

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 1455

To the General Assembly:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Assembly Bill No. 1455 with my recommendations for reconsideration.

This bill renames the "County Identification Cards for Gold Star Parents Act" the "County Identification Cards for Gold Star Families Act" and expands identification card eligibility beyond parents, legal guardians, or other legal custodians to include additional close family members of service members who have paid the ultimate sacrifice while on active duty. These identification cards provide a small, yet meaningful, token of appreciation for the hardships faced by families of these service members by enabling family members to easily identify themselves in order to receive discounts and other courtesies extended to military families. I commend the bill's sponsors for recognizing the important roles these family members play alongside the great men and women of our Armed Forces and for rightly seeking to expand the program to include the spouses, civil union and domestic partners, and children of service members.

I am advised, however, that this bill inadvertently omits children whose legal guardian or custodian died in the line of active duty from the definition of "Gold Star Family Member." In close collaboration with the bill's sponsors, I am therefore recommending minor revisions clarifying that the program extends to all children to whom a Gold Star service member was a parent, a legal guardian, or other legal custodian. I look forward to signing this bill into law following the Legislature's adoption of this correction.

Therefore, I herewith return Assembly Bill No. 1455 and recommend that it be amended as follows:

Page 2, Section 2, Lines 18-20: Delete ", whether of the whole or half blood or by adoption, as applicable, a spouse, domestic partner, partner in a civil union," and insert "a"

Page 2, Section 2, Lines 21-22: Delete ", or child" and insert "related by blood or by law to, or a spouse, domestic partner, or partner in a civil union"

Page 2, Section 2, Line 22: Before "a" insert ","

Page 2, Section 2, Line 23: After "States" insert ", or a child to whom the member was a parent, legal guardian or other legal custodian, whether related by blood or by law"

Respectfully,

[seal]

/s/ Philip D. Murphy

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Parimal Garg

Chief Counsel to the Governor