

May 11, 2017

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 2353

To the General Assembly:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Assembly Bill No. 2353 with my recommendations for reconsideration.

This bill would require the establishment and implementation of a plan for the expanded testing of student-athletes for steroids and performance enhancing drugs ("PEDs") and would institute other measures designed to prevent their use, such as training programs and the dissemination of information designed to increase awareness about the potential health risks of steroid-use. In August 2015, I conditionally vetoed an identical bill, Senate Bill 1857, because the bill contained an unaccounted-for supplemental appropriation outside of the annual appropriations process.

As I previously stated in 2015, I support the intention of this bill to deter the prevalence of steroid-use in student athletics and raise awareness of the dangers associated with the use of steroid and PEDs. However, I am bewildered that the Legislature has returned the same bill with the same supplemental appropriation I rejected just 18 months ago. As I have stated many times since taking office, appropriations should be considered in the context of negotiating a balanced budget, not through piece meal legislation.

Also, I believe that this program should not be administered by the NJSIAA. This is a public health issue, and, as such, should be administered by the New Jersey Department of Health. That conversion should be made in this bill.

Recently, I proposed my eighth budget that appropriately balances spending priorities against available resources. I urge the Legislature to make similar responsible choices in

developing the budget for Fiscal Year 2018 if it chooses to include the funding proposed in the bill.

Accordingly, I herewith return Assembly Bill No. 2353 and recommend that it be amended as follows:

<u>Page 2, Title, Line 2:</u>	After "P.L.1987, c.389," insert "and"
<u>Page 2, Title, Lines 2-3:</u>	Delete "chapters 11 and" and insert "chapter"
<u>Page 2, Title, Lines 3-4:</u>	Delete ", and making an appropriation"
<u>Page 2, Section 1, Lines 9-10:</u>	Delete "New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association" and insert "Department of Health"
<u>Page 3, Section 4, Lines 25-26:</u>	Delete "New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association" and insert "Department of Health"
<u>Page 3, Section 4, Line 37:</u>	Delete "association" and insert "Department of Health"
<u>Page 3, Section 5, Lines 40-41:</u>	Delete "New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association" and insert "Department of Health"
<u>Page 3, Section 5, Line 44:</u>	Delete "association" and insert "Department of Health"
<u>Page 3, Section 5, Line 45:</u>	Delete "association" and insert "Department of Health"
<u>Page 6, Section 12, Lines 13-18:</u>	Delete in their entirety
<u>Page 6, Section 13, Line 20:</u>	Delete "13." and insert "12."

Respectfully,

/s/ Chris Christie

Governor

[seal]

Attest:

/s/ Gregory L. Acquaviva

Chief Counsel to the Governor