

STATE HOUSE NEWS - APRIL 2008

A monthly recap for GluckWalrath's government and public relations partners.

PAID FAMILY LEAVE

Governor Jon Corzine will likely sign into law, legislation that will provide Paid Family Leave (PFL) benefits to workers caring for sick family members, newborns, or newly adopted children. New Jersey will shortly become only the third state in the nation to authorize up to six weeks of paid family leave during any twelve-month period. Employees will receive two-thirds of their weekly salary up to \$524.00, but must first exhaust maternity and disability leave benefits under certain circumstances, and use at least two weeks of sick leave and vacation time. To finance this initiative, the law will assess an additional tax on that portion of an employee's wages subject to the State Temporary Disabilities Tax (TDI). This tax will equal 0.14% beginning on January 1, 2009 and will increase to 0.18% in January of 2010. Employees may begin using PFL benefits on July 1, 2009.

CASINO SMOKING BAN

On April 9th, the Atlantic City Council voted unanimously to ban smoking on all casino floors within the City. The Council's decision will amend the City's partial smoking ban; and require casino industry officials to construct separately ventilated and enclosed smoking rooms by October 15, 2008. Council members are likely to vote on the measure for final passage at its next meeting later this month. The Council's decision will also supplement the "New Jersey Smoke-Free Air Act," which prohibits smoking in most indoor public facilities, but provides certain exceptions to casinos and casino simulcasting facilities.

REBATE CHECKS

Assembly Speaker Joseph J. Roberts D-5, recently called for converting the State's property tax rebates into direct income tax credits. Roberts noted that such a measure could save significant taxpayer dollars as it costs the State approximately \$10.0 million to process the rebate checks and another \$44.0 million in short term borrowing costs to finance the rebates. Close to 2.3 million homeowners and tenants will receive rebates in 2008. Those with incomes under \$100,000.00 will receive an average rebate check of \$1,115.00; and those with incomes between \$100,001.00 and \$150,000.00 will receive an average rebate check of \$665.00. Those with incomes over \$150,000.00 are out of luck.

STATE HOUSE TRIVIA

Did you know that New Jersey was the first state to ratify the Bill of Rights?

The Firm is pleased to welcome the City of Atlantic City as its newest government relations client.