks third highest in per capita income, but eighth lowest in the cost of government per \$1,000 of personal income.

Any candidate who would suggest repeal of that program must explain how New Jersey would bear the consequences of such an irresponsible action: the end of the homestead rebates, the return of the constitutional crisis over how to finance public education, dramatic increases in property taxes, reimposition of the cost of senior citizen and veteran deductions on local governments, loss of jobs, flight of business and a severe economic slump.

2. SERVICES TO PEOPLE

a. SENIOR CITIZENS: No prior Administration or Legislature has responded to the state's senior citizens as the Democrats have during the past six years.

Only New Jersey returns so much to its elderly citizens who have given us so much. Virtually no other state funds the broad range of services and assistance to senior citizens as New Jersey.

In New Jersey, there are 300 services for senior citizens, including legal services, meals on wheels and transportation. This also includes counseling, educational services, and pre-retirement training.

Senior citizens are the major beneficiaries of the tax reform program, receiving extra homestead rebates and paying little or no state income tax.

Today, 280,000 New Jersey senior citizens receive prescription drugs at nominal prices. Two years ago, that program was virtually non-existent. Today, that program funds more than five million individual drug prescriptions a year for senior citizens.

No other state offers such a program. No other party took this step for our elder citizens.

It was Democrats who enacted the program, put it in effect, and refinanced it last fall so it could continue serving a growing number of people.

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Democrats are developing a utility "lifeline" program which will assist the elderly and disabled in meeting the high costs of heating their homes and apartments during the coming winter.

Democrats have acted to eliminate abuses by health insurers who prey on the elderly, and have instituted a generic drug program to provide quality, low-cost drugs for the elderly and other consumers.

The following are details of some of the major areas of Democratic accomplishment in services and programs for the elderly:

- PAA PROGRAM: Now in its second year, the Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged (PAA) program -- the first of its kind in the nation -- has proved to be one of the most successful programs adopted by this or any earlier Legislature. In fact, more than 280,000 senior citizens throughout the state are enrolled in this program, which allows them to buy prescription drugs for a fee of \$2. Aided by this program are senior citizens whose income is low -- only individual seniors earning \$9,000 or less annually are eligible, or married seniors whose joint income is \$12,000 or less per year. Since the elderly generally purchase more prescription drugs than any other age group, it is apparent how great a benefit this program is for them.

The Legislature should ensure that funds are provided in the next budget so that this beneficial program can be extended to the disabled, who also have a need for assistance with their drug bills.

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- LIFELINE PROGRAM: The lifeline credit program recently approved by the Assembly -- and awaiting Senate action -- will give a \$100 utility bill credit to senior citizens, handicapped and disabled persons who are gas and/or electric users. Eligible for this program, which will be initiated this October, are PAA and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program recipients and disabled persons who receive Social Security benefits. The 380,000 persons expected to be eligible for the lifeline program will receive \$100 if both their gas and electric services are provided by the same utility or, if separate utility companies supply these services, a \$50 credit will be applied by each company. The \$100 credit will be raised to \$125 in fiscal year 1981 to accommodate the impact of growing utility costs.

Enactment of the lifeline program on the state level, and support by New Jersey Democrats for similar federal efforts to be financed by the proposed tax on windfall oil profits, demonstrate the Democrats' determination that the poor and elderly will not be forced to choose between spending their limited incomes on eating or heating during the winter months.

Rather, state and federal governments will step in to help those who are hit hardest by rising fuel costs, and who are least able to assume the full impact of those increases.

- HEALTH INSURANCE ABUSES STOPPED: The Democratic Legislature is also responsible for passage of legislation aimed at curtailing instances of health insurance fraud, the victims of which are often the persons who have the most trouble purchasing this insurance -- senior citizens. Under this legislation, the Commissioner of Insurance is given the power to regulate the writing of health insurance policies so that unclear and possibly fraudulent language is eliminated. The law also guarantees buyers of health insurance policies a 10-day waiting period during which they can examine the policy fully before committing themselves to purchase.

