



## Bergen County Adopts E-Procurement Due To COVID—19

(continued)

Eventually allowing a vendor to have a single sign on to participate in nearly every bid and solicitation within the County of Bergen. The licensing agreement is being offered to the municipalities through a shared service agreement at no cost to the communities who are opting in.

To see and experience the County's e-procurement platform please visit [www.BergenBids.com](http://www.BergenBids.com)



## County Vocational Technical Schools Ready to Apply for Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act Grants

by New Jersey Council of County Vocational Technical Schools



Many of New Jersey's 21 county vocational-technical schools are finalizing grant applications under the Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act that will pave the way for expanded career and technical education offerings around the state.

The Bond Act, approved by voters in 2018, provides \$275 million for county vocational-technical school districts and \$50 million for community colleges to build the high-tech shops and labs needed to prepare young people with the skills and credentials needed to launch careers in key New Jersey industries like health care, advanced manufacturing, construction, and clean energy.

The state grants will cover 75% of the cost of construction and renovation projects and equipment investments (up to a maximum of \$40 million), with counties providing a 25% match. County vocational-technical school districts must submit their grant applications by March 1.

"This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for counties to address economic needs with new programs in high-demand and emerging careers such as logistics, manufacturing, health care, and cybersecurity," said Judy Savage, executive director of the New Jersey Council of County Vocational Technical Schools.

Garden State businesses cannot grow and prosper without a pipeline of young people who are prepared to fill current vacancies and expected retirements. County vocational-technical schools and community colleges can help fulfill that need if county leaders leverage state dollars to create shared facilities that will expand access to career and technical education programs aligned with regional economic demand, Savage said.

"While the need for this investment predates Covid-19, the pandemic has accelerated technological shifts across all kinds of industries and highlighted the need for a well-trained technical workforce," Savage noted.

**CAREERTECHNJ**  
New Jersey Council of County Vocational-Technical Schools

IN THE NEWS

# Guarding The Vote As The New Jersey Air & Army National Guards Deploy To New Jersey Counties

by Maureen G. Bugdon, President, NJ Association of Elected Officials

The effects of COVID-19 on the 2020 Presidential Election changed the way our Nation votes. Masks, shields, sanitizer, gloves and more were delivered to every election office for election staff, poll workers and voters. Election equipment sold out due to the increase in paper ballots, and patriotic ballot drop boxes adorned municipality corners and government buildings as an added convenience to residents. In order to process and count over 4.6 million votes in our state, the proud members of the New Jersey Air and Army National Guards were deployed to each county election office requesting additional help. These fine members of our armed forces worked long hours at safe 6-ft. distances alongside the more seasoned election officials, who guided them through the Statewide Voter Registration System, MIB process and Provisional ballot investigations.

“Huge thanks go out to these young men and women,” remarks Maureen Bugdon, President of the New Jersey Association of Election Officials. “They’re quick learners, polite and focused, and they literally helped deliver the vote for New Jersey in an historic election year,” she relays.

Counties were assigned anywhere from 8 to 16 guard members beginning a week to the November 3<sup>rd</sup> General Election. As election offices completed their work, members were reassigned to new counties still processing, whether due to COVID exposure or simply higher ballot volume.

The assignment was the first of its kind for the NJ Air National Guard, and the second outreach for the Army who had assisted during the 2020 Primary. Offices enjoyed representatives from both branches based on their resident county, easing the burden of daily commute time. Wherever possible, food, also helped combat tired eyes and minds. Patti DiCostanzo, Bergen County Superintendent of Elections emphasizes how important a warm meal can be when putting in 12-hour days for several weeks straight. “You’ve got to feed the people!” she says. “Listen, the work is constant and important. When you’re running the engine for these kind of hours, you’ve got to fill the tank!” Bergen County election officials would certainly know best as their vote totals exceeded all others, hitting just over 503 thousand at certification.

“Support this year to the New Jersey elections was an extension of the Guard’s active role in preventing the spread of COVID-19,” stated Colonel Robert Hughes, Commander of the 44th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and resident of Ocean County. “Not only did our young troops gain a valuable, behind-the-scenes experience of the how the voting process works, but they also gained an appreciation for the dedicated election officials who protect one of our most precious rights and responsibilities as Americans.”

With the promise of a COVID-19 vaccine in the horizon, whether the NJ National Guard will assist in future elections remains an unknown at this time. As we close up another General Election, I hope you will join me in thanking all those tireless, dedicated election workers who now include the valued members of the New Jersey National Guard. Warmest wishes to all for a beautiful holiday season and a very happy New Year. Thank you ALL for your incredible service.



## Dear NJ County Biz Reader And Child Welfare Partner

There have been a series of articles like [this](#) and [this](#) and [this](#) from throughout the country focused on the impact COVID-19 has had on young people's mental wellness. Social distancing has, for many, meant remote learning, no recreational sports, no birthday parties or school dances; no group outlet. For youth already struggling with grades or confidence or belonging, the pandemic has exacerbated their mood swings, emotional withdrawal, substance use or behavioral conditions. **Families need to know that there is help available.** The New Jersey Department of Children and Families' (DCF) Division of the Children's System of Care has free or low cost access to behavioral health support 24/7/365. Please share the attached flyers ([located here](#)) with your constituency and through your social media channels. **Help us spread the word** so that at-risk youth can get the support they need.

### MY CHILD IS IN CRISIS! WHO DO I CALL?

**IF THERE IS INJURY OR THREAT OF INJURY, DIAL 911**

If your child has been impacted by depression, trauma, violence, defiant behavior, and/or drug or alcohol use, call the NJ Children's System of Care at 1-877-652-7624. It is open 24/7/365.

#### What is the Children's System of Care?

It is New Jersey's free or low cost behavioral health system for kids up to age 21. It provides eligible youth with coordinated access to mental health supports, substance use treatment and services for intellectual or developmental disabilities.

#### It can include:

- **Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS)**, real time de-escalation and crisis counseling with a clinician at your home or any location.
- **BioPsychoSocial (BPS) Assessment** is a one-time, in-home evaluation by a licensed clinician to determine if your child can benefit from behavioral supports and services.
- **Care Management Organization (CMO)** connects families to treatment services for youth that are displaying/experiencing significant emotional and behavioral health concerns.
- **Intensive In-home Services (IIS)**, is designed to concentrate on behaviors where they take place — in the home, in the community or in school. It may include individual, group and family sessions.

#### How much do services cost?

Services recommended and authorized are paid by a variety of sources, such as Medicaid, NJ FamilyCare, and commercial insurance or self-pay. Families will be asked to provide insurance information.

