

FLOOR AMENDMENT STATEMENT: No

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE: No

VETO MESSAGE: No

GOVERNOR'S PRESS RELEASE ON SIGNING: Yes

FOLLOWING WERE PRINTED:

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REPORTS: No

HEARINGS: No

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES: Yes

Matt Arco. "Murphy signs bills passed in wake of Brennan rape claim." The Star-Ledger, (Newark, NJ), January 14, 2020: 003.

Rwh/cl

P.L. 2019, CHAPTER 347, *approved January 13, 2020*
Assembly, No. 5631

1 **AN ACT** concerning complaints related to equal employment
2 opportunity and amending N.J.S.11A:7-3.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6
7 1. N.J.S.11A:7-3 is amended to read as follows:

8 11A:7-3. The division shall develop, implement and administer
9 an equal employment opportunity and affirmative action program
10 for all State agencies. The program shall consider the particular
11 personnel requirements that are reasonably related to job
12 performance of each State agency. The director of the division
13 shall ensure that the affirmative action and equal employment goals
14 of each State agency for minorities, women, and persons with
15 disabilities shall be reasonably related to their population in the
16 relevant surrounding labor market areas. The director, in
17 accordance with applicable federal and State guidelines, shall:

18 a. Ensure each State agency's compliance with all laws and
19 rules relating to equal employment opportunity and seek correction
20 of discriminatory practices, policies and procedures;

21 b. Recommend appropriate sanctions for noncompliance to the
22 State Treasurer who, with the concurrence of the Governor, is
23 authorized to implement sanctions;

24 c. Review State personnel practices, policies, and procedures,
25 inclusive of recruitment, selection, and promotion, in order to
26 identify and eliminate artificial barriers to equal employment
27 opportunity;

28 d. Act as liaison with federal, State, and local enforcement
29 agencies;

30 e. Recommend appropriate legislation to the State Treasurer
31 and perform other actions deemed necessary by the State Treasurer
32 to implement this chapter; and

33 f. Provide, under rules adopted by the Department of the
34 Treasury, for review of equal employment complaints. Such rules
35 shall, at minimum, (1) require that each State agency create a
36 written record of each complaint received and provide a uniform
37 format and procedure for creating and maintaining that record; (2)
38 require that the State agency interview the person submitting the
39 complaint to determine the nature and scope of the complaint; and
40 (3) when the person submitting the complaint is the person against
41 whom the discrimination is alleged to have occurred, require that

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 the State agency notify that person as to whether an investigation
2 into the complaint will be conducted and if not, the basis for such a
3 determination.

4 (cf: P.L.2017, c.131, s.11)

5
6 2. The rules established pursuant to this act, P.L. ,
7 c. ,(C.)(pending before the Legislature as this bill), shall be
8 effective immediately upon filing with the Office of Administrative
9 Law and shall be effective for a period not to exceed 18 months,
10 and may, thereafter, be amended, adopted or readopted in
11 accordance with the provisions of the “Administrative Procedure
12 Act,” P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.).

13
14 3. This act shall take effect on the 60th day following
15 enactment.

16
17
18 STATEMENT

19
20 This bill specifies certain requirements that must be included in
21 the rules governing a State agency’s review of equal employment
22 and discrimination complaints.

23 Under the bill, the rules must, at minimum,

24 (1) require that each State agency create a written record of each
25 complaint received and provide a uniform format and procedure for
26 creating and maintaining that record;

27 (2) require that the State agency interview the person submitting
28 the complaint to determine the nature and scope of the complaint;
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30 (3) when the person who submitted the complaint is the person
31 against whom the discrimination is alleged to have occurred,
32 require that the State agency notify that person as to whether an
33 investigation into the complaint will be conducted and if not, the
34 basis for that determination.

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39 _____
40 Specifies certain requirements for State agency review of
complaint of workplace discrimination.