- HEALTH SERVICES TO THE ELDERLY: Through the enactment of Democratic legislation, Blue Cross and Blue Shield coverage has been extended so that the cost of convalescing has been reduced and patients can recuperate at home without fear of losing these benefits. Additionally, Democrats are responsible for giving nursing home patients new rights while, at the same time, assuring that unscrupulous nursing home operators are stopped from further abuses.

- SENIOR TRANSPORTATION: New Jersey Democrats are also responsible for legislation authorizing local school districts to use school buses for the transportation of senior citizens. More importantly, the enactment of the state Reduced Fare Program for seniors on public transportation has benefited approximately 470,000 persons who now ride public buses and trains at reduced fares throughout the year.

b. CONSUMERS: New Jersey consumers are surviving the ravages of inflation far better than consumers throughout the nation. The New Jersey Economic Policy Council, in fact, will soon issue a study which shows that major household expenses, such as housing, food and medical care, have increased in New Jersey by only 8.8 per cent from May, 1978 through May, 1979 as compared with a national increase in these same areas of 10.8 per cent. Much of the credit for this favorable position can be taken by New Jersey Democrats whose consumer-oriented, cost-cutting measures and sound management of the state's economy have worked to the benefit of working families throughout the state.

- CREATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADVOCATE: With the establishment of the Public Advocate Department in 1974, Democrats placed in the governmental process a vigilant watchdog for the consumer. Since its inception, the Public Advocate has saved New Jersey consumers in excess of \$1.25 billion in utility rate increases. This includes a savings of \$465,515 in electric and gas increases and \$272,703 in telephone and telegraph rate increases sought.

- HOSPITAL COST CONTAINMENT: New Jersey has held down hospital rate increases to 9 per cent, as compared with a national average of 15 per cent. This has been done by setting hospital rates that compare to hospital costs reimbursed both by private and public third party payment sources.

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In addition, in July of 1978 Democratic legislation was signed into law which created a five-member Hospital Rate Setting Commission which will, by next January, begin to set rates for the state's \$2 billion hospital industry.

- HOMEOWNERS WARRANTY PROGRAM: Since July, buyers of new homes in New Jersey have had the added insurance of a 10-year warranty program against construction defects, due to the enactment of a Democratic legislative initiative. Titled the New Jersey Homeowners Warranty Program, the law requires that all New Jersey builders be registered with the Department of Community Affairs to qualify for a local construction permit. Most importantly, the program mandates that any new home sold after July 1, 1979, must bear a 10-year warranty given by the builder at closing.

- PLAIN LANGUAGE STANDARDS FOR CONTRACTS AND INSURANCE: Recently signed into law by Governor Byrne was legislation requiring the simplification of language used in all life and health insurance policies. This, together with another bill awaiting Assembly approval which would expand the plain language mandate to all consumer contracts, should greatly aid consumers in their purchase of contractual goods and services. Informed consumers will be better able to prevent fraud and abuse.

- GENERIC DRUGS: New Jersey Democrats are also responsible for legislation which requires pharmacists to substitute lower-cost generic drugs wherever possible. This action alone is expected to save New Jersey consumers from \$10 million to \$15 million annually.

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- MILK COST CONTAINMENT: The Democratic Administration is studying the state's milk pricing control system to determine whether the system increases retail milk prices. In June, Governor Byrne requested the Department of Agriculture to cancel a scheduled milk price increase until he could hold a public hearing on the effectiveness of this system. Cancellation of this increase could save New Jersey consumers \$5 to \$15 million annually. Democrats commend the Governor for his efforts, and await the results of his review of the pricing system.

- DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS: One of the most vigorous advocates for consumers during the current tenure of the Democratic party in state government has been the Division of Consumer Affairs, whose efforts on behalf of New Jersey citizens have been unequalled among the states. Our vigilant state consumer effort was extended in 1975 by giving county and municipal consumer protection offices the power to enforce consumer laws.

c. TENANTS: Through the efforts of New Jersey Democrats over the past six years, tenants in this state have finally been accorded the rights they have long been denied. No longer are tenant rights subordinate to those of the landlord, nor are tenants relegated to second class status by the government.

During the last six years, the Democratic Legislature and Administration have:

- prohibited eviction of tenants without cause;
- mandated the transfer of a tenant's security deposit following the sale of an apartment building;

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- required all landlords to obtain federal crime insurance to protect their tenants;
- required landlords to register with the municipality in which their buildings are located, to post and provide tenants with their names and addresses and with the names and addresses of the superintendents when the lease becomes effective;
- required landlords to place security deposits in interest-bearing accounts;
- protected tenants displaced due to an emergency from losing their security deposit;
- passed through a portion of the benefits realized by landlords from the Homestead Rebate Program to the tenant;
- provided for a \$65 state income tax credit for renters; and
- recently required landlords in Atlantic City to give tenants one year's notice before eviction, unless the lease is longer than that period, and to provide the tenant with comparable housing within 10 miles of the municipality.

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3. JOBS AND ECONOMY

The six-year efforts of the Democratic Administration and Legislature have turned New Jersey's economy around. Democrats have created new jobs and attracted new business to this state.

a. JOBS: When Governor Byrne and the Democratic Legislature were elected in 1973, the unemployment rate in New Jersey was climbing. That trend has now been reversed. Additionally, 260,000 more New Jersey citizens are working today than in 1975. During the last 12 months, New Jersey has added 77,000 new jobs for our residents. Some specific ways in which New Jersey Democrats have put people back to work are:

- the creation of the successful Economic Development Agency which, to date, has helped private business finance nearly \$600 million in new construction, with a total projected value of almost \$900 million. This has led to the creation of more than 10,000 construction jobs and nearly 27,000 new permanent jobs.
- approval of issuance of \$325 million in bonds last year alone for housing, state institutions, and Green Acres projects will create more new jobs in New Jersey.
- the revamping of a disorganized attempt by the former Republican administration to put together a sewer construction program. The result has been the appropriation of more than \$1 billion in state and federal funds for sewer construction --- and some 70,000 jobs.

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- the enactment of enabling legislation to govern casino gambling in New Jersey which has led to a construction boom in Atlantic City and the creation of several thousand jobs.
 - the building of the Meadowlands Sports Complex which, in addition to creating construction jobs, provides many full-time jobs and has also attracted professional sports teams, entertainers and tourists to New Jersey.
 - the enactment of legislation permitting the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to build industrial parks in the high unemployment areas in New Jersey's northern cities.
 - the raising of the minimum wage from \$2.40 to \$2.90 this year, and \$3.10 as of January 1, 1980.
 - implementation of the federal Targeted-Jobs Tax Credit Program to give tax incentives to employers who hire people who have difficulty in finding jobs.
 - Permitting race tracks to keep a larger share of the parimutuel take, which will help revitalize the horse racing industry.
- b. BUSINESS AND THE ECONOMY: When Democrats assumed office in 1974, approximately 30 major firms a year were leaving the state. Since then, the loss has been cut in half. In addition, Democrats are responsible for New Jersey becoming one of the leading states for foreign investment. This improvement in New Jersey's business activity is attributable not only to the repeal of the business taxes mentioned earlier, but also other Democratic initiatives such as:

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- the establishment of an Office of Business Advocacy in the Department of Labor and Industry. This office acts as an ombudsman for businesses with problems in locating or expanding their facilities.
 - the reorganization and expansion of the Division of Economic Development in the Department of Labor and Industry. This division has helped 854 new companies locate in New Jersey and assisted the expansion of 737 companies. These efforts have resulted in the creation of nearly 100,000 new jobs.
 - the enactment of legislation which increased the mortgage interest ceiling, thereby improving the availability of mortgage money.
 - the elimination of bureaucratic red tape by requiring the Department of Environmental Protection to respond to permit applications within 90 days.
 - the passage of the Uniform Construction Code which encouraged home construction by removing the many and varied local building ordinances.
- c. OTHER ACTIONS: The Democratic Legislature acted to offset the adverse effect on local government of the termination of the federal Anti-Recession Aid Program. A total of \$22.4 million in state funds was distributed to 524 municipalities to ease the loss of federal monies.
- Local job-creating efforts were also aided by the enactment of the workfare program which requires municipal welfare directors to assign employable persons receiving public assistance to public service jobs.

