

June 30, 2008

The Honorable Jon S. Corzine
State House
Trenton, NJ 08625

Via hand carry

Re: request to Veto the “Permit Extension Act” A2867[2R]/S1919[2R]

Dear Governor Corzine:

On behalf of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER), I am writing to request that you issue a **Veto** of “**The Permit Extension Act**” which passed both houses on June 23, 2008. PEER is a national support group for professionals in environmental agencies that seek enforcement of environmental laws and ethics.

The premises and provisions of the bill are fatally flawed. These flaws cannot be corrected by the series of narrowing amendments negotiated by Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Lisa P. Jackson, or the issuance of a Conditional Veto on your part.

The bill provides no economic stimulus whatsoever, or other valid economic relief for the national economic recession and collapse of the housing market, the purported justifications for the legislation. As such, the bill represents as cruel hoax upon New Jersey residents suffering economic hardship and losing their homes.

The bill would apply to an unknown universe of thousands of DEP permits and municipal approvals. It is simply reckless to enact legislation whose impacts have not been even crudely analyzed.

Implementation of the bill would undermine environmental protection by exempting prior approvals from changes in environmental standards and community preferences reflected

in municipal land use planning and zoning. This is a fatal blow to core principles of environmental and land use law. Principles known as “time of decision” and “technology forcing” seek to assure that technology and markets adapt to meet changing environmental laws and standards that have evolved to meet changing conditions and new scientific knowledge, and that economic activities reflect those changes,

The bill would frustrate the ability of New Jersey to implement and meet the emission reduction goals of your signal accomplishment, *The Global Warming Response Act*. For example, thousands of projects would be exempt from any new energy conservation, energy efficiency, building codes, or other requirements to install renewable energy. This alone is sufficient policy grounds to kill this bill.

The amendments that carve out of the Highlands, Pinelands, and "environmentally sensitive areas" under the State Plan would sacrifice urban areas and result in *de jure* and *de facto* differential and unequal protection of urban New Jersey. This would violate fundamental principles of environmental justice. As succinctly stated by South Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance Co-Chair Roy Jones:

“Separate and unequal ... dates back to slavery” (Asbury Park Press, June 26, 2008).

We strongly urge you to veto this bill and uphold your constitutional obligation as Governor of all people of New Jersey, urban, suburban and rural, and not provide favors to special interests.

Sincerely,

Bill Wolfe, Director