

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 26

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey ("State") enjoys the benefits of 31 public and 32 independent institutions of higher education throughout the State providing a broad array of undergraduate and graduate programs to over 429,000 students; and

WHEREAS, although many of the State's higher education institutions and their administrators, educators, and students have distinguished themselves through their achievements, the State's higher education system has not met its full potential or kept pace with the higher education systems in some other states; and

WHEREAS, the State's higher education institutions have been saddled with numerous regulations, many of which are regarded by education experts as outmoded, which have hampered the ability of the State's higher education institutions to serve the State's full education needs and have driven up both administrative costs and the cost of tuition; and

WHEREAS, the State's higher education institutions have been further challenged by the lack of State capital investment over the past twenty (20) years, which has caused the State's higher education institutions to borrow funds to meet their capital investment needs, making them among the most heavily debt-burdened education institutions in the nation; and

WHEREAS, as a result of these trends and practices over the past two decades, New Jersey's higher education institutions have failed to attract many of the State's best and brightest students as evidenced by the fact that New Jersey loses more of

its students to out-of-state colleges and universities than any other state in the nation; and

WHEREAS, this administration believes that New Jersey's long-term economic prosperity is tied to a robust system of higher education, which requires, among other things, a plan for capital investment to support the institutions' ability to keep pace with the demands of the modern world and to attract external funding to the State; and

WHEREAS, this administration is committed to ensuring that New Jersey's institutions of higher education are operating at their maximum potential, making the most effective and efficient use of available resources; and

WHEREAS, in light of the current fiscal emergency, the challenges confronting the system of higher education in New Jersey, and the recently enacted statute creating the new position of Secretary of Higher Education, a Task Force on Higher Education is necessary to assist in identifying challenges faced by these institutions, as well as to offer recommendations to further the quality and success of these institutions and the overall system of higher education in this State; and

WHEREAS, at the same time the Task Force is studying the important issues facing the higher education system in the State, the administration will be seeking to bring immediate relief through legislation to empower the higher education institutions to better control their costs through collective bargaining, risk management and civil service reforms, which will ultimately drive down the cost of tuition;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, CHRIS CHRISTIE, Governor of the State of New Jersey, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the

Constitution and by the Statutes of this State, do hereby ORDER and DIRECT:

1. There is hereby created a New Jersey Higher Education Task Force, hereinafter referred to as the "Task Force."

2. The Task Force shall consist of up to seven (7) members appointed by the Governor who shall serve at his pleasure. The Governor shall select a chairperson from among the members of the Task Force. The Task Force shall consist of individuals from both inside and outside government who have knowledge or expertise in the areas of higher education policy or administration, economic development, and related areas. All members of the Task Force shall serve without compensation. The Task Force shall organize as soon as practicable after the appointment of its members.

3. The Task Force is charged with developing recommendations for the Governor concerning the State's higher education system. In particular, the Task Force shall consider and make recommendations to improve the overall quality and effectiveness of the State's higher education system. In developing its recommendations, the Task Force shall specifically consider the following issues: (a) the appropriate governance structure of the State's higher education institutions and the inter-relationship between these institutions and the State government; (b) the effective use of "public-private partnerships" among the institutions; (c) the need for capital investment in the institutions, and mechanisms for securing capital; (d) the current mission statements of the State's higher education institutions, and whether the resources of the State's higher education institutions are being effectively utilized and promoted; (e) the relationship

between the county colleges and other institutions of higher education; (f) the relationship between the higher education institutions and the State's workforce needs; (g) the accessibility and affordability of the State's institutions of higher education, including the availability of tuition assistance; (h) the methods for distributing direct State aid and other financial support for higher education; (i) the effects of State-imposed regulations and mandates on the State's institutions of higher education; (j) the methods currently utilized for training teachers in this State and the role of higher education institutions in this process; and (k) such other matters as may be referred to the Task Force by the Governor.

4. The Task Force shall also review the current bifurcated financial disclosure requirements in the higher education community wherein Presidents of the State Colleges and Universities file financial disclosure statements, while the members of the governing boards of the State Colleges and Universities file separate conflict of interest forms. The Task Force shall provide recommendations about the appropriate level and content of financial disclosure. Given the Task Force's consideration of this issue, members of the governing boards of the State Colleges and Universities shall not be required to file financial disclosure statements pursuant Executive Order No. 24 in the 2010 calendar year, but still shall be required to file the conflict of interest forms with the State Ethics Commission.

5. The Governor's office shall provide staff support to the Task Force. The Task Force shall be authorized to call upon any department, office, division, or agency of this State

to supply it with any information, personnel, or other assistance available as the Task Force deems necessary to discharge its duties under this Order. Each department, office, division, and agency of this State is hereby required, to the extent not inconsistent with law, to cooperate fully with the Task Force within the limits of its statutory authority and to furnish the Task Force with such assistance on as timely a basis as is necessary to accomplish the purposes of this Order. The Task Force may consult with experts or other knowledgeable individuals in the public or private sector on any aspect of its mission, including but not limited to the Commission on Higher Education, the Committee Chairs and Members of the Senate and Assembly Education Committees of the State Legislature, and the leaders of the higher education institutions.

6. In formulating its recommendations pursuant to this Order, the Task Force may elicit public input from individuals, members of institutions of higher education, organizations, community groups, and other interested parties.

7. The Task Force may report to the Governor from time to time and shall issue a final report to the Governor setting forth the Task Force's recommendations pursuant to this Order no later than December 1, 2010. The Task Force shall expire upon the issuance of its final report.

8. The final report of the Task Force shall be provided to the Legislature and shall be made available to the public.

9. This Order shall take effect immediately.

GIVEN, under my hand and seal this
7th day of May ,
Two Thousand and Ten, and
of the Independence of the
United States, the Two
Hundred and Thirty-Fourth.

/s/ Chris Christie

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Jeffrey S. Chiesa

Chief Counsel to the Governor