ASSEMBLY, No. 5631

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 17, 2019

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman ELIANA PINTOR MARIN

District 29 (Essex)

Assemblywoman NANCY F. MUNOZ

District 21 (Morris, Somerset and Union)

Assemblywoman NANCY J. PINKIN

District 18 (Middlesex)

Senator LORETTA WEINBERG

District 37 (Bergen)

Senator KRISTIN M. CORRADO

District 40 (Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:

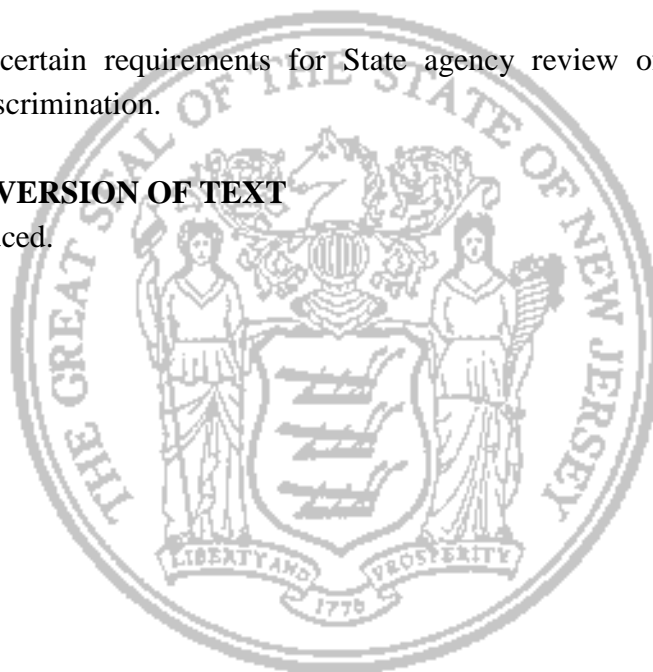
**Assemblywomen B.DeCroce, Schepisi, Vainieri Huttle, Murphy, Downey
and Senator Ruiz**

SYNOPSIS

Specifies certain requirements for State agency review of complaint of workplace discrimination.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/17/2019)

1 AN ACT concerning complaints related to equal employment
2 opportunity and amending N.J.S.11A:7-3.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

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7 1. N.J.S.11A:7-3 is amended to read as follows:

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12 performance of each State agency. The director of the division
13 shall ensure that the affirmative action and equal employment goals
14 of each State agency for minorities, women, and persons with
15 disabilities shall be reasonably related to their population in the
16 relevant surrounding labor market areas. The director, in
17 accordance with applicable federal and State guidelines, shall:

18 a. Ensure each State agency's compliance with all laws and
19 rules relating to equal employment opportunity and seek correction
20 of discriminatory practices, policies and procedures;

21 b. Recommend appropriate sanctions for noncompliance to the
22 State Treasurer who, with the concurrence of the Governor, is
23 authorized to implement sanctions;

24 c. Review State personnel practices, policies, and procedures,
25 inclusive of recruitment, selection, and promotion, in order to
26 identify and eliminate artificial barriers to equal employment
27 opportunity;

28 d. Act as liaison with federal, State, and local enforcement
29 agencies;

30 e. Recommend appropriate legislation to the State Treasurer
31 and perform other actions deemed necessary by the State Treasurer
32 to implement this chapter; and

33 f. Provide, under rules adopted by the Department of the
34 Treasury, for review of equal employment complaints. Such rules
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36 written record of each complaint received and provide a uniform
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39 complaint to determine the nature and scope of the complaint; and
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41 whom the discrimination is alleged to have occurred, require that
42 the State agency notify that person as to whether an investigation
43 into the complaint will be conducted and if not, the basis for such a
44 determination.

45 (cf: P.L.2017, c.131, s.11)

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not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

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2 c. , (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), shall be
3 effective immediately upon filing with the Office of Administrative
4 Law and shall be effective for a period not to exceed 18 months,
5 and may, thereafter, be amended, adopted or readopted in
6 accordance with the provisions of the “Administrative Procedure
7 Act,” P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.).

8
9 3. This act shall take effect on the 60th day following
10 enactment.

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14

STATEMENT

15 This bill specifies certain requirements that must be included in
16 the rules governing a State agency’s review of equal employment
17 and discrimination complaints.

18 Under the bill, the rules must, at minimum,

19 (1) require that each State agency create a written record of each
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27 require that the State agency notify that person as to whether an
28 investigation into the complaint will be conducted and if not, the
29 basis for that determination.

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 5631

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 18, 2019

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 5631.

This bill specifies certain requirements that must be included in the rules governing a State agency's review of equal employment and discrimination complaints.

Under the bill, the rules must, at minimum,

(1) require that each State agency create a written record of each complaint received and provide a uniform format and procedure for creating and maintaining that record;

(2) require that the State agency interview the person submitting the complaint to determine the nature and scope of the complaint; and

(3) when the person who submitted the complaint is the person against whom the discrimination is alleged to have occurred, require that the State agency notify that person as to whether an investigation into the complaint will be conducted and if not, the basis for that determination.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This bill is not certified as requiring a fiscal note.

