

August 19, 2013

**SENATE BILL NO. 454
(First Reprint)**

To the Senate:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Senate Bill No. 454 (First Reprint) without my approval.

This bill allows students of any age to participate in voluntary surveys, including those inquiring about sexual behavior and attitudes, if schools send prior written notice to their parents or guardians. The bill provides that the failure of a parent or guardian to respond to such notice shall be treated as affirmative approval of their child's participation.

I recognize that surveys may help identify serious issues affecting students. However, this bill imprudently decreases parental involvement in a child's educational development. I believe a parent or guardian's legitimate interest to make an informed decision before their child is exposed to sensitive content outweighs the desire to make survey administration more convenient.

Accordingly, I herewith return Senate Bill No. 454 (First Reprint) without my approval.

Respectfully,
/s/ Chris Christie
Governor

[seal]

Attest:
/s/ Charles B. McKenna
Chief Counsel to the Governor