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Governor Chris Christie Vetoes Bill That Would "Upend" Early Voting System

Monday, November 9, 2015 Tags: [Bill Action](#)



Trenton, NJ – Governor Chris Christie today vetoed A-4613/S-50 (Prieto, Greenwald, Moriarty, Coughlin, Sumter, Mosquera, Schaer, DeAngelo/Gill, Rice, Sweeney, Weinberg) noting the legislation mirrors a misguided bill he nixed in the last legislative session because it would recklessly replace New Jersey’s reliable and cost-effective early voting process with a costly, counterproductive and duplicative system costing taxpayers \$25 million initially and millions more each subsequent year.

"This 71-page bill, styled as "The Democracy Act," will not further democracy, but endanger the State’s longstanding and proven election system. Instead of playing politics with the State’s electoral system, the sponsors should work across the aisle on responsible and cost-effective electoral reform," Governor Christie wrote in his veto.

The voting public’s use of mail-in ballots has already increased steadily in recent years because of the simple, effective vote-by-mail system already in place, and elections have been consolidated to better accommodate voter participation as well as to save tax dollars. According to the latest available PEW Charitable Trusts assessment, New Jersey’s registered voter rate is at 86.54 percent.

The Christie Administration has gone even further to promote voter registration efforts, including a current project to modernize the process at individual MVC terminals to ensure that every New Jerseyan applying for or renewing their driver’s license or non-driver’s license identification in an MVC office can be registered using an electronic signature pad.

The bill represents a manifest attempt to use election reform for political gain rather than a genuine bipartisan effort to further improve the State’s election system. The bill was not considered in legislative committee and was hastily adopted along party lines before the Legislature could complete its own fiscal analysis.

"Tellingly, the bill lacks the support of the bipartisan group of county election officials who would be responsible for its implementation and administration." Governor Christie wrote.

The legislation would needlessly impose further cumbersome, costly, and inadvisable requirements on the State’s election process. Eligible voters in the Garden State already have ample opportunities to register to vote and cast their ballots. Voter registration applications are available online or at motor vehicle agencies, county and municipal offices, schools, libraries, social services agencies and other public offices. Nine out of ten eligible voters in New Jersey were registered to vote last year.

"New Jersey taxpayers deserve better than to have their hard-earned tax dollars spent on thinly-veiled political gamesmanship and the State must ensure that every eligible citizen’s vote counts and is not stolen by fraud," the Governor said.

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