SENATE STATE GOVERNMENT, WAGERING, TOURISM &
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 5631

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: NOVEMBER 18, 2019

The Senate State Government, Wagering, Tourism & Historic Preservation Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 5631.

This bill specifies certain requirements that must be included in the rules governing a State agency's review of equal employment and discrimination complaints.

Under the bill, the rules must, at minimum,

(1) require that each State agency create a written record of each complaint received and provide a uniform format and procedure for creating and maintaining that record;

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(3) when the person who submitted the complaint is the person against whom the discrimination is alleged to have occurred, require that the State agency notify that person as to whether an investigation into the complaint will be conducted and if not, the basis for that determination.

Assembly Bill No. 5631 is identical to Senate Bill No. 3982 of 2018-2019.

SENATE, No. 3982

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 20, 2019

Sponsored by:

Senator LORETTA WEINBERG

District 37 (Bergen)

Senator KRISTIN M. CORRADO

District 40 (Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senator Ruiz

SYNOPSIS

Specifies certain requirements for State agency review of complaint of workplace discrimination.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/25/2019)

S3982 WEINBERG, CORRADO

2

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2 opportunity and amending N.J.S.11A:7-3.

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3 immediately upon filing with the Office of Administrative Law and
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28 investigation into the complaint will be conducted and if not, the
29 basis for that determination.

SENATE STATE GOVERNMENT, WAGERING, TOURISM &
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 3982

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: NOVEMBER 18, 2019

The Senate State Government, Wagering, Tourism & Historic Preservation Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 3982.

This bill specifies certain requirements that must be included in the rules governing a State agency's review of equal employment and discrimination complaints.

Under the bill, the rules must, at minimum,

(1) require that each State agency create a written record of each complaint received and provide a uniform format and procedure for creating and maintaining that record;

(2) require that the State agency interview the person submitting the complaint to determine the nature and scope of the complaint; and

(3) when the person who submitted the complaint is the person against whom the discrimination is alleged to have occurred, require that the State agency notify that person as to whether an investigation into the complaint will be conducted and if not, the basis for that determination.

Senate Bill No. 3982 is identical to Assembly Bill No. 5631 of 2018-2019.

Governor Murphy Takes Action on Legislation

01/13/2020

TRENTON – Today, Governor Phil Murphy signed the following bills into law:

A268 (Kean, Egan, Holley/Singer, Gopal) - "P.I.C.K. Awareness Act"; authorizes issuance of special support recovery license plates.

A790 (Andrzejczak, Land, Mosquera, Mukherji, Downey, Zwicker, Mazzeo/Connors, Singleton) - "Combat to College Act"; grants priority course registration to military service members and veterans attending public institutions of higher education.

A791 (Andrzejczak, Land, Mosquera, Danielsen, Mukherji, Downey, Zwicker/Van Drew, Brown) - Requires institution of higher education to award appropriate credit for student's military service.

A1212 (McKeon, Gusciora, Vainieri Huttel/Sweeney, Smith, Bateman, Greenstein) - Clarifies intent of P.L.2007, c.340 regarding NJ's required participation in Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

A1305 (Greenwald/Rice) - Renames Mountainview Youth Correctional Facility as "William H. Fauver Youth Correctional Facility."

A1576 (Conaway, Giblin/Vitale) - Requires certain health care facilities to provide, and employees to receive, annual influenza vaccination.

A1582 (Conaway, Moriarty, Mosquera, Benson, Pinkin, Giblin, Quijano/Weinberg, Ruiz) - Establishes "Dietetics and Nutrition Licensing Act".

A1991 (Sumter, Munoz, Mukherji/Singer, Gordon) - Requires students at institutions of higher education to receive immunization for meningitis in accordance with recommendations of Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

A3101 (Egan Jones, Benson, Land/Singleton) - Increases minimum annual amounts for appropriation for certain arts, historical heritage, and tourism purposes from hotel and motel occupancy fee revenues.

[Copy of Statement](#)

A3160 (Lampitt, Giblin, Murphy/Beach) - Permits cosmetology and hairstyling school clinics to charge certain fees for services rendered to general public.

A3832 (Mukherji, McKnight, Chiaravalloti/Cryan, Stack) - Authorizes municipal tax levy through public question for certain purposes; clarifies ability of local government entities to issue non-recourse bonds; appropriates \$100,000.

A4493 (Pinkin, Conaway, Vainieri Huttel/Vitale) - Authorizes expedited partner therapy, under which sexual partners or patients diagnosed with sexually transmitted disease are treated without prior clinical examination.