4. CITIES

The revitalization of New Jersey's urban areas has been a critical part of the Democratic effort to improve our state's economy and the quality of life. Democrats have made state government a catalyst for change --- and a full partner with private enterprise in seeking unique solutions to urban problems.

- The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey has been authorized to develop urban industrial parks. The first potential sites identified are in Newark, Jersey City, and Elizabeth. These parks will mean jobs and business activity for depressed urban neighborhoods.
- The Mortgage Finance Agency (MFA) was created to increase the availability of low-interest residential mortgages in urban areas. The agency's programs have often expanded to include low-interest home improvement loans to middle-income homeowners to rebuild urban neighborhoods.
- The Urban Aid Program now includes 31 cities and distributes \$38.9 million to needy urban centers.
- The Safe and Clean Neighborhoods' Program helps put more policemen on the beat to fight crime. Democrats, just this year, increased the appropriation from \$12 million to \$12.8 million.
- Urban School Districts now receive more than 60% of their funding from the state because the Democrats reformed the public school financing system.
- Private business, in cooperation with government, has moved aggressively into our cities. Johnson and Johnson is building a new world headquarters in New Brunswick. PSE&G is rebuilding in Newark. Casino gambling is revitalizing Atlantic

City. The Economic Development Authority has focused its loan guarantees in urban areas.

- The Democratic Administration and Legislature have demonstrated a major commitment by developing a capital improvement program directed at urban areas. The new Justice Complex, for example, is now being built in Trenton.
- The \$200 million 1978 Green Acres Bond Issue was the first to specifically commit funds to urban parks projects. Half of this bond issue will go to cities.

All of these actions will mean not only jobs, but permanent improvements to urban areas. They were done under a Democratic urban strategy of carefully redirecting our resources to the cities.

5. GOVERNMENT REFORM

Democrats in New Jersey took state office six years ago amid widespread public cynicism about public officials at all levels of government--local, state and national.

The cynicism about, and mistrust of, government was the result of abuses of the public trust which had occurred in Trenton and in Washington.

The people of New Jersey chose the Democratic Party to open up and clean up state government.

Democrats have responded over the past six years by instituting reforms which expose all levels of government to public and media scrutiny, and guard against misdeeds by public officials.

These reforms include the following:

- a. the enactment of the Open Public Meetings Act, or "Sunshine Law", which requires public bodies to notify the public of the time, place and subject of their meetings, and to make all decisions in public. State and local government is now open to public view, and the peoples' confidence in government has been restored.
- b. Legislation is now pending after Assembly passage which would impose "sunset" restrictions on all administrative rules and regulations. Under this bill, a state agency's administrative rules would expire unless proven to be appropriate and useful.
- c. also awaiting Senate action are two bills which would create county and local boards of ethics and would require the filing of financial disclosure statements by local and county officials.

d. public financing of gubernatorial campaigns in New Jersey is now a matter of law because of Democratic action. This law restricts the use of private wealth or large contributions to fund campaigns. Public financing also opens up gubernatorial elections to all people, regardless of wealth. Currently awaiting the Governor's signature is another bill which extends public financing and campaign spending limits to gubernatorial primaries.

e. the implementation of postcard registration, which has helped register many people to vote who otherwise might not have taken the opportunity to participate in the electoral process.

f. the enactment of a law increasing the penalties for public officials who participate in corrupt activities, and for those who encourage and assist these officials.

g. an additional safeguard against corrupt government was the requirement of full public disclosure of personal finances by the top 275 officials of the executive branch.

h. the creation of the Legislative Oversight Committee by the General Assembly to assure that legislation is implemented properly and according to the intent of the Legislature.

