

August 7, 2017

SENATE BILL NO. 2214

To the Senate:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Senate Bill No. 2214 with my recommendations for reconsideration.

This bill would require public institutions of higher education and proprietary institutions licensed to offer academic degrees ("proprietary institutions") to develop policies and procedures on the use and management of mandatory student fees. In addition, this bill would require public and independent institutions of higher education and proprietary institutions to provide a financial aid shopping sheet developed by the Secretary of Higher Education to each prospective student as part of the institution's financial aid offer to that student.

I support the intention of this bill to increase transparency of the costs of attending an institution of higher education, including the amount of mandatory student fees and a student's financial aid package. The information required by this bill would make it easier for students to determine the true costs associated with attending a college or university and to easily compare institutions to make informed decisions about where to attend school.

However, this bill would require public and independent institutions of higher education and proprietary institutions to utilize a shopping sheet developed by the Secretary of Higher Education. The United States Department of Education and the federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau have already developed a model shopping sheet format for post-secondary schools to notify students about the costs of attendance and financial aid, which became available in the 2013-2014 school

year. This federal model is commonly used by schools throughout the country and serves as a valuable tool for students when comparing institutions from different states. In fact, many of New Jersey's colleges and universities are already providing the federal shopping sheet to prospective students.

Requiring New Jersey schools to use a State-specific version of the shopping sheet may cause confusion for students looking to compare New Jersey institutes of higher education against schools outside the State. As such, I recommend amendments to the bill to allow public and independent institutions of higher education and proprietary institutions to utilize either the shopping sheet format developed by the Secretary of Higher Education in accordance with the bill or the federal version of shopping sheet. This will provide our colleges and universities the flexibility needed to provide valuable information to prospective students, while remaining competitive with institutions from other states.

Accordingly, I herewith return Senate Bill No. 2214 and recommend that it be amended as follows:

Page 2, Section 2, Line 48: After "utilize" insert
 "either"

Page 2, Section 2, Line 48: After "format" insert
 "developed by the secretary
 or the most current financial
 aid shopping sheet developed
 by the United States
 Department of Education or
 the Consumer Financial
 Protection Bureau"

[seal]

Respectfully,

/s/ Chris Christie

Governor

Attest:

/s/ James J. DiGiulio

Chief Counsel to the Governor