#### What if I want out of home (residential or group home) treatment for my child?

It is national best practice that youth be served at home and in their communities. Out-of-home treatment is considered a last resort and is sought only after having exhausted every effort at a community-based plan.

SAFE  
CONNECTED



## City of Trenton, NJ Partners With Tech Company, GovPilot - Nets \$4.15 million on Auctioned Properties

*- Trenton partnered with government software company, GovPilot to host online real estate auction in effort to reduce blight and provide homeownership opportunities. Initiative seen as replicable in municipalities across the country to revitalize communities and bolster city budgets*

*by Evan Achiron, Director of Marketing & Communications for GovPilot*

In an effort to revitalize the city, promote affordable housing options, and generate revenue, New Jersey's capital city, Trenton, yesterday hosted a live online auction of residential and commercial properties.

The auction, hosted in partnership with [GovPilot](#), a Hoboken, New Jersey based government management software provider, saw all 49 listed properties receive winning bids - generating \$4.153 million in revenue for the city once sales are finalized. Upon approval, property owners will commit to a five-year owner occupied requirement.

Trenton's Department of Housing and Economic Development (HED), seeking effective ways to make property ownership accessible, reduce blight, and generate much needed revenue for the city's budget, made a selection of forty nine properties available at far below their assessed market value through a web portal built and hosted by GovPilot.

"Successful auctions are key to our redevelopment efforts, especially when they get promising properties into the hands of tax-paying residents who can renovate them for the benefit of the surrounding community," said Trenton Mayor Reed Gusiora. "And with the residency requirement for many of these properties, we know they will be cared for by Trentonians who are proud to finally own a stake in their hometown."

The mayor added, "To be able to host a successful online, socially distanced real estate auction in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic was tremendous. The opportunities created for our residents, and the revenue generated for our budget will support constituent services and the continued revitalization of the city of Trenton."

To drive awareness and participation in the auction among interested Trenton residents, GovPilot launched a two-week coordinated marketing campaign which included yard signs at the available properties, geo-targeted Facebook and Instagram ads, emails to local residents, and a local press release.

A total of 372 participants pre-registered for the auction by placing a \$1,000 reimbursable deposit through an online payment form. In advance of the auction, the city hosted two video conference information sessions, and the auction platform enabled practice bidding so that participants could become familiar with its use.

"This auction was tailor-made to benefit Trenton residents - including first-time homeowners - over outside investors," said HED Director Ben Delisle. "Even with a Trenton residency requirement for many of these properties, we received 1,554 bids from 284 different participants, showing demand for this area remains relatively high. We will closely review each bid to make sure the residency restrictions are closely followed."

One of the successful bidders is looking to own the very same property in which she is a tenant. "I'm very happy that I don't have to relocate and I'm proud to own the home where I have enjoyed living for the last 20 months," said Delmy Tabora, who placed the winning bid on her home on Cummins Ave in Trenton. "The website was very practical and easy to use, and I would recommend it to others."

*continued on page 6*

## City of Trenton, NJ Partners With Tech Company, GovPilot - Nets \$4.15 million on Auctioned Properties *(continued)*

Michael Bonner, the founder and CEO of GovPilot said, “Right now, municipalities across the country are looking for creative, effective ways to generate revenue, revitalize neighborhoods, and support their residents. We are proud to partner with the city of Trenton. Not only has this auction made homeownership more accessible, it will help the city revitalize its neighborhoods and budget as well.”

Bonner added, “GovPilot’s mission is to help local governments operate efficiently through digital transformation. This program is replicable across the country and is a win for local governments and residents alike. We invite municipal officials nationwide to consider GovPilot hosted [government real estate auctions](#) as part of their economic development strategy.”

Since 2017, GovPilot has provided Trenton - New Jersey’s capital city - with cloud-based government management software, replacing processes that were previously paper-based. Today, constituent services are available digitally through the city’s website, including registrations and permit applications, construction management, and the reporting of non-emergency concerns through an online form or a mobile app called *GovAlert*.

In April, as COVID-19 forced businesses to close their doors, Trenton utilized GovPilot’s platform to make low-interest [loan applications](#) available to small businesses located within the city’s Urban Enterprise Zone, in an effort to help them remain in business and protect local jobs.

### About GovPilot:

GovPilot - named a GovTech 100 company for three consecutive years - is the leader in digital transformation for local governments. GovPilot's cloud-based platform was built with the sole purpose of enabling local governments to operate at their full potential by standardizing, digitizing, and unifying more than 100 operational and constituent service processes on one system.

To learn more visit [www.govpilot.com](http://www.govpilot.com).  
Follow @GovPilot.

For additional questions regarding GovPilot please contact Evan Achiron, Director of Marketing & Communications via e-mail at [evan@govpilot.com](mailto:evan@govpilot.com).



## BECOME A MEMBER OF THE NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

Learn about the benefits of being a part of NJAC and how you can join.

Contact Loren Wizman, Business Development Director at  
(609) 394-3467 or [loren@njac.org](mailto:loren@njac.org).

[Click here for an application.](#)



## OpenGov Citizen Services

# How Will Your Community Regulate Cannabis?

As of November 2020, thirty-five states in the U.S. and Washington, D.C. have legalized medical marijuana, and fifteen states and Washington, D.C. have legalized recreational marijuana.

### Step 1: Do the Research

Municipalities new to cannabis regulation need to first decide what types of operations are appropriate for their community. In addition to determining the types of businesses such as cultivators, testing or research facilities, distributors, manufacturers, retailers, and consumption establishments that will be allowed, local governments should consider the cannabis industry in terms of licensing, planning and zoning, and taxation.

### Step 2: Kickstart Cannabis Regulation in Your Community with OpenGov

#### Engage the Community

Use [OpenGov Town Hall](#) to gather the environmental, public safety, and equity concerns of your constituents. Build and share metrics with all stakeholders to create a culture of transparency.

#### Map Zoning Laws

Consider regulating the density of cannabis establishments or their proximity to schools or drug rehabilitation facilities. Schedule inspections through OpenGov to ensure compliance.

#### Plan Tax Structure

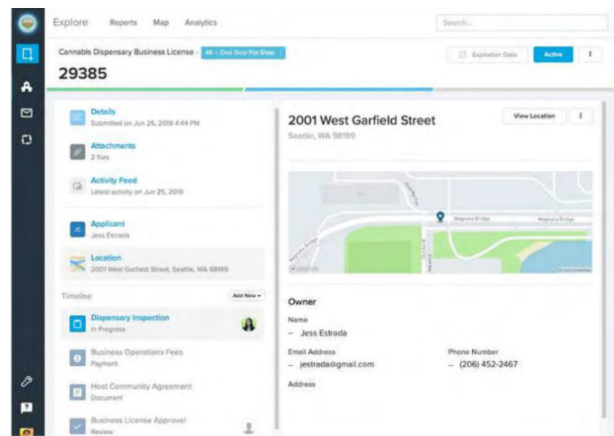
With [OpenGov Citizen Services](#), issue licenses and collect fees which may differ by calculation (flat fee or percentage) or by business type, such as MWBE-owned and medical versus commercial.