6. TRANSPORTATION

As the nation's most urbanized state, New Jersey needs good highway and efficient mass transportation systems.

The previous Republican Administration and Legislature dragged their heels on undertaking a number of critical highway and rail projects.

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Once Democrats exerted leadership, that sorry record of inaction was ended--major highways have been completed, steps have been taken to improve our rail system, and efforts are being made to restructure the state's bus network.

Examples of the strong leadership provided by Democrats over the past six years include:

- a. the completion and the opening of major segments of Interstates 195, 295, 287 and 78;
- b. significant improvements to Newark International Airport and more direct access to the facility from highway and ground transportation facilities;
- c. passage this year of legislation which places on the November ballot a \$475 million bond issue for capital improvements to the state's highways and public transportation system;
- d. approval of legislation which will allow the state to assume ownership and management of state bus companies;
- e. legislation which will require the Department of Transportation to revise and update a comprehensive master plan every five years; and
- f. the rehabilitation of the Erie Lackawana and New York and Long Branch railroads.

In addition, it should be noted that during this six-year period, more federal funds for transportation projects were obtained by New Jersey than during any previous administration.

7. ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Democrats have built an impressive record of accomplishments in this area, the most impressive of which is the enactment of the Pinelands Preservation Act. Advances have been made in preserving our environment and expanding on our energy supplies without hardship or detriment to the state's economy.

Among the notable actions taken by the Democrats over the past years in environmental areas are:

- a. the enactment of the Pinelands Preservation Act, which has been termed the single most important environmental action taken by the state. With this law, development is substantially limited in one of the most environmentally sensitive areas of the nation --- the Pine Barrens. While the purpose of this law is not to end building in this area, it will result in the development of a regional zoning plan that will restrict building in the especially sensitive core area and allow it in others.
- b. a program to clean up the environment and to compensate businesses and individuals for damage caused by pollution by the enactment of the Water Pollution Planning Act, the Water Control Act and the Spill Compensation and Control Act. In addition, new Green Acres programs have been approved, as have Clean Water bond issues.
- c. to avoid drought, the construction of a pipeline to the Round Valley Reservoir which links the state's population centers to an additional 80 million gallons of water per day.
- d. the implementation of the nation's first auto emission control program, which has resulted in an improvement in the quality of the state's air.

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d. passage of several pieces of legislation aimed at controlling the dumping of hazardous chemical wastes, including the establishment of a legislative subcommittee to examine the suitability of existing sites used to store hazardous and chemical wastes.

e. concern that the state act to avoid an accident at either of the state's two existing nuclear power plants, and that adequate safeguards are taken in the construction of future nuclear plants. Among the Democratic legislative initiatives, is a bill pending which would permit municipalities to use a portion of their franchise and gross receipts tax revenues to prepare, test and implement nuclear emergency plans.

Democratic efforts to promote energy efficiency in New Jersey began well before the current energy crisis. Accomplishments in this area include:

a. the establishment of the nation's first cabinet-level Department of Energy in 1977. Since its inception, it has proved to be an able watchdog, fighting to obtain the state's fair share of oil and gasoline allocations, instituting energy efficient measures in public buildings and protecting against price gouging by oil companies and gasoline stations.

b. the promotion of usage of alternate energy technologies to alleviate oil scarcities and rising costs. Through Democratic efforts, New Jersey is receiving federal funds for homeowners who install solar heating devices.

