

August 19, 2013

**SENATE BILL NO. 2620**

To the Senate:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Senate Bill No. 2620 without my approval.

For more than two decades, the Shore Protection Fund has served as a critical resource for the stabilization, restoration, and maintenance of our coastal areas. Through an annual appropriation of \$25 million, countless projects including beach replenishment and construction, and maintenance of bulkheads, jetties, and seawalls have been completed, protecting public and private property and infrastructure from coastal storm damage and erosion. Indeed, many Shore Protection Fund projects served as invaluable defenses that mitigated damage that otherwise would have been wrought by Superstorm Sandy.

This bill, however, undermines that critical public necessity by allowing Shore Protection Fund moneys to be diverted away from the Fund's traditional focus. Instead, this bill would authorize funding repairs and maintenance to the Hudson River Walkway, which, since the 1980's, adjacent landowners have agreed to maintain at their sole expense. Given the significant and immediate priority of shore protection structures in our coastal zones, I cannot countenance an effort to divert this limited funding source away from that pressing public need.

Accordingly, I herewith return Senate Bill No. 2620 without my approval.

Respectfully,

/s/ Chris Christie

Governor

[seal]

Attest:

/s/ Charles B. McKenna

Chief Counsel to the Governor