#### Track Industry from Seed-to-Sale

Monitor all stages in one platform by allowing industry participants to apply for licenses, upload required documents, and pay fees online.



The "bud room" of a growing facility in Denver, CO. Picture from Cannabis Tours.



### About OpenGov Citizen Services

OpenGov Citizen Services simplifies the way governments serve their communities by offering one cloud solution to power every permitting and licensing workflow.

For more information, please download  
**A Local Government's Guide to Successful Cannabis Regulation & Licensing.**

# Mercer County Conducts “Innovative” Full-Scale Airport Drill

by Michael Boonin, Deputy Director of Communications for the County of Mercer

Aviation and government representatives and more than a dozen agencies took part in Trenton-Mercer Airport’s mostly virtual full-scale emergency exercise that has left Mercer County better prepared for a real emergency, County Executive Brian M. Hughes said.

“It was essential to keep participants safe in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, while also meeting Federal Aviation Administration requirements. This was an innovative and exciting way to accomplish those things,” Mr. Hughes said of the Nov. 19 drill, which took place mostly via Zoom video conference and partly on the Trenton-Mercer Airport (TTN) airfield rather than as a full in-person exercise.

A full-scale exercise is mandated by the Federal Aviation Administration to be held once every three years to measure the level of preparedness of first responders and to allow the agencies that will respond to a true emergency to train together in a single venue.

“Every agency at every level, from the local fire department to the FBI, has to be on the same page should a major disaster occur in Mercer County,” Mr. Hughes said. “That requires taking a regional approach to preparedness, coordination and response, which is what was done for this exercise.”

Led by Airport Manager Melinda Montgomery, A.A.E., representatives of various agencies and offices participated in the handling of the “incident,” which for the purpose of this exercise was the simulation of a commercial aircraft overshooting the end of a runway upon landing at TTN, resulting in reported injuries. The non-virtual part of the exercise was the immediate response to the scene by firefighting units, law enforcement and emergency medical services (EMS).

The remainder of the exercise took place in two Zoom meeting rooms, the first of which established a command post involving the TTN fire department and other firefighting units, EMS, Mercer County Sheriff’s Office and other law enforcement and security agencies, airport operations and aviation organizations. Command post participants handled aspects of the simulation such as response, access to the scene, airport closures, scene security, resource coordination, HazMat containment, recovery and restoration.

The second Zoom meeting room began about 30 minutes after the first, and established an emergency operations center (EOC) and joint information center (JIC), which were combined for this exercise. Participants included Mercer County Office of Emergency Management (OEM), Mercer County administration, Mercer County public information officer, airport manager, fire, EMS, law enforcement, air carrier and aviation organizations.

Active participants and observers could jump between the command post and EOC/JIC Zoom meetings throughout the event, which took about 90 minutes.

Airport staff and other participants in the exercise will now evaluate the response and use information gained to improve or revise, if necessary, the Airport Emergency Plan and emergency procedures.



*Law Enforcement Personnel Confering at the Scene During the Non-Virtual Part of the Exercise.*







**Help  
Wanted!**

## Wastewater Chief Plant Operator

The Chief Plant Operator shall assist the Superintendent in providing supervision of the Authority's Wastewater Treatment Plants and sludge disposal facilities along with related equipment.

A few of the duties are: assign daily work schedules, evaluate plant operating records, provide training to staff, adjust plant equipment and processes as needed, assist the Superintendent with construction and start-up of new facilities, be available for emergencies and serve as Superintendent in the absence of the Superintendent.

A few of the requirements are: 5 years of experience at a wastewater treatment plant comparable to that requiring S-3 and C-3 licenses, thorough knowledge and understanding of the processes and equipment involved in wastewater and sludge treatment, ability to supervise staff, ability to perform the duties of staff if required. High school diploma, S-3 Wastewater License. C-2 Collection System License.

### Applications can be obtained at:

SCMUA Administration Building located at the Solid Waste Facilities  
34 Route 94, Lafayette, NJ  
9:00 am – 4:00pm Monday through Friday or go to [SCMUA.org](http://SCMUA.org)



### EOE

Submit application and resume via email to [mnemeth@scmua.org](mailto:mnemeth@scmua.org) until 1/22/21



## CITRUS ROASTED SALMON

### INGREDIENTS

3 clementines, divided  
1 lemon, sliced  
8 sprigs thyme, plus 1 tablespoon thyme leaves  
1 (3-pound) skin-on salmon fillet  
1 1/2 tbsp. pure honey  
1 tbsp. fennel seeds, crushed  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Slice 1 clementine. Arrange sliced clementine, lemon, and thyme sprigs in center of a baking sheet. Top with salmon, skin side down.
2. Grate zest from 1 clementine into a measuring cup, then squeeze in juice from both remaining clementines (you should get about 1/4 cup). Add honey and whisk until dissolved. Brush salmon with half of clementine mixture, then sprinkle with fennel and thyme leaves. Season with salt and pepper. Roast 10 minutes.
3. Brush salmon with remaining juice mixture. Roast until barely opaque throughout, 12 to 15 minutes.

## Grant Opportunities

### **Support for Veteran Housing Construction and Rehabilitation—Home Depot Foundation: Veteran Housing Grants Program**

***Application Deadlines: March 26 and July 9, 2021***

Awards funding to nonprofit organizations throughout the United States and Puerto Rico for the new construction or rehabilitation of permanent supportive housing for veterans. Grants ranging from \$100,000 to \$500,000 are available for the physical construction or repair of housing for veterans (hard costs); the grant amount must comprise less than 50% of the total development cost of the project. Rural areas will be considered; however, high priority will be given to large metropolitan areas that have a dense veteran population. Nonprofit organizations that have been in existence at least five years and have a current operating budget of at least \$300,000 are eligible to apply.

Visit the Foundation's website [here](#) to review the funding guidelines.

### **Healthcare Delivery Improvements—The COPIC Medical Foundation**

***Closing Date: January 15, 2021***

The COPIC Medical Foundation supports nonprofit organizations that address healthcare issues in the United States. The goal of the Foundation is to be a catalyst in improving the quality of healthcare delivery by reducing adverse outcomes and supporting innovation. The Foundation provides grants for initiatives that improve patient safety and quality of care through education and training of healthcare professionals or through systems changes and improvements, pilot programs that are designed to reduce medical errors, and the development and implementation of checklists and other tools to improve disease management and transitions in care. The focus area for the 2021 funding cycle is "Fragmentation Across Care Settings."

