



New Jersey Gasoline, C-Store, Automotive Association (NJGCA)
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Reasonable and Fair Edition III

*Governor Murphy correct about RESPONSIBILITY
Should small employers be blamed for essential employees with COVID-19?
Small Business community offers compromise That **SCREAMS**
Fair and Reasonable for both employers and essential employees*

Sal Risalvato, Executive Director of the New Jersey Gasoline, Convenience, Automotive Association (**NJGCA**), released the following statement in response to legislation that was sent to the governor's desk:

Last Thursday, the Legislature passed S-2380, a bill which presumes that if an employee at an essential business gets sick with COVID-19, they are assumed to have been infected at work and therefore are eligible for workers compensation payments. The governor has still not made a decision whether to sign, veto, or conditionally veto the bill.

On Wednesday, Governor Murphy asked the people of New Jersey on his daily Coronavirus update to "take responsibility for our actions; and that means no crowded indoor house parties." New Jersey has recently seen its rate of transmission rise to its highest rates since April, with officials predicting this trend will continue. House parties and events where partygoers are not social distancing or following mask rules throughout the state recently have largely been to blame for these. Earlier last week, the governor reported "we are now back, plus or minus, to where we were roughly a month ago in the daily numbers of new cases."

Risalvato responded, “Governor Murphy is 100% correct when he says that we must take responsibility for our actions. Yes we must. But isn’t that the point of asking him to conditionally veto S-2380? Gas stations, auto repair shops, and convenience stores are certainly agreeable to accepting a presumption of culpability as their responsibility when it is appropriate. But should others who act irresponsibly be permitted to then place culpability on their employers?”

In a concluding remark Risalvato said, “I emphasize that NJGCA members who operate the gas stations, auto repair shops, and convenience stores in NJ answered the call of duty at great risk from the beginning of this crisis. It is not fair or reasonable to pass a law that automatically assumes blame and responsibility on them when an employee may have contracted this crazy virus outside of the workplace. I reiterate what I have said previously – our request to Governor Murphy for a conditional veto of this legislation SCREAMS fair and reasonable.”

NJGCA has banded together with other Small Business Associations to form a coalition that has asked Governor Murphy to conditionally veto the legislation that was sent to his desk. The coalition has reasonably offered to accept automatic presumption of culpability during the period of time when it was much less likely that an essential employee contracted COVID-19 outside of the workplace, even though it was still possible for that to have happened.

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