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# THIS WEEK IN TRENTON

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**May 7, 2010**

## **Christie Nominates Patterson to Serve on Supreme Court**

Governor Chris Christie this week nominated Anne Murray Patterson to become an associate justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court. In selecting Patterson, Governor Christie decided not to re-appoint Associate Justice John E. Wallace, Jr., whose seven-year initial appointment expires on May 20.

Patterson, 51, of Mendham Township in Morris County, is a partner with the law firm Riker, Danzig, Scherer, Hyland & Perretti, LLP, of Morristown. There she practices primarily in the areas of product liability and commercial litigation in state and federal courts, class actions involving product liability and pharmaceutical pricing, intellectual property litigation, restrictive covenant litigation, closely held corporation litigation and appeals.

Patterson has been a member of the New Jersey bar for 27 years and has practiced before the state's Supreme Court, appellate and trial courts. In 1989 and 1990, Patterson served as a Deputy Attorney General and Special Assistant to then-New Jersey Attorney General Peter N. Perretti, Jr.

Patterson, who was born in Trenton and is a lifelong New Jerseyan, graduated Magna Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Dartmouth College in 1980, and received her law degree from Cornell Law School in 1983. She is married to James E. Patterson, an attorney with the law firm Graham Curtin of Morristown, where he specializes in labor and employment law.

Senate President Stephen Sweeney, a strong supporter of Justice Wallace, immediately expressed his disappointment at the Governor's decision not to re-appoint Justice Wallace and said that he will not authorize the Senate Judiciary Committee to consider Patterson's nomination.

## **Christie Creates New Jersey Higher Education Task Force**

Governor Chris Christie today signed Executive Order #26 establishing the New Jersey Higher Education Task Force. The Task Force will be chaired by former Governor Thomas H. Kean and will study the key issues and impediments facing the State's higher education institutions.

The new Task Force will consider a variety of factors in developing their recommendations for reform, such as:

- \* Governance structure and inter-relationship with State government
- \* Effectiveness of public / private partnerships among institutions
- \* Capital investment needs and mechanisms for securing capital
- \* Effective use and promotion of resources
- \* Relationship between county colleges and other institutions
- \* Relationship with State workforce needs
- \* Accessibility and affordability of institutions, including availability of tuition assistance
- \* Methods for distributing direct state aid
- \* Effects of State-imposed regulations and mandates
- \* Methods used for training teachers and the role of higher education institutions
- \* Review of financial disclosure requirements for governing boards and Presidents

The Task Force will consist of up to seven members, all named by the Governor. Also named to the Task Force today were Dr. George Pruitt, President of Thomas Edison State College; John McGoldrick, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Association of State Colleges and Universities and Peggy Howard, Vice President of Administration, Drew University.

A final report with recommendations is due to Governor Christie no later than December 1, 2010 at which time the term of the Task Force will expire.

### **Legislative Calendar**

This week the Assembly held Group A and B Committee meetings on May 6. The Assembly Budget Committee reviewed the budgets of the Department of Human Services, the Department of Corrections/State Parole Board, the Department of State, the Judiciary, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Public Advocate. The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reviewed the budgets of the Department of Law and Public Safety, the Judiciary, the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Treasury and Interdepartmental Accounts. Next week the Senate will hold Group 1 and 2 Committee meetings on May 10 and Group 3 and 4 Committee meetings on May 13. The Assembly will hold Group C and D Committee meetings on May 13.