

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 4118

To the General Assembly:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Assembly Bill No. 4118 with my recommendations for reconsideration.

Assembly Bill No. 4118, Assembly Bill No. 2762 (First Reprint), Assembly Bill No. 2763 (First Reprint), and Senate Bill No. 844 all address various aspects of our temporary disability and family leave insurance systems. Assembly Bill No. 4118 permits individuals to submit temporary disability and family leave insurance claims related to pregnancy, childbirth and child care prior to the start of a known period of leave. This adjustment will help expedite the processing of benefit claims and ensure that workers receive more immediate financial backing.

I unequivocally support the expansion of these benefits for workers in the State, and will continue to work with the Legislature on future legislation addressing shortfalls in coverage, underutilization by vulnerable populations, and inequities in benefit administration. I have identified, however, significant issues with the infrastructure supporting these programs. As a result, I am concerned that these bills require changes that will render the Department of Labor and Workforce Development ("DOLWD") unable to administer the benefits contemplated by the bills, and will disrupt the timely delivery of all benefits managed by the system. I have recommended an extension of the effective dates of the bills to allow additional time for the Department to implement these measures.

In the interim, I have directed the DOLWD to work with the Office of Information Technology on coordinating a strategy for implementation and locating opportunities for much-needed modernization of the Department's computer systems.

Accordingly, I herewith return Assembly Bill No. 4118 and recommend that it be amended as follows:

Page 13, Section 5, Line 22: Delete "immediately" and insert "one year after the date of enactment"

Page 13, Section 5, Line 25: Delete "2018" and insert "2019"

[seal]

Respectfully,
/s/ Philip D. Murphy
Governor

Attest:

/s/ Matthew J. Platkin
Chief Counsel to the Governor