

**LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS REPORT**  
**NEW JERSEY LICENSED BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION**  
**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 2010**  
**ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY**

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### **The Mood in Trenton**

Although the Legislature is technically in recess pending the budget hearing, there is still plenty of action and arguments going on under the Gold Dome.

With Governor's Christie's brave, gutsy budget speech where he said, in essence, "that New Jersey has lived far too long off borrowed money, uncontrolled spending and high taxes." The Governor wanted it stopped, and he put forward a plan for close the \$10.7 billion budget shortfall which included:

- Budget cuts in every state department;
- Downsizing the number of state employees;
- Cuts for municipal aid;
- Cuts for school districts;
- Cuts for New Jersey Transit;
- Cut for the UEZ program – and many, many more

### **The Response**

You can imagine the outcry from various groups, especially school boards, the NJEA, municipal officials. In fact, while most arguments are typical and those we have heard before, there was one really unbelievable response from the Bergen County Teachers Association. It was an open letter blasting the Governor and ending with a "prayer" that the "Governor be Taken Away like many actors who have passed on this year."

However, many school boards have responded to the Governor by seeking to re-negotiate their teacher contracts and seeing how they can reduce spending. The same is happening in municipalities throughout the state,

New Jersey Transit immediately announced they were going to increase fares, but when they started getting a lot of "flack" they are now backing down and willing to "talk about it".

No one wants to see programs cut, but someone had to take the bull by the horns and say, "enough of this addictive spending behavior"! Looks like Christie is the man and does not plan to back down!

### **Congressman Bobby Franks**

Former New Jersey Legislator and Member of Congress recently passed away at a far too young age. However, he leaves a rich and enviable legacy of that a public servant should

be. He was a kind and distinguished man who cared so much about New Jersey and “the greater good”, He demonstrated so well what it meant to be a great public servant. He will be greatly missed. NLBA offers their sincere sympathies and condolences to his wife and family.

**Legislation Recently Introduced**

- A192 – decreases sales tax from 7 – 6%;
- A-306 Criminalizes fifth or subsequent DUI offense
- A-496 Provides sales tax exemption for good made and sold on property;
- Exempts “testing” of cigarettes from NJ Smoke Free Act – A-461