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c. responsibility for current experiments designed to develop and test alternative fuels and to determine the feasibility of their use in New Jersey --- such as the use of gasohol, which is currently being tested in state cars.

d. the formulation of a comprehensive Energy Conservation Master Plan that will be instrumental in cutting energy consumption in New Jersey by five per cent in 1980.

e. the Democratic Legislature also is responsible for law which allows motorists to turn right on a red light, which has saved countless gallons of gasoline.

f. the Democratic Administration, in cooperation with public utilities in New Jersey, has also developed a new rate structure which provides for incentives for energy conservation. While the traditional formula rewarded energy wastefulness, New Jersey's newly established flat rate system removes the incentive for excessive usage.

8. EDUCATION

Five years ago New Jersey's system of public education was in chaos --- there was inadequate financing, little or no accountability to taxpayers and parents, wasteful spending and a Supreme Court ruling that said not all of the state's 1.4 million students were receiving the type of education they needed and to which they were entitled.

Inheriting this situation when we took office in 1974, Democrats in the past five years have completely turned around the state's educational system to a point where now, in 1979, school districts receive substantial amounts of state aid, students are tested for minimum basic skills and schools are more accountable than ever before to parents and taxpayers. What the Democrats did, in short, was launch the nation's

first Thorough and Efficient state system of public education.

a. T & E: The Public School Education Act of 1975 (T&E) requires school districts to decide what their children should learn, to provide programs designed to achieve those goals, to measure the progress made by the children and to provide additional help to those who need it. In short, T&E provides the framework for education --- but school districts provide the education.

From the funding perspective, T&E has provided more money for education than ever before. Prior to the implementation of T&E, the state support level was 29 per cent which, in real terms means state aid was less than \$800 million. That figure is contrasted with the current state aid figure --- \$1.5 billion --- which represents 41 per cent of the average local school costs and is an 85 per cent increase over funding in pre-T&E years. This substantial increase in state funding has also been reflected in local property tax rates which, since the inception of T&E, has increased by only six per cent.

Of even greater importance, however, is the fact that T&E has allowed taxpayers, for the first time, to be able to judge whether or not they are receiving full education value for their tax dollars. To assure citizen involvement, T&E requires that local residents be involved in various parts of the educational system, such as the goal setting process. Schools must, therefore, be accountable to parents and taxpayers.

Most important, however, is the benefit to students that has resulted from the implementation of T&E. The imposition of basic skills testing, and the future testing for high school graduation, assure that graduates from New Jersey schools will be able to read, write and compute, and that their education will have meaning and value.

b. OTHER EDUCATIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- passage of legislation which appropriates more than \$12 million for the construction of regional day schools for the severely handicapped. This legislation will enable many handicapped students, who prior to this have been institutionalized, to have all the benefits of our educational system as well as the opportunity of living at home.
- implementation of the community school concept, which is aimed at involving the community in its schools by offering adult education programs, community services such as health care and use of school buildings for social gatherings.
- additional state support of the non-public school system in New Jersey, including textbook and transportation aid and new auxiliary and diagnostic services.
- legislation requiring the Commissioner of Education to monitor violence in the schools.
- legislation which requires that children in state institutions be provided a thorough and efficient education.

9. HIGHER EDUCATION

Democrats have been leaders in innovating and developing New Jersey's higher education system. State support for higher education, both public and private, has increased over \$100 million since 1974. Our county colleges are expanding to meet new community needs. During the last 6 years, Democrats have:

- increased state aid to county colleges from \$600 to \$725 per student.
- established a special student grant program for Viet Nam veterans.
- expanded the tuition aid grant program for New Jersey's college students.
- completed and expanded the College of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.
- established a South Jersey medical education program.
- created a basic skills testing program for incoming freshmen at New Jersey's public colleges and universities.
- continued to change the state colleges into multi-purpose institutions.

