

**GOVERNOR'S STATEMENT UPON SIGNING
ASSEMBLY BILL No. 3371**

Assembly Bill No. 3371, which I have signed today, prohibits individuals who are licensed to provide professional counseling under Title 45 of the New Jersey statutes from attempting to change a minor's sexual orientation.

At the outset of this debate, I expressed my concerns about government limiting parental choice on the care and treatment of their own children. I still have those concerns. Government should tread carefully into this area and I do so here reluctantly. I have scrutinized this piece of legislation with that concern in mind.

However, I also believe that on issues of medical treatment for children we must look to experts in the field to determine the relative risks and rewards. The American Psychological Association has found that efforts to change sexual orientation can pose critical health risks including, but not limited to, depression, substance abuse, social withdrawal, decreased self-esteem and suicidal thoughts.

I believe that exposing children to these health risks without clear evidence of benefits that outweigh these serious risks is not appropriate. Based upon this analysis, I sign this bill into law.

Date: 8/19/13

/s/ Chris Christie

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Charles B. McKenna

Chief Counsel to the Governor