Click [here](#) to learn more.

### **Department of Health and Human Services—HRSA Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training (BHWET) Program for Professionals**

***Closing Date: January 21, 2021***

The BHWET Program for Professionals aims to increase the supply of behavioral health professionals while also improving distribution of a quality behavioral health workforce and thereby increasing access to behavioral health services. A special focus is placed on the knowledge and understanding of children, adolescents, and transitional-aged youth at risk for behavioral health disorders.

Visit [here](#) to learn more.

### **Department of Health and Human Services—HRSA National Telehealth Resource Center Program**

***Closing Date: January 21, 2021***

This notice announces the opportunity to apply for funding under the National Telehealth Resource Center (NTRC) Program. The purpose of NTRCs is to support the delivery of telehealth technical assistance through Regional Telehealth Resource Centers (RTRCs). Two NTRCs may be funded.

Click [here](#) to learn more.

## Grant Opportunities *(continued)*

### Department of Health and Human Services—HRSA Regional Telehealth Resource Center Program

***Closing Date: January 21, 2021***

This notice announces the opportunity to apply for funding under the Regional Telehealth Resource Center (RTRC) Program. RTRCs assist health care organizations, health care networks, and health care providers in the implementation of cost-effective telehealth programs to serve rural areas and populations. RTRCs also assist patients and families living in rural areas with telehealth technology to obtain health services. This notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) will support 12 RTRCs that focus on statewide and regional telehealth activities.

Click [here](#) to learn more.

### Department of Health and Human Services—HRSA Rapid Response Rural Data Analysis and Issue Specific Rural Research Studies

***Closing Date: January 29, 2021***

This notice announces the opportunity to apply for funding under the Rapid Response Rural Data Analysis and Issue Specific Rural Research Studies Program. The purpose of this program is to assist rural communities with conducting rapid data analyses and short term issue-specific rural research studies to understand the impact of current and proposed policies and regulations as well as provide information that will improve health care in rural America.

Please click [here](#) to view additional details.

### Rural Emergency Medical Services Training Grant

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, is accepting applications for fiscal year (FY) 2021 **Rural Emergency Medical Services Training grants** (Short Title: EMS Training). The purpose of this program is to recruit and train emergency medical services (EMS) personnel in rural areas. SAMHSA recognizes the great need for emergency services in rural areas and the critical role EMS personnel serve across the country.

***Closing Date: February 16, 2021***

For more information please follow the link below:

<https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grant-announcements/ti-21-005>



**FEMA**  
Region II



# Fostering Resilience During Times Of Change

by Michael Galello, Industry Marketing Manager, Public Sector for Ultimate Kronos Group (UKG)

It's been quite a year. We've had many new challenges thrown our way between our work and personal lives. Professionally, there has been a huge shift in the way we do our jobs and interact with each other and our constituents. Personally, we likely all know somebody who has gotten sick, lost a job, or experienced a hardship of a different kind. The silver lining to all of this is that we've learned a lot about resilience.

What is resilience? It's the ability to bounce back after facing a challenge. Nelson Mandela provided one of my favorite quotes: "Do not judge me by my success, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again." Governments who seek to become more resilient must ask themselves three things as we slowly get up again and transition back to "normal".

- **Are we ready to rethink workforce management?**
- **Are we prepared to listen to employees?**
- **Are we offering a positive employee experience?**

If you're ready to tackle any of the three points above, you'll need to take a closer look at your organization's change management strategy and how you're engaging your workforce.

**Manage and Accept Change:** During a time of disruption, what does business as usual look like now? The way we do things have changed and organizations need to accept that. We need to ensure that our employees are well positioned for success amidst these disruptions and it starts with managing change. Leveraging technology helps us remain agile and make quick decisions that ensure business continuity. Things to consider when managing change:

- What motivates our employees?
- Who were the top performers and leaders when things have been implemented in the past?
- How effective are our managers in supporting staff and driving productivity?

**Engage Your Workforce:** Workplace culture is paramount to building resilience. Culture is the foundation of an organization with "team resilience". If this doesn't already exist, don't worry. It's something that can be developed. According to [positive psychology](#), a culture of resilience includes team members being encouraged to:

- Speak up and ask any questions
- Openly share bad news, and report early warning signs of potential problems
- Maintain composure during 'emergencies' and times of heightened stress
- Keep an eye on one's work colleagues, and be there to offer support throughout the challenge – before (to minimize the impact of the stressor), during (to manage the heightened stress) and after the stressor (to 'mend' once the stress has passed)
- Lastly, but importantly, once the challenge has passed, encourage team members to thank others for their help

Resilience is a powerful tool. Every team has likely faced some tough challenges lately. Some teams overcame them quickly while becoming more resilient in the process. Some teams struggled and morale probably took a hit. Building resilience within your organization now can help teams tackle challenges faster and avoid loss of morale in the future.

To learn more about UKG, please contact Wesley Witherington, UKG Sales Executive State of New Jersey, Public Sector and Education, at [wesley.witherington@UKG.com](mailto:wesley.witherington@UKG.com) or via telephone at (973) 331-5465.



## Letter From Joseph Davis, Interim President for AT&T New Jersey

What are the qualities that define a community? Unity, commitment, and adaptability - all values, when woven together, describe the values our teams work hard to uphold, in and outside the company.

As 2020 comes to an end, we remain steadfast in our commitment to be there for friends, families, coworkers and neighbors. Whether it's addressing social and economic barriers or empowering those particularly affected by the pandemic, we continue to collaborate with civic and non-profit organizations to provide our communities with the resources they need.

When it comes to racial inequality, it cannot be solved overnight. To do our part, we continue to actively reevaluate how to make a positive impact. Our \$10 million commitment to create economic opportunities and foster upward mobility for black and underserved communities is just one of the many ways we are helping to combat long-standing social inequities.

While the homework gap has existed for decades, COVID-19 has brought national awareness to the problem. Although America's networks have performed well during the pandemic, many rural and low-income families don't have the internet access they need to work and learn. We believe in the equality of education and connection is at our core. An now that the classroom has gone digital, we are refocusing our efforts to expand student connectivity.

It is vital we continue to support each other through the COVID-19 pandemic to emerge stronger than ever. From opening opportunity's doors to closing technology gaps, I invite you to click [here](#) and learn more about our journey to building a resilient community.

Finally, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank Charlene Brown, our long-time state president, who recently retired after an extraordinary career at AT&T. I know many of you have worked with Charlene over the years. We're grateful for her years of service, her many accomplishment, and her commitment to her home state of New Jersey. It's a great honor to continue that work as interim president for New Jersey.

