

Governor Christie Vetoes New Jersey Unemployment Discrimination Bill

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In somewhat of a surprise move, in the same week that New Jersey Governor Chris Christie signed into law the Opportunity to Compete Act, which prohibits employers from inquiring about job candidates' criminal histories early in the hiring process (which we wrote about [here](#)), the Governor **vetoed** a bill prohibiting discrimination against the unemployed (a measure which we wrote about [here](#) just last month).

In 2011, Governor Christie signed legislation prohibiting employers from publishing "need not apply" job advertisements excluding the unemployed. However, Governor Christie determined that the current proposed legislation—which would have made it illegal for an employer to refuse employment to an applicant because he or she is unemployed—went too far and would have been administratively unenforceable and created undue hardships on businesses.

In his veto message, the Governor explained: "The sort of in-depth factual analysis necessary to determine the subjective reasons why an employer did not hire a job applicant is inappropriate for summary proceedings by the Department [of Labor and Workforce Development]. Because there is no practical way for the Department to enforce the bill, the bill would provide no tangible benefits to job applicants seeking to reenter the workforce. Rather, the bill would only serve to expose employers to additional legal proceedings and impose more red-tape and bureaucracy onto the State's already embattled business community. Because this bill will do nothing to improve the lives of unemployed New Jerseyans, but rather will drive up the cost of doing business in our State, I cannot support it."

Authors