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## **Codey Signs Bill Requiring Fire Extinguishers in Homes**

(TRENTON) – Acting Governor Richard J. Codey today signed S-1294 / A-3432, a bill requiring that single-, double- or triple-occupancy homes be equipped with a fire extinguisher upon sale, lease or transfer.

State Senator Joseph Coniglio first drafted the bill two years ago, when a fifth-grade student at Cliffside Park School #6 suggested the idea. Senator Coniglio was visiting Mrs. Donna Spoto's fifth-grade class when the student, Christopher Keethe, raised his hand and asked why every home in New Jersey is not required to have a fire extinguisher.

“He went on to say that he believed everyone would be safer and lives would be saved if we all had access to fire extinguishers. I couldn't have agreed more, so I went to work on broadening our existing fire safety laws,” Senator Coniglio said.

The Senator joined Acting Governor Codey for the public bill signing during a school assembly at Cliffside Park School #6 – which Christopher still attends as a seventh-grader. The bill's other primary sponsors are Assemblyman Frederick Scalera, Assemblyman Gordon M. Johnson and Assemblyman Brian P. Stack.

“I'm sure most of you have heard a lot about politics and government from adults, the newspapers or television. You've heard how complicated the political system is and how it often feels as if it is impossible to get anything done,” Codey told the assembled students before signing the bill.

“Today the work of one student proves that, if you have an idea, if you get involved and if you advocate for your idea, you can make a difference. There are many ways to advocate. You can call or send letters to your Legislator's office. You can work with a group of people to make sure your ideas are heard. Or you can run for office, like we did,” Codey continued.

Senator Coniglio said: “Each year there are thousands of fires in New Jersey homes. A good portion of those fires are kitchen fires or caused by candles or cigarettes – the type of fires that can be put out with a fire extinguisher before major damage can occur. By making sure homeowners and tenants are equipped with the fire extinguishers necessary to fight these small fires, we can help prevent millions of dollars in damage and countless deaths each year.”

“Fire extinguishers are a cost-effective tool to help residents safely leave a burning building while waiting for firefighters to answer the alarm,” said Assemblyman Scalera, who also is deputy fire chief in Nutley. “By providing all new homeowner and tenants with a working fire extinguisher, we can ensure that these residents are prepared to protect themselves from the moment they step into their new home.”

“Single- and two-family homes are not required to have sprinkler systems like high-rise apartments,” said Assemblyman Johnson. “Requiring a fire extinguisher be part of a home transfer will close this gap that leaves many residents unprotected from fire.”

“Homeowners and tenants often are overwhelmed with a litany of tasks when they move into a new house,” said Assemblyman Stack. “This law will ensure that being able to protect themselves from a fire is not lost in the shuffle.”

The bill’s text can be found online by visiting the Legislature’s website, [www.njleg.state.nj.us/](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/), and conducting a “Bill Search” for S1294.