

Office of the Governor
NEWS RELEASE

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Gov. Christie Whitman signed the following legislation:

A-135, sponsored by Assembly Members Arline M. Friscia (D-Middlesex) and Neil M. Cohen (D-Union), amends motor vehicle laws to require State and local law enforcement authorities to receive proof of valid automobile insurance before releasing a motor vehicle impounded pursuant to State law. Uninsured vehicles would, therefore, remain impounded until a valid insurance policy was obtained or proof of existing insurance was presented.

A-316, sponsored by Assemblywomen Charlotte Vandervalk (R-Bergen) and Joan M. Quigley (D-Bergen/Hudson) and Senator Peter A. Inverso (R-Mercer/Middlesex), directs the Department of Health and Senior Services to develop regulations to require licensed health care facilities to monitor pain in patients as a fifth vital sign. The four traditionally accepted medical vital signs include blood pressure, pulse, respiration and temperature. The bill is based on one of the recommendations issued by the New Jersey Legislative Commission for the Study of Pain Management Policy in its report to the Governor and the Legislature in March 1999. The purpose of this bill is to promote greater awareness of pain as a patient concern among physicians, physician assistants and nurses. Additionally, the bill is intended to facilitate communication between health care professionals and their patients about levels of pain intensity.

A-317, sponsored by Assemblywomen Charlotte Vandervalk (R-Bergen) and Rose Marie Heck (R-Bergen) and Senator Peter A. Inverso (R-Mercer/Middlesex), amends the "Cancer Research Act" and broadens the mandate of the statutorily created New Jersey State Commission on Cancer Research (Commission) to encourage the development of research projects on pain management and palliative care for cancer patients. The bill is based on one of the recommendations issued by the New Jersey Legislative Commission for the Study of Pain Management Policy in its report to the Governor and the Legislature in March 1999. The Commission currently receives \$1 million annually to fund research projects on the genetic, biochemical, viral, microbiological and environmental causes of cancer. This bill would specifically authorize the Commission to fund research projects that focus on pain management and palliative care for persons diagnosed with cancer.

A-318, sponsored by Assemblywomen Charlotte Vandervalk (R-Bergen) and Joan M. Quigley (D-Bergen/Hudson) and Senator Peter A. Inverso (R-Mercer/Middlesex), continues the work of the New Jersey Legislative Commission for the Study of Pain Management Policy (Commission), which was established by the Legislature in 1997 to study and make recommendations concerning acute and chronic pain management policy issues. The Commission expired in 1999 upon submission of its recommendations to the

Governor and the Legislature. This bill would temporarily establish the New Jersey Pain Management Policy Advisory Council (Council) in the Department of Health and Senior Services for another two years, as a follow-up entity to the Commission in order to continue to study and develop further policy recommendations concerning pain management. The bill calls for the Council to submit a report of its recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor at the end of two years.

A-319, sponsored by Assembly Members Charlotte Vandervalk (R-Bergen) and Samuel D. Thompson (R-Middlesex/Monmouth) and Senator Peter A. Inverso (R-Mercer/Middlesex), intends to focus the attention of hospital and nursing home management and health care professional staff on the need to address pain management as an integral component of patient care. The bill amends the statutory "bill of rights" for hospital and nursing home patients to explicitly include the right to expect and receive appropriate assessment, management and treatment of pain. The bill is based on one of the recommendations of the New Jersey Legislative Commission for the Study of Pain Management Policy in its report to the Governor and the Legislature.

A-2179, sponsored by Assemblymen Christopher Bateman (R-Morris/Somerset) and E. Scott Garrett (R-Sussex/Hunterdon/Morris) and Senator Gerald Cardinale (R-Bergen), eliminates the requirement that a minimum of two-thirds of a savings bank's board of managers be residents of New Jersey. The residency requirement is retained for the first five years of operation of a newly formed savings bank. The bill intends to allow New Jersey State chartered savings banks greater flexibility to attract and retain the best qualified managers and to provide parity with State chartered banks and savings and loan associations, which do not have residency requirements.

A-2180, sponsored by Assemblymen Christopher Bateman (R-Morris/Somerset) and E. Scott Garrett (R-Sussex/Hunterdon/Morris) and Senator Gerald Cardinale (R-Bergen), removes the requirement that a savings bank must use the word "savings" in its name. The change will help preserve the viability of the State savings bank charter and recognizes the blurring of distinction between banks and savings banks by consumers. Federal law does not require the use of the word savings in the title of a federally chartered savings bank.

A-2263, sponsored by Assemblymen Christopher Bateman (R-Morris/Somerset) and Neil M. Cohen (D-Union) and Senator Gerald Cardinale (R-Bergen), provides for an expedited approval process for certain applications by banks, savings banks and savings and loan associations, such as for branch office applications, certificate of incorporation amendments, and other corporate approvals. The bill sets forth eligibility requirements that banks must meet to qualify for the expedited approval process. Also, the bill consolidates and clarifies parity power provisions for financial institutions to be consistent with new powers granted by the federal "Graham-Leach-Bliley Act."

A-2264, sponsored by Assemblymen Christopher Bateman (R-Morris/Somerset) and Neil M. Cohen (D-Union) and Senator Gerald Cardinale (R-Bergen), outlines procedures to be followed in the event of mergers between financial institutions and their subsidiaries, as

allowed by new federal law. The bill requires the Department of Banking and Insurance Commissioner's approval prior to a merger and requires a financial institution's governing board to adopt a plan of merger that sets forth, among other things, the terms and conditions of the proposed merger and the manner in which shares will be converted or paid.