A4608 (Zwicker, Downey/Weinberg, Kean) - " Applied Behavior Analyst Licensing Act."

A4710 (Lampitt, Zwicker, Vainieri Huttel/Beach,Turner) - "Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act"; establishes school district responsibilities in educating gifted and talented students.

A5037 (Pintor Marin, Speight, Vainieri Huttel/Andrzejczak, Greenstein) - Enhances penalties related to counterfeit drugs.

A5091 (McKeon, Vainieri Huttel, Pinkin/Pou, Singleton) - Establishes "Safeguarding Against Financial Exploitation Act."

A5263 (Tully, Armato/Corrado) - Requires four-year public institution of higher education to award college credits to firefighters for certain courses completed at county fire academies.

A5277 (DeAngelo, Houghtaling/Greenstein) - Eliminates term limits for members of State Board of Examiners of Master Plumbers and State Board of Examiners of Heating, Ventilating, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Contractors.

A5624 (Pintor Marin, Munoz, Lampitt/Weinberg, Corrado) - Requires that State employee serve as Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action officer for gubernatorial transitions.

A5625 (Pintor Marin, Munoz, Lampitt/Weinberg, Corrado) - Requires payment of expenses related to background investigations for certain gubernatorial transition positions.

A5628 (Pintor Marin, Munoz, McKnight/Weinberg, Corrado) - Requires Civil Service Commission establish standardize recordkeeping and retention requirements with regard to unclassified State employees.

[Copy of Statement](#)

A5631 (Pintor Marin, Munoz, Pinkin/Weinberg, Corrado) - Specifies certain requirements for State agency review of complaint of workplace discrimination.

[Copy of Statement](#)

A5632 (Pintor Marin, Munoz, Reynolds-Jackson/Weinberg) - Requires certain public employees receive additional training to manage harassment or discrimination complaints.

A5917 (Chiaravalloti, McKnight/Cunningham, Weinberg) - Expands DOH oversight of hospital finances.

A6007 (McKeon/Pou) - Requires insurers and insurance groups to submit corporate governance annual disclosure to DOBI Commissioner.

S463 (Singer, Greenstein/Dancer, Calabrese, DeAngelo) - Provides for voluntary contributions by taxpayers on gross income tax returns for Meals on Wheels.

S538 (Oroho, Stack/Wirths, Vaineri Huttie, Bucco) - Allows long term tax exemption extension for certain low-income housing.

S775 (Cunningham, Sacco/Sumter, Caride, Vainieri Huttie) - Establishes Tuition Aid Grant Study Commission to examine New Jersey's Tuition Aid Grant Program and make recommendations regarding improvements to program.

S778 (Cunningham, Kean/Quijano, Jasey, Pintor Marin) - Establishes Campus Sexual Assault Commission.

S1493 (Stack, Singleton/Quijano, Chaparro, Timberlake) - Prohibits landlords from requiring residential tenants to pay rent and other related charges through electronic funds transfer; requires landlords to provide receipts for cash payments.

S1508 (Turner, Singleton/Reynolds-Jackson, Sumter, Wimberly) - Eliminates motor vehicle surcharges following retirement of bonds and debts tied to surcharges.

S1834 (Ruiz, Cunningham/Quijano, Murphy) - Requires each public institution of higher education to post its budget on the institution's website.

S1953 (Oroho, Cruz-Perez/Space, Andrzejcack, Wirths) - Directs Dept. of Agriculture to authorize and advise food hubs.

S1966 (Sweeney, Singleton/Taliaferro) - Increases death benefit of active member of PFRS and SPRS to 50 percent of final compensation for surviving child or children.

S2527 (Ruiz, Turner/Lampitt, Quijano, Timberlake) - Requires Department of Agriculture to promote school meal programs.

S2533 (Greenstein, Cruz-Perez/Vainieri Huttie, Lopez, Timberlake) - Requires Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy to provide services to certain inmates.

S2898 (Madden, Sarlo/Murphy, Mosquera, Vainieri Huttie) - Establishes "New Jersey Fire and EMS Crisis Intervention Services" telephone hotline; provides funding for hotline through fire inspection fees and penalties.

S2980 (Ruiz/Lampitt, McKnight) - Provides that school district may not condition student enrollment in district on fact that MVC does not have name or address of parent or guardian on file.

S2982 (Ruiz/Lampitt, Mukherji, Lopez) - Clarifies that child may not be excluded from public school based on membership in protected category under "Law Against Discrimination" or immigration status.

