

VETO MESSAGE - No. 6806

TO THE ASSEMBLY:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, the following bills:

Assembly Bill Number 10005, entitled:

"AN ACT to amend the criminal procedure law, in relation to designating uniformed court officers of the town of New Windsor as peace officers"

Assembly Bill Number 10761-A, entitled:

"AN ACT to amend the criminal procedure law, in relation to including certain employees of the town and village of Harrison within the designation of peace officer"

NOT APPROVED

These bills would designate employees of the Town of New Windsor and the Town and Village of Harrison, who are acting as court officers or attendants, as peace officers. While I appreciate the role that court officers play in providing security in the courtroom, I have long expressed my concern that existing training requirements for peace officers are woefully inadequate given the broad law enforcement powers accorded to them. As a result, in 2008 and 2009 I vetoed 19 bills that would have created new peace officer designations. Indeed, last year, I vetoed a bill identical to A.10005 (Veto Number 31 of 2009) because of these concerns.

The Legislature has now passed a bill to increase the mandated training requirements for peace officers, from a maximum of 35 hours to a maximum of 180 hours (A.7957-A/S.6102-A), and I am approving that bill today. However, that bill will not become effective until January 1, 2011, and, therefore, it would not require peace officers appointed to serve as court officers or attendants to obtain such enhanced training if they were appointed prior to that date. Given my previously expressed concerns about the inadequacy of existing training requirements, and my previous vetoes of bills similar to these, I cannot approve these bills.

These bills are disapproved.

(signed) DAVID A. PATERSON