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*****MULTIMEDIA*****

WEBBER: CORZINE'S BUDGET IS A FISCAL SHELL GAME

As New Jersey grapples with another budget shortfall that could reach \$2 billion, Assemblyman Jay Webber (R-26, Morris and Passaic) urged the Governor today to stop raiding dedicated revenue sources. The proposed Fiscal Year 2009-10 budget lists at least 14 areas that would have portions of their funds redirected to “balance” New Jersey’s books. Those raids are in keeping with the practices of each of the last three Democratic Governors, who have diverted over \$10.3 billion in revenues from 54 dedicated sources since 2003, all to pay for bloated budgets New Jersey citizens cannot afford.

“The Governor should be taking much less money from taxpayers in the first place, but when the State takes the people’s money and promises to put it toward specifically dedicated programs, the money should stay dedicated,” said Assemblyman Webber. “By raiding established funds, the Governor breaches his duty to the people, exposes programs to underfunding when people need services the most, and causes tax increases to cover the inevitable shortfalls when the dedicated funds run out. Worse, siphoning from dedicated funds drains the people’s trust out of government because their money is not going where the government promised them it would go. Our citizens lose more than their money in these raids — they also lose faith in their elected representatives.”

Assemblyman Webber again highlighted one of the most important and hotly contested issues of this legislative term, the Paid Family Leave fund. At the time the legislation was passed in the General Assembly (March 2008), Assemblyman Webber received a commitment

from the bill's sponsor that the revenue in that fund would be dedicated solely for its intended purpose. To date, no effort has been made to ensure the fund's protection. Video of the sponsor's unfulfilled promise to protect the paid-leave fund can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

"I urge the Governor and the Legislature to reverse course and keep their word to the people of New Jersey by passing a constitutional amendment that protects the people's money from the diversions that define Governor Corzine's budget," said Assemblyman Webber.

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