S2998 (Ruiz/Freiman, Downey) - Requires creditors to make certain disclosures regarding collateral protection insurance to consumer debtors.

S3064 (Ruiz, Singleton/Armato, Conaway, Swain) - Establishes task force to develop State-wide plan to diversify apprenticeships.

S3066 (Ruiz, Singleton/Lampitt, Mukherji, Benson) - Creates five year High-Growth Industry Regional Apprenticeship Development Grant Pilot Program.

S3118 (Ruiz/Speight, Munoz, Tucker) - Establishes public awareness campaign to promote early conversations about advance care planning and end-of-life care.

S3124 (Stack/Mukherji) - Requires landlords to allow tenants to pay rent up to three business days after eviction order or lockout is executed and accept rent payments by any means.

S3206 (Pou, Cruz-Perez/Lopez, McKeon, Murphy) - Establishes "Unbanked and Underbanked Consumers Study Commission."

S3215 (Greenstein, Singleton/Zwicker, Mukherji, Swain) - Requires State to use 20-year time horizon and most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Assessment Report when calculating global warming potential to measure global warming impact of greenhouse gases.

S3246 (Sarlo, Singleton, Oroho, Bucco/Benson, Bucco, Freiman) - Establishes elective pass-through entity business alternative income tax and allows corresponding refundable gross income tax and corporation business tax credit.

S3327 (Ruiz, Cruz-Perez/Lopez, Timberlake) - Establishes Commission on Latino and Hispanic Heritage in DOE.

S3348 (Weinberg/Vainieri Huttle, McKnight) - Requires home health agencies and specialty pharmacies providing services related to bleeding episodes associated with hemophilia to comply with certain minimum practice standards.

S3528 (Scutari, Codey/Vainieri Huttle, Quijano, Kennedy) - Establishes process to obtain judgement of adoption for civil union partner or spouse of natural or legal parent of child when that person is named as parent on child's birth certificate.

S3574 (Scutari, Kean, Cryan/Carter, Kennedy, Freiman) - Requires NJT to conduct feasibility study on restoring one-seat ride to Manhattan on Raritan Valley Line.

Governor Murphy conditionally vetoed the following bills:

A2431 (Benson, Jimenez, DeCroce, Eustace/Weinberg, Kean) – Requires health insurers to provide plans that limit patient cost-sharing concerning certain prescription drug coverage.

[Copy of Statement](#)

A4978 (Timberlake, Zwicker, Vainieri Huttle/Greenstein, Cryan) – Prohibits online education services from using and disclosing certain information, engaging in targeted advertising, and requires deletion of certain information in certain circumstances.

[Copy of Statement](#)

S3920 (Pou/Wimberly, Sumter) – Concerns provision of energy to certain manufacturing facilities by providing exemptions to certain energy related taxes.

[Copy of Statement](#)

Governor Murphy absolute vetoed the following bill:

S4139 (Greenstein/Benson) - Makes Fiscal Year 2020 supplemental appropriation of \$250,000 to Rutgers University - New Brunswick for School of Dental Medicine - Special Care Treatment Center.

[Copy of Statement](#)

**GOVERNOR'S STATEMENT UPON SIGNING
ASSEMBLY BILL NOS. 5628 AND 5631**

Today, I am signing Assembly Bill No. 5628 and Assembly Bill No. 5631 into law. These two bills resulted from the work of the Legislative Select Oversight Committee ("LSOC"). Upon LSOC's formation, I pledged my Administration's full cooperation with this inquiry. My Administration kept this promise by turning over a substantial number of documents and allowing every member of my staff who was asked to testify at the LSOC's public hearings. Throughout the process, I noted that I was open to any and all recommendations about how to address these challenging issues. My only request throughout the process has been that discussions about reforms be centered around the experience of sexual assault survivors and include all branches of government, as I recognize that this is an issue where we all can and must do better.

Among other steps, the two bills that are the subject of this message require standardized recordkeeping procedures regarding recruitment, selection, hiring, and employment, and written records and notification procedures for equal employment complaints that are received. The establishment of these procedures can be valuable tools in our efforts to ensure adequate employment records and support those who may have experienced or witnessed discrimination or harassment, and I am pleased to enact these reforms into law.

