

**ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 4476
(First Reprint)**

To the General Assembly:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Assembly Bill No. 4476 (First Reprint) with my recommendations for reconsideration.

Current law generally prohibits the establishment of new surgical practices and ambulatory care facilities in this State, subject to limited exceptions. Among those exceptions is a facility owned by a hospital or medical school. This bill would narrow that exemption to apply only if the parent hospital or medical school is located in New Jersey, unless the application for the new facility was submitted to the Department of Health prior to March 1, 2015.

While I believe it is important to protect the ability of our hospitals to provide care to our citizens, I am concerned about enacting policies that would encumber opportunities for healthcare investment and job growth, inhibit appropriate competition, and restrict patient access to care. Nevertheless, I also recognize that, in an era of transformation in the healthcare marketplace, hospitals, which are subject to additional regulatory restrictions and obligations, face added competition from facilities that are not bound by the same responsibilities.

Rather than retroactively cutting off applicants, I believe that a more prudent course of action would be to establish a predictable timeline that gives appropriate notice to the regulated community. As such, I recommend amending the applicability of the bill to match the date of enactment.

Accordingly, I herewith return Assembly Bill No. 4476
(First Reprint) and recommend that it be amended as follows:

Page 6, Section 1, Line 7: Delete "as of March 1, 2015"
and insert "on or before the
effective date of this act"

Page 6, Section 1, Line 9: Delete "March 1, 2015" and
insert "the effective date of
this act"

Page 6, Section 1, Line 10: Delete ","

[seal]

Respectfully,

/s/ Chris Christie

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Scott A. Coffina

Senior Deputy Chief Counsel to the Governor