

August 19, 2013

**SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
SENATE BILL NO. 1191  
(First Reprint)**

To the Senate:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Senate Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 1191 (First Reprint) without my approval.

This bill authorizes five counties to purchase food and custodial services for local school districts and regulates all subcontracting by school districts and public higher education institutions.

For many years, school districts have been able to directly purchase food and custodial services or, alternatively, enter into joint purchasing agreements with other school districts to take advantage of economies of scale. This existing system appropriately allows purchasing decisions to be made at the local level and affords districts the flexibility to jointly purchase services as a means to reduce costs and share services.

This bill, however, proposes to usurp local control in favor of a more restrictive county-wide experiment that would conflict with federal law. According to the Office of the Attorney General, federally funded school food services must be administered by local school districts or boards, not counties. This bill would therefore jeopardize funding for school breakfast and lunch programs that annually serve more than 52 million meals to schoolchildren in the five counties that would be impacted by this bill.

Accordingly, I herewith return Senate Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 1191 (First Reprint) without my approval.

Respectfully,

/s/ Chris Christie

Governor

[seal]

Attest:

/s/ Charles B. McKenna

Chief Counsel to the Governor