

## Legislative Summary

**New!** S2664 - Senator Raymond Lesniak (D-20), Senate President Stephen Sweeney (D-3)

Designated as the "Market Competition and Consumer Choice Act," this bill alters State regulation of competitive services provided by telecommunications and cable television companies in New Jersey to ensure that such services are governed like other competitive services provided in the State. *The bill reported out of the Senate Economic Growth Committee with amendments for a second reading in the Senate. The SNJDC has testified on this matter on behalf of Verizon Communications Inc. and supports this legislation.*

**Update!** S1 - Senator Raymond Lesniak (D-20)

This bill reforms the State's affordable housing laws. If enacted, this legislation would abolish the Council on Affordable Housing established and would allow municipalities to administer their own affordable housing obligations. *The bill has passed both the House and the Senate, however the Governor conditionally vetoed the bill stating that it is insufficient and perpetuates COAH's problems. The bill was formally withdrawn as Senator Lesniak aims to introduce a new measure to abolish COAH. The SNJDC has testified on this matter and supports this legislation.*

**New!** A3768 - Assemblyman Peter Barnes (D-18), Assemblyman Albert Coutinho (D-29), Assemblywoman Celeste Riley (D-3), Assemblyman Matthew Milam (D-1)

This bill creates the New Jersey Business Action Center within the Department of State and abolishes the Division of Business Assistance, Marketing, and International Trade established by the Business Retention and Attraction Division. *The bill was recently introduced and referred to Assembly Commerce and Economic Development Committee.*

**New!** A3756 - Assemblywoman Pamela Lampitt (D-6)

This bill establishes a tax credit program for capital investment and increased employment in the vicinity of one or more of the Department of Transportation's transit villages in an effort to stimulate growth and development in those designated areas throughout the State. The bill is comprised of two separate yet related tax credits. The first provides certain businesses with a tax credit in an amount equal to 50 percent of a business' capital investment in a qualified business facility. The second provides a credit in an amount equal to 20 percent of a business' capital investment in a qualified residential project. *The bill was recently introduced and referred to Assembly Commerce and Economic Development Committee.*

## *From the Governor's Desk*

### *Governor Christie Signs Landmark Legislation to Revitalize Atlantic City*

Governor Chris Christie signed into law legislation aiming to revitalize the ailing gaming and tourism industries in Atlantic City, and set the region on a new course for economic growth, job creation and prosperity. Recognizing the significance and importance of Atlantic City's regional economy to the state as a whole, the reform plan aims to turn around the deep and unprecedented challenges facing Atlantic City's gaming and tourism industries.

The bills, S11 and S12, represent critical steps in following through on his commitment to the tens of thousands of New Jersey families whose livelihoods depend on the regional economy, and will set the stage for Atlantic City to once again be a world-class destination resort and an engine of job creation and economic growth. S11 authorizes the creation of a tourism district within Atlantic City, with the charge of improving public safety, public health, marketing and infrastructure projects and improvements; S12 provides for the reform and modernization of New Jersey's casino regulatory structure.

### *Christie enacts law allowing windmills on piers along New Jersey coast, including on Steel Pier in Atlantic City*

Governor Christie signed a measure that allows the tenants at Steel Pier in Atlantic City to install wind turbines along its length. The Catanoso family, who collectively owns the amusements on the pier, says it intends to set up the first 120-foot windmill by November. The set of turbines, which would eventually sit alongside Steel Pier's roller coasters and Ferris wheel, will be what state Senator Jim Whelan (D-2) calls a "de facto pilot program" to see the results of allowing turbines on any piers within 500 feet of the main water line. Other pier owners, lawmakers say, may soon follow. The family, which leases the pier from Trump Entertainment, plans to put up three turbines, with an educational center nearby. The Pier is located in front of Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort, jutting out from the Boardwalk at Pennsylvania Avenue.

## *In the News*

### **Southern New Jersey Veterans' Hospital Bill Now Law**

Legislation Assemblymen Matthew Milam, Vincent Prieto, Nelson Albano and Paul Moriarty sponsored to establish a task force to study and make recommendations on how best to build and operate a veterans' health care facility in southern New Jersey is now law. "This is a great step forward for our veterans who deserve our best," said Milam (D-1). "Forcing our southern New Jersey veterans to travel long distances for health care is not acceptable. We need to do better, and this task force will help determine the best way possible to ensure veterans in southern New Jersey get the best health care possible."

Southern New Jersey lacks a federal Department of Veterans Affairs inpatient veteran's medical center; forcing veterans needing inpatient care to travel to veterans' hospitals in northern New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York and Delaware. The VA has small clinics in Ventnor, Cape May and Vineland, but they only perform some outpatient medical services and are often overwhelmed by a large number of veterans seeking care. "This is a significant step toward properly helping the men and women who fought to protect our freedom," said Albano (D-1). "They deserve a reasonably accessible hospital that can meet their often specialized health care needs."

"Making our South Jersey veterans take long trips for health care is, quite simply, unacceptable," said Moriarty (D-4). "We are now closer to fixing this problem and giving veterans the respect they've earned." This law establishes the New Jersey Veterans' Hospital Task Force to study, evaluate and make recommendations related to the construction and operation of a veterans' health care facility in southern New Jersey.