

January 19, 2016

**SENATE BILL NO. 2806**  
**(First Reprint)**

I am filing Senate Bill No. 2806 (First Reprint) in the Division of Archives and Records Management without my approval.

Under the provisions of Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, this bill, which was passed within 10 days preceding the expiration date of the second legislative year, does not become law because it was not signed prior to noon on the seventh day following such expiration. While in this circumstance there is no provision for the return of a bill to the Legislature for reconsideration, I believe it is appropriate to express my reasons for not approving this legislation.

This bill would extend Work First New Jersey general assistance benefits to convicted drug offenders upon their release from prison, including individuals convicted of distributing drugs, and also removes the requirement that an individual go through a licensed treatment program prior to receiving benefits.

Throughout my administration, I have been committed to helping New Jerseyans afflicted by the disease of drug addiction reclaim their lives. From expanding drug courts and the lifesaving Narcan program statewide, to integrating job training and services to ex-offenders re-entering society, to preventing employers from asking about a prospective employee's criminal history on an initial job application, to expanding access to college degrees within correctional facilities, these efforts have served to help individuals struggling with addiction become productive members of society.

While I wholeheartedly support efforts to further assist individuals plagued by the epidemic of addiction, New Jersey already affords those individuals who have been convicted of

possession or use of drugs the opportunity to receive benefits after the successful completion of a drug treatment program. The treatment requirement serves an important purpose of ensuring that individuals are actively engaged in their commitment to sobriety. I cannot sign a bill that undermines this important goal.

For these reasons, I have decided to file Senate Bill No. 2806 (First Reprint) without my approval.

[seal]

Respectfully,  
/s/ Chris Christie  
Governor

Attest:

/s/ Thomas P. Scrivo  
Chief Counsel to the Governor