

Gov. Christie: New Jersey Is Growing Stronger Every Day

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Gov. Christie: New Jersey Is Growing Stronger Every Day

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pw3KANwoTWg>

Transcript:

Governor Christie: The state of New Jersey is strong and it is growing stronger every day. And everyone who said that New Jersey is ungovernable was wrong. In 2014, our economic recovery went from strong to stronger. We achieved the best private sector job growth in New Jersey in fifteen years. After creating no jobs for eight years, we've created 224,000 new jobs in the last six years. Our unemployment rate has fallen to 5.3 percent, the lowest it's been since 2008. Home sales continued to recover in 2015, rising by nearly 14 percent over 2014, and the number of construction permits issued is 10 percent higher than it was in 2014, now at its highest level of construction permits since 2006. Last year foreclosures fell by 20 percent, with declines in every one of our 21 counties in this state. On our watch, New Jersey has pulled back from the economic brink. We've brought discipline back to our public finances as well. We've now achieved six consecutive balanced budgets with no new taxes on the people of New Jersey. Our discretionary spending for Fiscal Year 2016 is \$2.3 billion below 2008. We've shown that smaller government is better government. We've shrunk the size of government while delivering better and more efficient public services. You know, there are now nearly 10,000, 10,000 fewer state employees today than the day I took office six years ago. Property taxes were increasing seven percent a year for a decade before we arrived. In the last half decade, on our watch and under our 2% cap, property tax increases have averaged only 1.9%. With more reform, we could do even better. And that's how we've achieved historic levels of state investment in our school system, with more than \$12.8 billion in funding for our schools this year. That's how we've continued to make progress with revitalizing schools in some of our lowest-achieving districts in Newark, Camden and Asbury Park. At the same time we reformed teacher tenure rules, we greatly expanded charter schools, we established Renaissance Schools under the Urban Hope Act, and now have seen two years in a row of graduation rate increases in what was once the worst school district in New Jersey in the city of Camden. We've continued to make progress towards building safer and stronger communities, strengthening our law enforcement and keeping violent offenders off the streets, while also helping to build the conditions for long-

term peace in our communities. From 2011 to 2014, crime in New Jersey fell 20 percent, and the incarceration rate in New Jersey has fallen nearly 10 percent. In Camden, once the most violent city in America, the murder rate has dropped 52% in the last three years since, with Mayor Redd, we transformed the police force. And one of the achievements that I'm proudest of. We've helped thousands of people whose lives have been devastated by drugs to get the help that they need. Instead of prosecuting a failed war on drugs-a war against our own citizens-we've classified drug addiction as the illness it truly is, and worked to treat and rehabilitate some of the most vulnerable at-risk members of our society. Last year alone I signed ten new laws to address this issue, and today we're going to talk about the next steps we need to continue making progress. Now all these achievements are more than points on a scoreboard or touchdowns in the end zone. These are lives saved; these are communities transformed.

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