These two bills were introduced on June 17, 2019, as part of a broader package, and passed the Assembly Appropriations Committee the next day. Because I took the Legislature at its word that it was not interested in scoring political points and only wanted to come up with reforms to protect sexual assault survivors, I assumed that it would agree wholeheartedly that its proposed reforms should apply across all of government. Therefore, on June 19, 2019, before the full Assembly had a chance to vote on the package, my staff sent over a series of amendments to both the Assembly and the Senate that would apply the reforms in the package to the Legislature, and the Judiciary, where applicable. Despite this good faith effort, the proposed amendments were not incorporated when the full Assembly passed the package of bills on June 20, 2019.

Nonetheless, I was heartened to hear legislators subsequently assure the public that the proposed reforms would apply to the Legislature as well. As the bills had not yet moved in the Senate, I assumed that this issue would be taken up again in the fall, and we would be able to make these important changes then.

In November, this same package of bills did appear on the agenda of the Senate State Government, Wagering, Tourism & Historic Preservation Committee (the "committee"). In advance of the committee's hearing, my staff sent over the same amendments that

it had sent in June, applying these bills to the Legislature and Judiciary, where applicable. Curiously, these amendments were ignored for a second time. In December, this package of bills was placed on the Senate Board List. Well in advance of the Senate's voting session, my staff again sent over the same package of amendments, applying these bills across State government. This was the third time that legislative staff received these amendments, and, for the third time, these amendments were not made.

It is deeply disappointing that the Legislature would develop reforms to protect victims of sexual harassment and assault and refuse to include themselves in the scope of these reforms. Notably, a bill passed by the Assembly earlier this Session and scheduled for final consideration by the Senate this afternoon, requires the Legislature to adopt and maintain a sexual harassment policy. The pending bill leaves it to each House of the Legislature and the Office of Legislative Services, separately or in a single policy adopted jointly, to determine the details of the harassment policy, providing only that the policy must prohibit sexual harassment, put in place appropriate preventative measures and include procedures for reporting, investigating and disciplining prohibited conduct. The policy is not required to include any of the rules governing review of complaints outlined in Assembly Bill No. 5631, nor must the policy address any of the record keeping, hiring, and retention practices outlined in Assembly Bill No. 5628.

The Legislature's failure to include themselves in these bills is even more troubling in the aftermath of the Star-Ledger's December 29, 2019 article, which reported numerous alleged instances of sexual misconduct by legislators and legislative staff, including sexual assaults and offers to exchange votes for sex. Some of these alleged incidents occurred in the State House or at legislative hearings. In light of these allegations, it is simply unacceptable that employees of the legislative branch of government will not benefit from the procedures and protections that are contained in the two bills I am signing today.

Unfortunately, this is indicative of a broader pattern where the Legislature refuses to abide by the same requirements that it imposes upon others. Just last week, Senate President Steve Sweeney was asked if he would support removing the legislative exemption from the Open Public Records Act ("OPRA"). He responded by saying, "No. There you go." The executive branch and local governments across this State faithfully abide by OPRA to ensure that the public has access to their records. The Legislature's unwillingness to reconsider its broad OPRA exemption, which has often been invoked to prevent the disclosure of settlements relating to sexual harassment and other misconduct, creates the perception that the Legislature would rather operate behind closed doors and avoid the public accountability that is expected of other parts of government.

While the Legislature may choose to play political games with these and other issues, I will not. I am signing these bills to reform our employment and reporting procedures in the executive branch, but I will not accept the notion that employees in the Legislature and the Judiciary should not receive these protections as a matter of law.

I urge the Legislature to consider the welfare of their own staff members and colleagues who deserve action and accountability on this issue. I would also urge the Legislature to remember the deeply disturbing stories shared in the Star-Ledger's article and the courage and risk it took to reveal them. These repulsive incidents are not demonstrative of the New Jersey we are working towards together. I implore the Legislature to gather its courage and integrity and send me a bill that will impose the requirements contained in Assembly Bill No. 5631 and Assembly Bill No. 5628 on both the legislative and judicial branches, where appropriate.

If we do not ensure that these reforms apply across the entirety of government, we will not only fail our colleagues who would directly benefit from these reforms, but we will also miss an opportunity to demonstrate to the next generation that all of government is committed to tackling these issues. Until that commitment is apparent and we act to change the culture in Trenton, many leaders of tomorrow will no longer consider entering into public service, and we risk losing their talent, perspective, and brilliance.

I regret that the Legislature has to be publicly pressured into doing the right thing, but I am as committed as ever to fighting Trenton's broken political culture. The residents of New Jersey deserve better.

Date: January 13, 2020

/s/ Philip D. Murphy

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Kate McDonnell

Deputy Chief Counsel to the Governor