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NJ Taxpayers Alliance Applauds Senator Sweeney's Bold Proposal on Public Health Benefits Reform

Group encourages meaningful reform proposal be signed into law before the legislature finalizes state budget

Randolph, New Jersey – The New Jersey Taxpayers Alliance (NJTA) today applauded Senate President Stephen Sweeney for his proposal to reform public employee health benefits. It is among the boldest reform plans to be introduced by a legislator, and would bring greater accountability between public workers and the taxpayers, who currently pay a \$4 billion bill for the public benefits.

“Governor Christie and legislative leaders agree on the need to reform our system of providing health care to public workers,” said NJTA President Jerry Cantrell. “While the governor’s plan is the most aggressive, both his and Senate President Sweeney’s are an improvement over the status quo, and show a commitment to genuine reform and that is welcome news to taxpayers.”

The NJTA also urged the legislature to pass meaningful health benefits reform before approving this year’s budget. The opportunity for immediate savings, even if they are small in the first year, should not be forgone because of special interest pressure. The Alliance notes that the plans currently put forth reflect changes that have been discussed for at least the last five years, and the legislature is well versed on the issue.

“A meaningful reform plan will take years before taxpayers fully reap the benefits of it. The fact this year’s savings may not be substantial does not remove any urgency from this process. Delaying reform another year lessens benefits for taxpayers, lessens certainty for public workers and further inflates our long-term unfunded liability. Passing major reform during the budget process that will formally begin next week is crucial to New Jersey’s families,” Cantrell concluded.

About the New Jersey Taxpayers Alliance

The New Jersey Taxpayers Alliance is a non-partisan, grass-roots organization dedicated to achieving real and sustainable tax reform in New Jersey. Comprised primarily of civic, business and professional associations, the Alliance's mission is to educate and inform New Jersey taxpayers about sound fiscal policy; provide state policymakers with objective, non-partisan research about the impact of specific tax, regulatory and spending policies; and advocate for the adoption of rational public fiscal policy as it relates to individuals, non-profit organizations, small businesses and corporations.

NJTA/Alliance Members:

- ◆ Altria
- ◆ Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey
- ◆ Excellent Education for Everyone
- ◆ GRAND Institute
- ◆ National Taxpayers Union (Wash, DC)
- ◆ New Jersey Gasoline – C-Store – Automotive Association
- ◆ New Jersey Retail Merchants Association
- ◆ New Jersey Restaurant Association
- ◆ New Jersey Society of Certified Public Accountants
- ◆ New Jersey Taxpayers Association

Partners:

- ◆ The Tax Foundation – (Wash, DC)
- ◆ National Federation of Independent Businesses, NJ
- ◆ NJ Lawsuit Reform Alliance
- ◆ NJ Business and Industry Association
- ◆ Princeton Public Affairs
- ◆ Mercatus Center at George Mason University

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