I welcome your feedback.



# New Jersey Cybersecurity & Communications Integration Cell Advisory (NJCCIC) - *Updated Alert and Supplemental Guidance on Emergency Directive for SolarWinds Orion Compromise*

This Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) Advisory is being provided in order to assist agencies and organizations in the protection against cyber threats.

CISA has updated [AA20-352A](#): Advanced Persistent Threat Compromise of Government Agencies, Critical Infrastructure, and Private Sector Organizations, originally released December 17, 2020. This update states that CISA has evidence of, and is currently investigating, initial access vectors in addition to those attributed to the SolarWinds Orion supply chain compromise. This update also provides new mitigation guidance and revises the indicators of compromise table; it also includes a downloadable STIX file of the IOCs.

In addition, CISA has released [supplemental guidance](#) to Emergency Directive (ED) 21-01, providing new information on affected versions, new guidance for agencies using third-party service providers, and additional clarity on required actions.

CISA encourages users and administrators to review the following resources for additional information on the SolarWinds Orion compromise.

- [CISA Emergency Directive 21-01 - Supplemental Guidance v.1](#)
- [CISA Emergency Directive 21-01: Mitigate SolarWinds Orion Code Compromise](#)
- [CISA Activity Alert AA20-352A: Advanced Persistent Threat Compromise of Government Agencies, Critical Infrastructure, and Private Sector Organizations](#)

## **Reporting**

The NJCCIC encourages recipients who discover signs of malicious cyber activity to contact the NJCCIC via the cyber incident report form at [www.cyber.nj.gov/report](http://www.cyber.nj.gov/report).

Please do not hesitate to contact the NJCCIC at [njccic@cyber.nj.gov](mailto:njccic@cyber.nj.gov) with any questions. Also, for more background on our recent cybersecurity efforts please visit [cyber.nj.gov](http://cyber.nj.gov).

***The information contained in this product is marked [Traffic Light Protocol \(TLP\): WHITE](#). Disclosure is not limited. Subject to standard copyright rules, TLP: WHITE information may be distributed without restriction***

New Jersey Cybersecurity & Communications Integration Cell  
24/7 Incident Reporting: 1.866.4.SAFE.NJ  
General Inquiries: 1.833.4.NJCCIC



The NJCCIC is a division of the [New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness](#).

See Something/Say Something  
1-866-4-SAFE-NJ

## FCC Give SpaceX \$886M for 35-State Broadband Expansion



*A Starlink mission launch  
Courtesy Image: SpaceX*

With its \$886 million award from the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, Elon Musk's SpaceX is set to expand satellite broadband access in more than 640,000 locations across the United States.

SpaceX, Elon Musk's aerospace company, now has roughly \$886 million in federal funds to connect homes and businesses via satellite Internet.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which administers the \$20 billion Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF), [made](#) the announcement yesterday. Through its satellite Internet constellation called Starlink, SpaceX must bring connectivity to 642,925 locations across 35 states, including California, New Jersey, New York and Florida.

Only three organizations won more money than SpaceX: the Rural Electric Cooperative Consortium with about \$1.1 billion; Charter Communications with about \$1.2 billion; and LTD Broadband with about \$1.3 billion.

According to [Ars Technica](#), Starlink's beta service has an upfront charge of \$499 for equipment and a monthly fee of \$99 for speeds that range between 50 Mbps and 150 Mbps. These speeds surpass the FCC's broadband download definition of 25 Mbps.

In its RDOF awards announcement, the FCC said 99.7 percent of locations assigned to awardees "will be receiving broadband with speeds of at least 100/20 Mbps, with an overwhelming majority (over 85 percent) getting gigabit-speed broadband."

In May 2019, SpaceX [launched](#) its first 60 Starlink satellites. The company now has close to [1,000 satellites](#) in orbit.

In recent months, SpaceX has helped [reconnect](#) rural areas of Washington that were hit by fires and [partnered](#) with a Texas school district to bring high-speed Internet to families in need.

### NJAC SAVE THE DATES

**January 29, 2021**  
NJAC Reorganization  
*Virtual Event*

**October 12 - 14, 2021**  
NJAC Celebration of County Government  
*Caesars*  
*Atlantic City, New Jersey*

**December 10, 2021**  
NJAC Annual Summit  
*Trenton Country Club*  
*Trenton, New Jersey*

## OMNIA PARTNERS

OMNIA Partners is excited to announce a new national cooperative contract through the [State of Utah for Online Marketplace](#). This competitively-solicited contract is effective through May 5, 2025. The contract includes Education, Information Technology, MRO, and Office Online Marketplace Services with dynamic pricing. This national award through OMNIA Partners includes the following supplier partners below. For additional information, please [contact your Regional Manager](#) or review the contract documents.

### AMAZON BUSINESS

[Amazon Business](#) helps you reshape buying by combining the selection, convenience, and value you expect from Amazon, with features that transform everyday operations. This online store provides tools to guide users to preferred products, approval workflows, analytics, seller certifications, and flexible account settings. Access hundreds of millions of products from hundreds of thousands of suppliers across multiple product categories like office supplies, IT products, MRO, and more all in one place.

### OFFICE DEPOT

[Office Depot's](#) newest contract offers innovative solutions like product recommendations including the best value shopping cart, the private brand shopping cart, and the green shopping cart which advises users of alternatives during the shopping process for lower cost and/or green friendly items. In addition, you will receive customized billing solutions to provide flexible and personalized invoicing that is compatible with systems whenever possible.

### GRAINGER

[Grainger's](#) eProcurement system, available on this program, allows participants to reduce or eliminate paper-based processes, consolidate suppliers, increase visibility and control and analyze spend at the category and item level. Contract pricing is market-based and market competitive and simplifies the customer's purchasing decision.

### CDW•G

OMNIA Partners participants can harness the agility of [CDW•G's](#) eMarketplace for all their IT peripheral devices and products. This timely agreement empowers customers to source IT products from CDW•G's comprehensive portfolio in a convenient and compliant way. At a time when uncertainty permeates all aspects of society and virtual engagement prevails, public sector customers don't have to be uncertain about their IT product sourcing.

### CHARIOT GROUP

[The Chariot Group's](#) Online Marketplace is a game changer. Accessible and efficient, the Online Marketplace streamlines the ordering process to immediately serve state/local government, education and non-profit requirements. Knowledge and relationship are the cornerstone of The Chariot Group's business. Industry experience and long-standing manufacturer relationships, carefully cultivated throughout the years, enable us to provide the products and services required to address today's demanding group communication and collaboration needs.

