

April 19, 2021

**SENATE BILL NO. 347**  
**(First Reprint)**

To the Senate:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I herewith return Senate Bill No. 347 (First Reprint) with my recommendations for reconsideration.

This bill would establish a "New Jersey One Health Task Force" in the Department of Health ("DOH"). The task force will be charged with developing a strategic plan to promote interdisciplinary communication and collaboration between physicians, veterinarians, and other scientific professionals and State agencies, with the goal of promoting the health and well-being of the State's residents, animals, and environment.

I commend the sponsors of the bill for advancing a comprehensive approach that prioritizes public health through cooperative efforts to prevent and contain public health crises. It is generally understood that the majority of novel, emergent infectious diseases are zoonotic, in that they are spread between animals and humans. Of these, most originate in animals. The growing influence of human activity on our ecosystem is a factor in the emergence of these diseases, and changes in land use, agriculture, and travel have all contributed to their prevalence. If we are to stem the tide of these diseases and avoid the threats they pose to our public health and economy, we must commit to a collaborative approach that recognizes the integral role of each discipline involved.

Against the backdrop of growing populations, changes in food supply, and increased demand for animal and agronomic products, it is evident that our response in the area of agriculture will be critical to our success. Consequently, while I believe that this bill sets forth a solid framework for achieving optimal health outcomes, I am recommending changes that place responsibility with

the Department of Agriculture, rather than the DOH, for leading this initiative.

Accordingly, I herewith return Senate Bill No. 347 (First Reprint) and recommend that it be amended as follows:

Page 2, Title, Line 2: Delete "26" and insert "4"

Page 3, Section 2, Line 7: Delete "Health" and insert "Agriculture"

Page 4, Section 3, Line 45: Delete "Health" and insert "Agriculture"

[seal]

Respectfully,

/s/ Philip D. Murphy

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Parimal Garg

Chief Counsel to the Governor