

April 15, 2013

SENATE BILL No. 2483
(First Reprint)

To the Senate:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Senate Bill No. 2483 (First Reprint) with my recommendations for reconsideration.

This bill proposes to establish three new temporary governmental entities, the "New Jersey Workforce Development and Education Commission," the "Education Advisory Board," and the "Business and Workforce Advisory Board," to study and report on ways that New Jersey's school districts and institutions of higher education can better prepare students to meet future workforce needs. Specifically, under the bill, the boards are charged with advising the commission on ways to improve coordination between educational institutions and the business community, develop education and training strategies to meet employer needs in key industries, and identify current workforce training programs that are underutilized. The commission would then issue a report and the entities established under the bill would expire.

While I support the sponsors' goal of fostering an educational environment in New Jersey that leads to a more highly skilled workforce, the establishment of three new government entities to develop strategies to accomplish this goal is unnecessary. As Governor, I have the responsibility to ensure that the Executive Branch of State Government operates as efficiently and effectively as possible. Indeed, since the earliest days of my Administration, I have called upon governmental agencies at all levels to eliminate redundancies and to deliver services to our citizens in the most cost-effective manner feasible. By streamlining the organization,

operation, and structure of government agencies, we can enhance the performance of governmental service delivery systems while, at the same time, preserving scarce State resources and saving taxpayer dollars.

In contrast, this legislation would create three temporary entities charged with responsibilities that are already statutorily delegated to an existing commission: the State Employment and Training Commission ("SETC"). The SETC is an advisory council on workforce policy comprised of key executives and decision-makers from business, education, government, and community-based organizations throughout the State and has an integrated partnership with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The SETC is legislatively mandated to identify employer workforce needs and skills deficiencies in order to inform the revision and creation of education and training strategies and to guide public investments for the emerging and growth industries in New Jersey. Further, the membership of the temporary entities that would be established under the bill is duplicative of the membership of the SETC. As such, it is clear that the SETC is the appropriate entity to identify and report on policies that will improve the ability of the State's schools and public institutions of higher education to meet the demands of tomorrow's employers.

Accordingly, because this bill would establish three temporary State entities whose purpose and membership is duplicative of the SETC, I herewith return Senate Bill No. 2483 (First Reprint) and recommend that it be amended as follows:

Page 2, Title, Lines 1-2:

Delete "establishing the "New Jersey Workforce Development and Education Commission" and insert

"concerning the State Employment and Training Commission"

Page 2, Section 1, Lines 7-33:

Delete in their entirety

Page 2, Section 2, Lines 35-44:

Delete in their entirety

Page 3, Section 2, Lines 1-7:

Delete in their entirety

Page 3, Section 3, Lines 9-42:

Delete in their entirety

Page 3, Section 4, Lines 44-48:

Delete in their entirety

Page 4, Section 4, Lines 1-10:

Delete in their entirety

Page 4, Section 5, Lines 12-20:

Delete in their entirety

Page 4, Section 6, Lines 22-26:

Delete in their entirety

Page 4, Line 27:

Insert new section 1: "1. a. The State Employment and Training Commission shall develop a report identifying policies that will improve the ability of the State's schools and public institutions of higher education to meet the demands of tomorrow's employers. The report may include such recommendations for legislative or regulatory action as the commission deems appropriate. The report shall address means to (1) improve coordination and enhance relations between institutions of higher education, K-12 school districts, and the business community; (2) align education and training strategies with employer needs in key industries; (3) develop an education and training strategy for key industries based on an understanding of future workforce and skill needs; and (4) identify current programs that may be underutilized that could prepare students for jobs in key industries.

b. The commission shall issue the report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor no later than 12 months after the effective date of this act."

Page 4, Section 7, Line 28:

Delete "7." and insert "2."

Page 4, Section 7, Line 28:

Delete "and the New Jersey" and insert."

Page 4, Section 7, Lines 29-32:

Delete in their entirety

Respectfully,

/s/ Chris Christie

Governor

[seal]

Attest:

/s/ Charles B. McKenna

Chief Counsel to the Governor