[Contact us](#) for more information about these or our other contracts





# Despite Modest Assistance For Local Governments, Counties Disappointed That Congress Neglected Public Sector Frontline Workers

*- Despite Modest Assistance For Local Governments, Counties Disappointed that Congress Neglected Public Sector Frontline Workers*  
by Paul Guequierre, Communications Director for NACo

The final coronavirus relief and omnibus appropriations package of the 116th Congress includes some modest policy priorities for America's counties, but does not include critical aid to state and local governments on the front lines of the nation's response to the pandemic.



The National Association of Counties (NACo) expressed disappointment in the legislation, which fails frontline COVID-19 responders and county residents. Calling on Congress to pass a bipartisan coronavirus relief package that provides aid to counties, NACo Executive Director Matthew Chase said:

**America's counties remain on the front lines of this pandemic, addressing community health and human services needs, distributing vaccines and dealing with an economy on life support.**

**"Our message today is the same as it has been since the beginning of this pandemic: a coronavirus relief package without aid for state and local governments fails counties and our residents, whose lives and livelihoods are on the line.**

**"As the level of government with vast public health, safety, economic and other community responsibilities, our efforts in fighting COVID-19 have resulted in massive budgetary effects – as much as \$202 billion through FY2021. Many counties' revenues are down, and our expenses are up.**

**"Counties have made difficult decisions to cut services and job-creating capital projects all while confronting challenges with testing, contact tracing and vaccine distribution planning. Additionally, local governments have lost 1 million jobs since the pandemic began.**

**"County leaders are committed to working with members of Congress on both sides of the aisle and the administration to secure direct, flexible and equitable funding for counties of all sizes, so that together, we can protect the health of our residents and our economy."**

The omnibus appropriations package includes a few provisions for which NACo has advocated. Specifically, counties welcome:

- A one-year extension of the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CFR) deadline, providing much-needed time and flexibility to address the ongoing impacts of this crisis
- \$22 billion for health-related expenses of state, local, tribal and territorial governments
- \$27 billion for state highways, transit agencies, Amtrak and airports
- \$25 billion for a new Emergency Federal Rental Assistance Program
- Passage of the Broadband Data Act, which will help identify areas of the country with limited access to broadband
- \$13 billion for nutrition assistance, food banks and senior nutrition programs

Chase continued, "We call on the next Congress and President-elect Biden to enact a bipartisan coronavirus relief package that delivers direct, flexible federal aid to counties of all sizes."

*continued on page 18*

## **Despite Modest Assistance For Local Governments, Counties Disappointed That Congress Neglected Public Sector Frontline Workers** *(continued)*

NACo will release a full analysis of the final coronavirus relief and omnibus appropriations package, which will be available by clicking [here](#).

America's 3,069 county governments support over 1,900 local public health departments, nearly 1,000 hospitals and critical access clinics, more than 800 long-term care facilities and 750 behavioral health centers.

Additionally, county governments are responsible for emergency operations centers and 911 services, court and jail management, public safety and emergency response, protective services for children, seniors and veterans, and the "last of the first responders" with coroners and medical examiners, among many other essential public services.

NACo's coronavirus online hub includes county level examples of response efforts, interactive maps and analyses of federal actions. View this resource-rich webpage at [www.naco.org/coronavirus](http://www.naco.org/coronavirus).



### ***SHARE THE NEWS!***

***Let us know what educational or informational articles you would like published in the NJAC COUNTY BIZ.***

**Contact  
Loren Wizman,  
Director of Business Development  
(609) 394-3467  
[loren@njac.org](mailto:loren@njac.org)**

## Nationwide Economics

# Weekly Economic Review & Outlook for December 21, 2020

by Ben Ayers, Senior Economist of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company and  
Daniel Vielhaber, Economist of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company

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### Weekly Review

#### **COVID shutdowns hit consumer spending**

Retail sales fell by 1.1 percent for November in another sign of slowing economic activity toward year end. Moreover, October's initially reported increase was lowered to a slight decline, marking two consecutive negative months for November from a year earlier—a solid gain on the back of the surge spending coming out of the spring lockdowns.

There was a clear impact from the latest wave of new infections and the resulting government restrictions on consumer activity. Sales at restaurants dropped by 4.0 percent for November while department store spending plummeted by 7.7 percent with fewer people visiting brick-and-mortar locations. Non-store retail sales (mainly online spending) were up slightly for November and have soared by more than 29 percent over the past year as consumers increasingly look to e-commerce options during the pandemic. Expenditures on motor vehicles and at gasoline stations (with lower fuel prices) fell, too, reducing topline growth.

With COVID cases still near peak levels and several state and local government adding mandates in recent weeks (as well as further increases for jobless claims), retail sales are likely to remain soft for December and into early 2021. The slowdown in spending will also weaken real GDP growth for the first quarter, with a small decline possible.

#### **Home construction still climbing**

Housing starts rose by a modest 1.2 percent for November to an annualized pace of 1.55 million units (the strongest figure since February) as both single and multifamily starts were up for the month. Single-family starts were at the highest levels since April 2007 with the surge in demand for homes pushing up construction. Building permits also rose for November, up by a strong 6.2 percent, a sign that starts will continue to climb in coming months.

With homebuyer interest expected to rise to event higher levels for f2021 and the number of existing homes for sale at record lows, the housing market needs more building to improve the imbalance between supply and demand. Starts will likely be up by more than 12 percent for 2020 and we estimate a further increase of about 10 percent during 2021 to about 1.6 million units. This additional supply suggests a further increase in new home sales next year. Still, without a corresponding increase in existing home listings, total supply is likely to continue to fall well short of demand.

#### **Fed reiterates accommodative outlook**

The Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) maintained a supportive outlook following its December meeting, still expecting no increase for interest rates through year-end 2023 within its median projections. Moreover, the FOMC statement clearly codified that it would continue its current strong pace of asset purchases until well into the economic expansion. This implies little, if any, change in monetary policy for the foreseeable future.

### The Week Ahead

This is the last busy week of the year for economic news. It included both the consumer confidence and consumer sentiment indices, existing and new home sales, personal income and personal consumption expenditures (PCE), and durable goods orders.

*continued on page 20*

## Nationwide Economics *(continued)*

### Existing home sales expected to edge lower but remain strong

Existing home sales climbed to their highest point in nearly 15 years for October, and they likely remained strong in November. Sales have been pushed to these high levels in recent months by falling mortgage rates (down to record monthly lows in November for an eighth straight month), an improving labor market, and a desire for “space” amid the pandemic. The strong pace of existing sales has been surprising, however, given the lack of supply. Over the past two months pending home sales (a leading indicator of reported existing sales) have slipped modestly, perhaps a sign of this supply constraint. It suggests that November existing home sales should edge lower, with our forecast down to an annualized sales pace of 6.66 million units—still the second-fastest pace since early 2006.

