
THIS WEEK IN TRENTON



PUBLIC STRATEGIES IMPACT
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Christie Launches Choose New Jersey

Governor Chris Christie and Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno this week announced the launch of Choose New Jersey, a non-profit corporation designed to market, promote and facilitate business attraction, expansion and retention in the State.

Choose New Jersey will be chaired by Dennis M. Bone, President of Verizon New Jersey. It will market incentive programs to attract and retain job creators and provide policy recommendations to make New Jersey a home for growth. At their first meeting, the board of Choose New Jersey will constitute their organizational structure. They will also launch the search for a permanent CEO to lead Choose New Jersey.

In addition to Bone, the initial governing board members of Choose New Jersey are Joe Colalillo, President, Wakefern Food Corporation; Don Correll, CEO and President, American Water; Robert H. Doherty, State President, Bank of America Merrill Lynch; Laurence M. Downes, Chairman and CEO, New Jersey Resources; Bernard Flynn, President and CEO, NJM Insurance Group; Edward Graham, President and CEO, South Jersey Industries; Reverend M. William Howard, Pastor, Bethany Baptist Church; Robert J. Iacullo, President and COO, United Water; Bob Hugin, Celgene President and COO (representing the Healthcare Institute of New Jersey); Ralph Izzo, Chairman and CEO, Public Service Electric and Gas; Vincent Maione, President, Atlantic City Electric; William J. Marino, Chairman and CEO, Horizon Blue Cross / Blue Shield of New Jersey; Raymond M. Pocino, Vice President and Eastern Regional Manager, Laborers International Union of North America; Kevin Rigby, Vice President Public Affairs, Novartis; and John R. Strangefeld, Jr., Chairman and CEO, Prudential Financial, Inc.

Women's Legislative Caucus to Hold First Hearing Next Week

The newly formed, bipartisan, bicameral Women's Legislative Caucus will hold a hearing next week to explore the increasing lack of access to healthcare services for women.

The Women's Legislative Caucus was conceived as a means to facilitate a productive dialogue among the 34 female members of the legislature, spanning both parties and both houses, in order to address issues that directly impact women, and their children and families. The caucus is chaired by Senators Loretta Weinberg and Diane Allen and Assemblywomen L. Grace Spencer and Amy Handlin.

The hearing will explore, among other things, the impediments to practicing medicine in New Jersey; the disparities in access to care among the different regions of New Jersey; whether the

state is optimizing available federal funding for graduate medical education; the competitiveness of New Jersey's Medicaid reimbursement rates; and the impact that the new federal healthcare reform law may have on health services in New Jersey. Expected to testify at the hearing are: Dr. Sharon Mass of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists / NJ Section; Dr. Shelley Greenman of the American College of Emergency Physicians / NJ Chapter; Deborah Briggs, Vice President of the New Jersey Council of Teaching Hospitals; Dr. Denise Rodgers, Provost & Executive Vice President of UMDNJ; Geri L. Dickson, Ph.D., R.N., Executive Director of the New Jersey Collaborating Center for Nursing of Rutgers College; Molly Walker from the Horizon Health Center in Jersey City, representing the NJ Primary Care Association; Lonnie Morris, CNM, President of the NJ Chapter of the American College of Nurse Midwives; Georgia Blair, CNM, MSN, Secretary of the NJ Chapter of the American College of Nurse Midwives; and Dina Aurichio of the NJ Chapter of Certified Nurse Midwives.

Senate Legislative Oversight Committee Holds Hearing on Proposed Merger of “Watchdog Agencies”

The Senate Legislative Oversight Committee met this week to hear testimony from representatives of the Office of the State Comptroller, the Office of the State Commission of Investigation, the Office of the Inspector General and the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General regarding the Governor's proposal to consolidate the functions of the four independent government watchdog agencies. Under the proposal, the SCI, the Office of Inspector General and the Office of the Medicaid Inspector General would all become part of the Comptroller's Office. The Governor's proposal predicts savings of \$3.5 million, realized entirely by cutting the funding for the SCI.

Senate Majority Leader Barbara Buono, who also serves as Chair of the Oversight Committee, voiced her strong opposition to the proposed merger of the State Commission of Investigation into the Comptroller's Office. The SCI is part of the Legislative branch of government while the Comptroller is a quasi independent agency within the Executive branch. SCI Chairman W. Cary Edwards, a former state attorney general, also spoke in opposition to the proposal.

The committee also heard testimony, from invited guests, regarding a proposal to create an elected comptroller position, which Governor Christie supports.

Legislative Calendar

This week Senate Group 3 and 4 Committees met. Next week the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizen's Committee will meet on June 7 and the Senate will hold a voting session on June 10. Assembly Group A and B Committees will also meet on June 10.