

**GOVERNOR'S STATEMENT UPON SIGNING
SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL NO. 2660
(First Reprint)**

Today I am pleased to sign Senate Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 2660 (First Reprint) into law, establishing a grant program for certain teachers of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). This bill creates a publicly-funded grant program to provide additional remuneration for teachers already employed by a public school district who choose to also teach STEM subjects in nonpublic schools. The purpose of the program is to incentivize current teachers to obtain STEM qualifications, to incentivize non-teachers with STEM backgrounds to enter the teaching profession, and to expand access to STEM education to more New Jersey students.

Boosting STEM education in New Jersey is a core component of my economic vision for this State. Last year, I announced multiple initiatives to increase STEM employment in New Jersey and increase access to STEM education for our students. Under the STEM Loan Forgiveness Program, graduates of New Jersey colleges and universities employed in STEM fields are eligible to receive \$1,000 each year for a maximum of four years towards their student loans, which must be matched by the participant's employer. I was pleased that the Legislature passed a bill implementing this idea, and I signed it into law in December 2018. I also announced the NJ Career Accelerator Internship Program in May 2018, administered through the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, under which employers may receive up to 50 percent of wages paid, up to \$3,000 per student, to new first-time interns enrolled in New Jersey high schools, colleges, and universities in STEM industries. In both the FY2019 and FY2020 budgets, I have proposed appropriating \$2 million for a "Computer Science for All" initiative to expand computer science education and give more students access to computer science coursework. Last year's awards will benefit nearly 900 high school students. Further, my Administration has introduced funding for STEM Dual Enrollment and Early College High Schools. Last year we helped three New Jersey schools implement the P-TECH education model to bring together high schools, community colleges, and businesses.

I commend the Legislature for exploring creative ways to incentivize and retain STEM teachers. However, on June 30, 2019, I issued Executive Order No. 73 directing the Director of the Division of Budget and Accounting ("Director") to place certain items of appropriation representing discretionary spending into reserve to ensure that the State budget remains in balance while maintaining a responsible anticipated closing fund balance and making the statutorily required credit to the Surplus Revenue Fund, more commonly known as the rainy day fund, consistent with law. Section 1 of Executive Order No. 73 authorized and directed the Director to supplement the list of reserved items of appropriation throughout Fiscal Year 2020 as necessary to effectuate the purposes of my order. In accordance with Executive

Order No. 73, the Director shall review the appropriation contained in this bill to determine whether this appropriation should be reserved based on the factors outlined in the Executive Order.

In the event that this appropriation is determined to be appropriate to place into reserve, and if sufficient funding is determined not to be available during the current fiscal year, the Department of Education will remain able to design and plan the program called for under this bill. The program could then be fully implemented contingent upon an appropriation to be included in the final Fiscal Year 2021 budget, as enacted. I believe this path, if determined to be necessary, will ensure both that the program is thoughtfully designed and that it can be properly considered for an appropriation in the Fiscal Year 2021 budget process and thereafter.

Date: August 23, 2019

/s/ Philip D. Murphy

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Matthew J. Platkin

Chief Counsel to the Governor