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## **Codey Signs Pay-To-Play Ban into Law**

(TRENTON)—Acting Governor Richard J. Codey today enacted one of the nation's strongest statewide pay-to-play bans, by signing into law the bill A-1500/S-2052 which prohibits campaign contributions by business entities seeking or holding State contracts in certain circumstances.

As Senate President Codey was a primary sponsor of the bill. The other primary sponsors were Assembly members Linda R. Greenstein, Michael J. Panter, Loretta Weinberg and Wilfredo Caraballo.

Harry Pozycki, founder of the Citizens' Campaign and Chairman of Common Cause New Jersey, also attended as Codey signed the bill during a public ceremony in the Governor's Outer Office.

"It was a long road that got us to this day. There was some suspense, a few twists and turns, and even an argument or two. But some achievements are worth a struggle. This bill signing is one of them. This is a signature moment in the history of our state," Codey said.

"For the past couple of years people have been talking about ethics in government, about the need to bring back accountability, the need to ban pay-to-play and the need to restore the public's trust. Some people complained about it. Some people tried to get it done. Today, we are getting it done. Today we have backed up our words with action. And New Jersey should be proud," Codey continued.

"New Jersey residents now will have a greater measure of assurance that state policy will be directed by the needs of the people, not the wishes of a few well-heeled state contractors," Assemblywoman Greenstein said. "This new law further strengthens what already is among the most rigid anti-pay-to-play laws in the country. More importantly, it ensures that our state does not lose the hundreds of millions of dollars in federal aid we need to undertake essential repairs to our roads and bridges."

"This ensures that the flow of political contributions by state contractors gets turned off and stays off," said Assemblyman Panter. "This is another victory for the cause of reform as we seek to restore the public's confidence in state government and the political process."

"This is the final step in ensuring that our 'pay-to-play' reforms will not be undone because of legal ambiguity," said Assemblywoman Weinberg. "The ultimate product of our work

will be an air-tight statute that will enhance further New Jersey's status as having the toughest anti-pay-to-play laws in the country.”

“Today’s signing codifies the Legislature's intent to crack down on campaign contribution abuses by constructing a firewall between political fundraising and government decision making,” said Assemblyman Caraballo.

Pozycki, of the Citizens’ Campaign and Common Cause New Jersey, said, “Today New Jersey takes a major step forward in the fight to restore merit, integrity and cost-effectiveness to the awarding of government contracts and in the broader battle to change our state’s political culture. This success is due in no small measure to the leadership and dedication of Acting Governor Codey. But it is also a result of a four-year effort by citizens throughout New Jersey who have built momentum for this landmark legislation by advocating and realizing the adoption of pay-to-play reforms in their own hometowns. The adoption of this law – the strongest of its kind in the country – shows that organized and dedicated citizens can not only make their voice heard; they can achieve significant victories. This bodes well for the future of our state.”

The bill’s full text, and statements on its specific rules regarding political contributions and state contracts, can be found by doing a “Bill Search” for A1500 or S2052 at the Legislature’s website, <http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/>.

Today’s bill signing is part of Codey’s broader effort to restore accountability and the public’s trust in government.

Codey’s other accomplishments toward that goal include:

- A proposed Fiscal 2006 budget with the largest investment in public accountability in recent memory, with nearly \$7 million in new funding for the Commission on Ethical Standards, Office of the Inspector General, State Commission on Investigation, Office of the Public Advocate and Election Law Enforcement Commission.
- Creation of the Special Counsel on Ethics Reform, which recently completed an unprecedented, thorough audit into the ethics codes that apply to employees of state Executive Branch. The Counsel recommended sweeping reforms that will be enacted under Codey’s investment in the Fiscal 2006 budget.
- The appointment of Mary Jane Cooper as New Jersey’s first Inspector General, with a mandate to root out waste, mismanagement and fraud.