



For Immediate Release:

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Photo available at the link below.

<http://www.nj.gov/governor/news/photos/2008/eventphotos/200812/20081212/EconomicAssis119.JPG>

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Governor Signs Legislation Directing \$10Million to NJ SHARES

December 13, 2008, Hamilton, NJ. Recognizing the hardships on main street this year, Governor Corzine signed a bill that will provide \$10 million in assistance to NJ SHARES. The program assists New Jersey residents who cannot afford their heating bills and do not qualify for the Federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. In addition to expanding energy bill payment assistance to residents in need, the bill also increases aid to food banks statewide; and promotes mortgage foreclosure assistance.

“We are very grateful to Governor Corzine and the legislature for their recognition of the crisis facing thousands of households across our state,” said Jim Jacob, executive director of NJ SHARES. “This bill will provide direct and meaningful assistance to families in crisis and will also allow NJ SHARES to assist deliverable fuel customers for the first time. NJ SHARES, LIHEAP and the NJ Universal Service Fund provide a safety-net for our neighbors in need.”

Governor Corzine signed bill A3374/S1 after his AARP Teletown Hall meeting at the Bernice Muha Senior Center in Hamilton yesterday, commenting, “In New Jersey, we've long maintained the progressive ideal that the disadvantaged, the vulnerable, and just those caught in a down cycle in the economy deserve assistance. We sign this bill to redouble our efforts to provide the most basic needs of shelter, food and heat to those in need. I thank the legislature for coming together and moving on this legislation to provide assistance at this critical time.”

NJ SHARES is an energy assistance program that assists households who do not qualify for utility bill assistance through traditional programs such as the LIHEAP or the Universal Service Fund. Eligibility for NJ SHARES is based on temporary need. NJ SHARES helps households with a temporary financial hardship that could have resulted from a loss, an illness or other misfortune. To donate or apply for the NJS program, please call our toll free number (1-866-657-4273) or visit our website at www.njshares.org.

The NJ SHARES Board consists of New Jersey's seven natural gas and electric utilities (Atlantic City Electric, Elizabethtown Gas, Jersey Central Power and Light, New Jersey Natural Gas, Rockland Electric, South Jersey Gas and Public Service Electric & Gas), eight non-profit agencies (AARP, The Salvation Army, Association for Children of New Jersey, New Jersey Community Action Agency, Catholic Charities, The Community Health Law Project, Lutheran Social Ministries of NJ and NJPIRG) and five at-large members (Bayada Nurses, Verizon, PNC Bank, Michael Swayze and Riker, Danzig).

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