

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 15

WHEREAS, ensuring fiscal responsibility is among my highest priorities as Governor of the State of New Jersey and is directly related to my obligation to supervise the principal departments and agencies of State Government; and

WHEREAS, in order to address the current economic and fiscal emergency in New Jersey at a time of unprecedented economic crisis, all spending by independent State Boards, Commissions, Authorities and Agencies (hereinafter referred to as "State Authorities") must be scrutinized more closely than ever before; and

WHEREAS, those State Authorities have capital and operating budgets that collectively amount to billions of dollars of public funds annually, but operate without many of the safeguards applicable to other agencies of the Executive Branch of State government; and

WHEREAS, the State Authorities are part of the Executive Branch and thus are subject to the Governor's executive powers pursuant to Article V of the State Constitution; accordingly, it is especially vital in these times of unprecedented economic distress that these State Authorities employ the same safeguards that are standard practices in other parts of the Executive Branch; and

WHEREAS, the spending at certain State Authorities remains excessive and wasteful, necessitating my veto of agency actions that would have ratified or approved wasteful and extravagant spending; and

WHEREAS, a prime example of such wasteful and unnecessary spending is the practice of State Authorities hiring lobbyists and legislative agents at taxpayer and ratepayer expense to

lobby the Executive Branch, the State Legislature, and the federal government; and

WHEREAS, the concept of one part of State Government hiring a lobbyist or legislative agent to enhance communications with another part of State Government is precisely the type of wasteful and extravagant use of taxpayer funds that has instilled and reinforced the public's mistrust as to the manner in which limited and precious State dollars are spent; and

WHEREAS, recent news reports have documented instances of excessive and wasteful spending by State Authorities for out-of-state travel by Authority board members and employees; and

WHEREAS, several employees of State Authorities have secured employment contracts with lucrative termination clauses (sometimes referred to as "golden parachutes") that are especially abusive of the public trust during this time of economic difficulty and recession;

NOW THEREFORE, I, CHRIS CHRISTIE, Governor of the State of New Jersey, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the Statutes of this State, do hereby, ORDER and DIRECT:

1. No State Authority shall hire, enter into or renew any contract with any lobbyist or legislative agent, unless expressly authorized in writing in advance by the Governor's Office.

2. All existing contracts between State Authorities and lobbyists or legislative agents shall be terminated as soon as is legally permissible. If it is not possible to terminate said contract(s), all State Authorities are hereby prohibited from renewing such contracts upon expiration of the current contractual term(s).

3. All State Authority heads are directed immediately to identify all contracts between their State Authority and

lobbyists or legislative agents and provide a list and a copy of such contracts to the Governor's Office for review not later than March 1, 2010.

4. No State Authority shall approve any travel by any employee or Authority Board member in excess of two-hundred and fifty dollars (\$250.00) paid out of Authority funds unless approval is obtained from the Governor's Office prior to such travel. Any approved travel must be directly related to the employee's or the Board member's official State duties. Any travel costs in excess of the two-hundred and fifty dollar limit not approved as provided herein shall be borne by the employee or Board member personally and shall not be eligible for reimbursement.

5. No State Authority shall include any financial incentive relating to termination or separation from employment in employment contracts with its employees, unless expressly authorized in writing by the Governor's Office.

6. All existing contracts between State Authorities and employees that provide for financial compensation to the employee upon termination of the employment contract before the stated end date of said contract shall be terminated as soon as is legally permissible. If it is not possible to terminate said contract(s), all State Authorities are hereby prohibited from renewing same upon expiration of the contractual term.

7. All State Authority heads are directed immediately to identify all contracts between their Authority and its employees that contain provisions for financial compensation upon early termination or separation from employment and provide a list of same and a copy of such contracts to the Governor's Office for review not later than March 1, 2010.

8. The commissioner or head of each principal department in the Executive Branch (hereinafter referred to as "Cabinet

Member") is hereby directed to identify the State Authorities established in or allocated to such department and to provide a recommendation to the Governor's Office not later than May 15, 2010, regarding whether each such State Authority should continue to exist or be eliminated. With regard to each such State Authority that is recommended to continue in existence, each Cabinet Member shall indicate his or her recommendation regarding whether the positions on each such State Authority should be compensated or not and whether reimbursement for expenses should be permitted. Any recommendation to provide compensation or reimbursement of expenses shall include a detailed explanation in support of such recommendation.

9. This Order shall take effect immediately.

GIVEN, under my hand and seal this
23rd day of February,
Two Thousand and Ten, and
of the Independence of the
United States, the Two
Hundred and Thirty-Fourth.

/s/ Chris Christie
Governor

Attest:

/s/ Jeffrey S. Chiesa
Chief Counsel to the Governor