To the General Assembly:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Assembly Bill No. 2619 with my recommendations for reconsideration.

This bill provides an exemption from the 15% fee that cemetery companies currently charge for certain conveyances for deposit into their Maintenance and Preservation Funds, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:27-13. The exemption would exclude conveyances of a right of burial in a grave, crypt, or niche for which there is no transfer of title, provided that the grave, crypt, or niche was sold after December 1, 1971.

According to the sponsors, this bill is intended to reduce the financial burden on organizations that purchase multiple graves, crypts, or niches for subsequent conveyance to their members. While I support the sponsors’ intentions, I am concerned that the bill in its current form is overbroad and may have an adverse impact on the proper maintenance and preservation of cemeteries in New Jersey. Thus, I recommend specifying that the bill’s exemption shall be for the conveyance of the right of burial from a corporation or association organized not for profit and operated exclusively for religious or charitable purposes to a member or authorized designee of a member of the corporation or association for those graves, crypts, or niches for which a fee has already been paid. These changes will ensure that the bill is carefully calibrated to provide financial relief to religious or charitable organizations while at the same time providing for the proper maintenance and preservation of New Jersey’s cemeteries.

Accordingly, I herewith return Assembly Bill No. 2619 and recommend that it be amended as follows:
Page 3, Section 1, Line 7:  
After "1971" insert ", the conveyance of the right of burial is from a corporation or association organized not for profit and operated exclusively for religious or charitable purposes to a member or authorized designee of a member of the corporation or association, and a fee or charge had previously been paid on that grave, crypt or niche pursuant to subsection c"

Respectfully,

[seal]     /s/ Chris Christie

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Christopher S. Porrino

Chief Counsel to the Governor