### Aided by the low supply of existing homes, new home sales should rise

New home sales have settled at an annualized pace of around one million units in each of the past three months, a level not reached since late 2006. In addition to the strong housing demand factors listed above, the historically low supply of existing homes on the market continues to push homebuyers into the market for new homes. Moreover, the present sales component of NAHB Housing Market Index climbed to an all-time high for November. Consequently, we project an increase in the annualized pace of new home sales for November, up to 1.02 million units.

### Growth in consumer spending is likely to slow

The ending of special pandemic-related government transfer payments plus slower (albeit still strong) job gains suggest that personal income fell for a second consecutive month for November. Additionally, with the jump in COVID-19 infections and the resulting rise in new government mandates, retail sales dipped for the month (especially the retail control measure, down by 0.5 percent—the biggest drop since April). This suggests that spending on goods also fell for the month, although services spending likely still moved higher. We project a modest rise in overall PCE of 0.3 percent for November—the slowest pace since the record decline for April. We also project overall PCE and core PCE inflation measures to both increase by 0.2 percent for November, moving the 12-month trend rate to these to 1.3 and 1.5 percent, respectively—both remaining well below the Fed’s average inflation target of 2.0 percent.

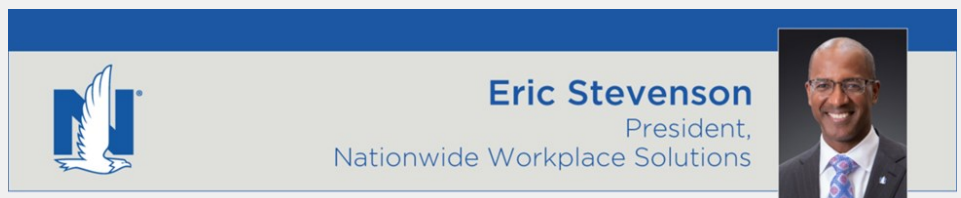
For further information please contact Emanuel Mahand, Program Director of DE/NJ/PA, at [MAHANDE@nationwide.com](mailto:MAHANDE@nationwide.com), or Bina Kumar, Managing Director - East Region, at [kumarb1@nationwide.com](mailto:kumarb1@nationwide.com).

Eric Stevenson, President, Nationwide Workplace Solutions recently had the distinct honor of testifying on Nationwide’s behalf before the Senate Finance Subcommittee on Social Security, Pensions, and Family Policy. The hearing, called “Investigating Challenges to American Retirement Security,” included statement from Subcommittee Chairman Rob Portman (R-OH) and Subcommittee Ranking Member Sherrod Brown (D-OH). Mr. Stevenson had the opportunity to demonstrate Nationwide’s support for the expanded provisions with S-1431, the Retirement Security and Saving Act. This important legislation builds on bipartisan work accomplished by the SECURE Act with more bipartisan solutions that help Americans prepare for and live in retirement.

Mr. Stevenson was one of four witnesses to testify, along with:

- Scott Barr, Financial Advisor - Edward Jones
- Michael P. Kreps, Principal - Groom Law Group
- Josh Luskin, President - NAGDCA

The testimony was livestreamed on Wednesday, December 9.



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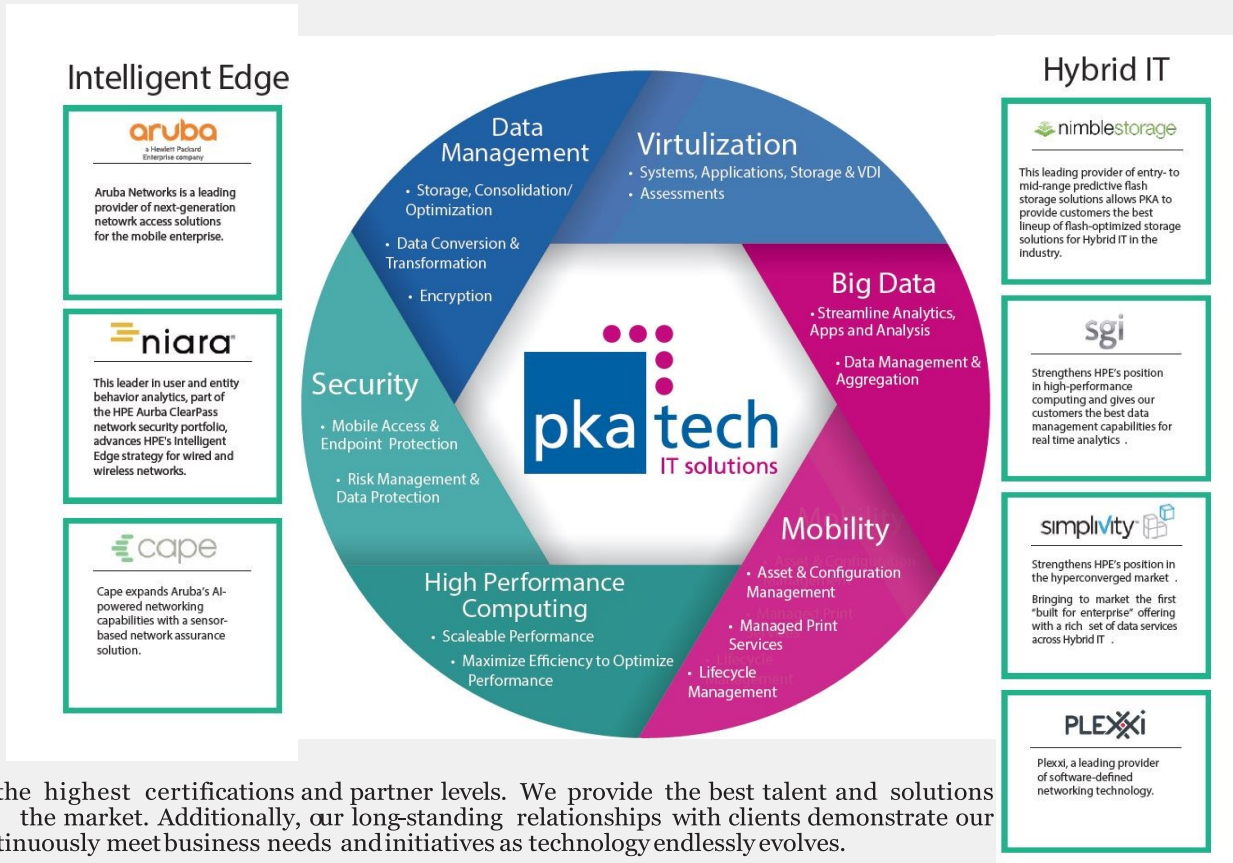
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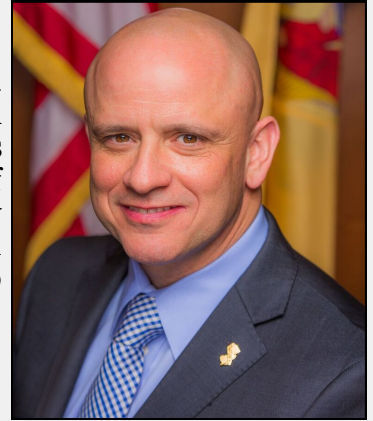
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## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**PENSION BENEFIT ENHANCEMENTS:** On December 17th, the Senate passed **SENATE, No. 1017** (*Gopal D-11/Lagana D-38*), which would provide for an additional category of service retirement for a member of the Police and Firemen's Retirement System (PFRS). NJAC joined the New Jersey State League of Municipalities (NJLM) and the Government Finance Officers Association of New Jersey (GFOA) in opposing this bill for the following reasons: this legislation will enhance member benefits; this legislation will accelerate pension payments to members; and, this legislation will increase the unfunded accrued liability of PFRS.