10. SHORE PROTECTION

The preservation of one of New Jersey's most valuable assets -- its shore area -- has been a top priority with the Democratic Administration and Legislature. The shore is important to the tourist industry and as an invaluable natural resource. The Democrats have demonstrated their commitment to protecting the shore by enacting programs for beach protection, tourism, shoreline erosion, offshore drilling guidelines, fishing and water pollution.

a. A \$30 million Beaches and Harbor Bond Act was enacted of which \$22 million was earmarked for shore protection projects. This was the first such bond issue ever for this purpose. Recently, \$4 million more was appropriated for the research, construction and maintenance of beach erosion projects.

b. The Division of Marine Services in the Department of Environmental Protection has been monitoring and inspecting the 120 miles of beaches from Cape May to Sandy Hook for beach access, water conditions and shoreline erosion.

c. One of the most important pieces of legislation enacted by the Democrats was the Oil Spill and Compensation Act of 1977. This act prohibits the discharge of petroleum and any other dangerous substance into the water. It also provides for the clean up of any discharge and established an oil spill compensation fund.

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The compensation fund provides compensation in the event of an oil spill. The state reimburses entities affected by a spill (for example, a municipality, a local business or a private homeowner) from a fund established with the imposition of a one cent tax on transporters of hazardous waste.

d. Problems facing New Jersey's marine industries have been addressed by the Democratic Administration and Legislature. Through the Wetlands Act, for example, the state now controls and protects 240,000 acres of wetlands in 11 coastal counties from marine life destruction. Additionally, legislation was enacted in 1976 -- the Marine Fisheries Management Act -- which provides long term protection for the fishing industry by controlling foreign fishing within the 200 mile limit.

e. Democratic concern about ocean dumping has successfully produced funds for dredging and clean-up projects. In addition, Democrats have opposed continued ocean dumping. The State Department of Environmental Protection has strongly recommended to the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency that this dumping be discontinued in 1981.

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11. CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Remarkable strides have been made by this Administration and Legislature over the past six years in improving the state's criminal justice system.

In addition to totally updating and revising New Jersey's criminal laws, Democrats also acted to unify the court system, improve jury selection methods and juror compensation, and create a separate Department of Corrections.

a. The new penal code, which became effective on September 1, revises New Jersey's hopelessly antiquated criminal laws.

Prior to adoption of the code, our criminal law created inequities in sentencing, failed to discourage persistent offenders and did not contain sufficiently stiff penalties for murder.

Democrats took the initiative and developed a comprehensive penal code which will restore public confidence in our criminal justice system.

Among the major provisions of the code are:

- a standard sentencing procedure which will remove inequities and disparities in sentencing;
- extended sentences for repeat offenders;
- tougher penalties for murder with minimum mandatory sentences;
- criminal penalties for sexual abuse of children or the mentally incompetent, and for child pornography;

- jail sentences for persons who release or abandon toxic pollutants or hazardous wastes;
- prohibitions against possession of firearms by persons convicted of violent crimes or with a history of emotional problems; and
- tough penalties for public officials who accept illegal benefits which influence the performance of their official duties.

b. JURY REFORM PACKAGE: The Democratic Legislature is now considering a series of bills which will substantially improve the current system of jury selection and compensation. Specifically, one bill increases juror compensation from \$5 to \$10 per day as of July 1, 1980. New jury selection methods would have jury members selected from a single list which includes registered voters and licensed drivers. Another bill would prohibit any employer from discharging employees for serving jury duty.

c. A major Democratic accomplishment in the area of criminal justice is the implementation of the Safe and Clean Neighborhoods Act, which substantially increases the number of foot patrolmen in New Jersey's urban centers. The Legislature recently approved a bill making this program permanent.

d. To streamline the state's court system and provide greater judicial efficiency, the Democrats were responsible for a constitutional amendment which resulted in the merger of the county courts into the State Superior Court system.

e. In order to eliminate conflicts of interest among departmental hearing officers, to promote due process, expedite the conclusion of contested cases and to generally improve the administration of state policy, Democrats enacted legislation which created an independent Office of Administrative Law whose sole function is to conduct administrative hearings.

f. In an effort to address all problems relating to criminal justice in this state in a unified and expedient manner, Democrats also were responsible for the creation of the Department of Corrections.