**John G. Donnadio, Esq.**

Under S-1017, a member of PFRS who is enrolled before or after the effective date of this bill may retire, regardless of age, upon attaining 20 or more years of service credit and receive a retirement allowance equal to 50 percent of the member's final compensation. As such, a police officer hired at the age of 20 could retire at the age of 40. Conservatively assuming this police officer retires as a patrolman at a salary of \$120,000.00 per year and lives until the age of 80, taxpayers would be responsible for paying this police officer in retirement \$2,400,000.00 ( $\$120,000.00 * 50\% = \$60,000.00 * 40 \text{ years}$ ) with \$300,000.00 in accelerated payments by taking retirement 5 years earlier than required under current law. At a time in which the Legislature should be focusing on how to relieve the ever-growing burden on the State's beleaguered taxpayers, this legislation imposes a new and untimely liability. Even more so, given the fact that the Division of Pension and Benefits in the State Department of Treasury recently released the 2021 local government employer billing statements for the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) and the Police and Firemen's Retirement System (PFRS), which included double digit increases in the total contributions for 2021 as summarized in last month's edition of State House News. The companion version **ASSEMBLY, No. 2562** (*DeAngleo D-14/Dancer R-12*) is currently in the Assembly Budget Committee awaiting consideration.

**HEPATITIS B & C TESTING FOR INMATES:** On December 7th, NJAC testified before the Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee on **ASSEMBLY, No. 804** (*Verrelli D-15/Greenwald D-6*), which would require State and county correctional facilities to provide inmates with Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C testing. Although NJAC and the New Jersey County Jail Wardens Association (NJCJWA) commend the sponsors for addressing an important public health matter, the Association is concerned with the practicality and costs associated with implementing this legislation at the county jails. In general, the county jail population is a transient one with 85% - 90% of the inmates classified as pre-adjudicated and most being released within 48 hours under Criminal Justice Reform. Only 10% - 15% of the inmates housed in county jails are sentenced to a term of incarceration or are detained pending a trial. As such, the ability to test, diagnose, and ultimately treat inmates for Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C at county jails would be impractical.

Moreover, as county jails house and process between 9,000 - 12,000 inmates on any given day, the cost to test inmates for Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C would be prohibitive and in violation of the State's Constitution and statutory law since the measure does not include a funding mechanism to offset costs. In accordance with Article VIII, Section II, Paragraph 5 of the State's Constitution and N.J.S.A. 52:13H-1(1)(b), NJAC submits that A-804 would in fact constitute an unfunded mandate as it would require the use of direct county expenditures to test all inmates for Hepatitis B and C; would not authorize resources other than property taxes to offset such direct expenditures; and, would not fall within one of the limited and narrow exemptions. To address our concerns with the unfunded mandate that this legislation would impose, NJAC recommended that the Committee either amend the bill to eliminate county jails from its requirements or provide a funding mechanism to county governments accordingly. NJAC further suggested that a possible way to mitigate expenses would be to limit mandatory testing to inmates sentenced to a term of incarceration or ordered detained pending a pretrial detention hearing; however, the State would still be required to provide funding under the law. Despite our concerns, the Committee favorably reported the measure without any changes to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. The companion version in **SENATE, No. 527** (*Vitale D /Cryan D-19/Stack D-33*) is currently in the Senate Budget and Appropriation Committee awaiting consideration.

# SPECIAL & UNIQUE HOLIDAYS

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1 	2 <b>World Introvert Day!</b> <i>An introvert is best defined as someone who focuses on internal feelings rather than external sources of stimulation.</i>
3 <b>Festival of Sleep Day</b> 	4 <b>Time to Get Cooking</b> It's <b>National Spaghetti Day!</b> <i>Make Your Favorite Spaghetti Dish Tonight!</i>	5	6 <b>National Cuddle Up Day!</b> <i>Cuddle up with someone you love or invite your pet up on the sofa for a snuggle session.</i>	7	8	9 <b>National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day!</b> <b>(LEAD)</b> <i>Thank You For Your Service!</i>
10	11 <b>National Human Trafficking Awareness Day!</b> <i>Hotline: 1-888-373-7888</i>	12  <i>Thank you!</i>	13 <b>Benjamin Franklin Day!</b> <i>Born on this day in 1706 to a soap and candle maker in England, Benjamin Franklin grew up to become one of the most well-known and celebrated Americans in history</i>	14 <b>Ratification Day!</b> <i>The anniversary of the congressional proclamation of the ratification of the Treaty of Paris, begun a year after on January 14, 1784, at the Maryland State House in Annapolis, Maryland by the Confederation Congress.</i>	15	16 <b>RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DAY</b> JANUARY 16 
17 <b>Kid Inventor's Day!</b> 	 <b>MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY</b> I HAVE A DREAM	19	20 	21 <b>National Hugging Day!!</b> <i>Give a virtual hug, and receive one in return.</i> <i>To all the huggers hang in there. This won't last forever!</i>	22 <b>Celebration of Life Day!</b> <i>This day honors the children and grandchildren who bring joy to our lives. The day is a reminder that each child and each life is to be held as a precious gift.</i>	23 <b>National Handwriting Day!</b> <i>Today is John Hancock's birthday. He was the first person to sign the Declaration of Independence.</i>
24 <i>Do the kind thing and compliment someone today!</i>  It's <b>National Compliment Day!</b>	25	26 <b>National Spouses Day!</b> <i>This is a day set aside to show each other gratitude.</i>	27	28 	29	30 <b>National Croissant Day!</b> 
31						