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Christie Slams Legislature

Governor uses town hall meeting in Cedar Grove to urge the state Legislature to support his budget before it goes on summer break.

By [Elizabeth Moore](#) [Email the author](#) June 20, 2012

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Governor Chris Christie got a warm welcome at Cedar Grove High School during his town hall-style meeting Tuesday — where he used the platform to criticize Democratic legislators whom he said are impeding his budget reforms.

"We have a \$30 billion-plus budget and they haven't even responded to it yet," he said. "I'm still waiting for bills to come to my desk."

He vilified Democratic legislators who oppose him by calling them "Corzine Democrats" and said he'd thought he'd driven "stakes through their hearts" when he was elected in 2009. The governor took jabs at former Gov. Jim McGreevey and state Sen. Dick Codey as well and said New Jersey residents who are waiting for tax relief to come their way from the Democrats should, "Go inside ... it ain't coming."

Christie held his 85th town hall meeting in the high school gymnasium, which was packed with more than 400 people, who filled the venue within minutes of the doors opening. It was mostly a supportive crowd, led by local Republican elected officials including Cedar Grove native state Sen. Kevin O'Toole.

A woman in a blue t-shirt who did not give her name encouraged Christie to consider becoming Mitt Romney's vice president.

"I love your no-nonsense and no bull---- attitude," she quipped. "Will you run?"

Her question was met with a roar of applause, but Christie said he did not think he'd be asked and told her, "If you were a betting woman, I would bet on me being governor in January 2013."

Christie took several audience questions — on everything from cutting military spending nationally, to tort reform, and whether shifting some of the Rutgers campus from Newark to Camden was a good move.

But Christie focused most of his talk on his platform of reducing property taxes and the size of government.

One speaker, Lynne Davies of Cedar Grove, illustrated his point perfectly when she said she was retiring and moving to Delaware because her property taxes would be lower there.

"What are you doing to encourage retirees to stay in New Jersey," she asked.

Christie said he would continue to reduce property taxes, veto attempts to introduce additional taxes, and take a hard look at public spending.

The governor also took a shot at teacher tenure, in response to a question from Millburn School Board member Jean Pasternak who called for greater accountability of school spending.

The governor said he is considering "demanding new benchmarks" for school districts in order to receive certain state aid.

"We have to say results matter," Christie said.

He said he opposes teacher tenure the way it is set up now, but favored incentive raises for teachers who are doing a good job.

The only contentious moment of the meeting came when Madelyn Hoffman, director of NJ Peace Action in Bloomfield, accused him of not renewing the so-called "Millionaire's Tax" which would have required higher taxes for state residents at a certain income level.

Christie shot back at her that it was up to former Gov. Jon Corzine to do that before he left office and it would unfairly target businesses and residents who make \$400,000 a year.

"I'm not going to engage in the class warfare the president is engaged in," retorted the governor, who also responded to someone in the crowd shouting that Corzine should be in jail.

"That was my old job pal," said Christie referring to his stint as the U.S. Attorney. "I can't do anything about that."

Overall, the governor was well received and the crowd gave him a standing ovation as he left the gym to return to Trenton, where he pledged to continue to do battle with his Democratic opponents.

He did give shout outs to state Sen. President Stephen Sweeney and Assembly Speaker Sheila Oliver, whom he said had worked with him to accomplish pension and benefit reforms last year.

"It's great to be in Cedar Grove, you know I'm an Essex County kid," he told the crowd, recounting his birth in Newark and upbringing in Livingston. "This neighborhood of suburban Essex County is my home. It's where I came from."

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watchamean

11:53 pm on Tuesday, June 19, 2012

Hand picked crowds what do you expect BOOING?

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Walter Zimmerman

11:53 pm on Tuesday, June 19, 2012

What a shame for a Republican governor to face the same lack of cooperation, at the state level, that the Democratic President faces from a Republican Congress. And as for 'unfairly targeting' wealthy New Jersey residents, I think they can afford a little targeting, if it helps with Christie's budgetary problems. But better to tax the poor, right?

Flag as inappropriate

Reply



Fran Hopkins

11:53 pm on Tuesday, June 19, 2012

I attended this event and felt hopeful for the future of our state after listening to Governor Christie. He's trying to slow the endless taxing and spending that's driving both individuals and businesses out of our state (and businesses take jobs with them). I support what he's trying to do.

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Reply

Mark Colegrove

Flag as inappropriate

[5:35 pm on Saturday, June 23, 2012](#)

You must have drank the Kool-Aid

Janet Mandel

Flag as inappropriate

[11:53 pm on Tuesday, June 19, 2012](#)

I was there today and I am not a supporter of the Governor. First of all, these are NOT town halls, they are campaign events, complete with banners and a slick video announcing that Christie has saved New Jersey from the brink of disaster. I thought I was playing a Roman citizen in a production of Julius Caesar, and someone was about to offer a crown to Christie. First, Christie gave a long encomium to himself and then, I am convinced, the majority of the questions that followed were staged. They are not really questions; they are opportunities for Christie to wax wonderful about himself and all his accomplishments. Of course no one mentioned the 500 pound gorilla in the room-- no, not Christie, but the riveting New York Times three-day exposé that shows him inextricably entwined in the corrupt and shameful privatization of New Jersey's half-way house/prison system (read all three if you haven't). I was going to talk about how the privatization of NJ schools is having the same disastrous, mercenary effects, but since I didn't flash him the prearranged sign of devotion, he didn't call on me.

[Reply](#)



Dan Grant

Flag as inappropriate

[11:34 pm on Wednesday, June 20, 2012](#)

Of course it was staged and no he will not do anything about property taxes. That isn't going to change until the formula for funding schools changes. He is the perfect Governor for a State that is represented by NJ, Housewives and Jersey Shore. He is basically a bully and largely ignorant of any real way to improve the lives of the people of NJ. He will wind up trashing NJ Education which has up till now put NJ in the top 5 States for decades.

[Reply](#)

Adam

Flag as inappropriate

[11:34 pm on Wednesday, June 20, 2012](#)

Christie is the best hope for our state. He is taking on many of the imbedded problems that have driven our taxes up. The economy had been very good for most of the past 20-30 years and the numbers have gone unchecked across most towns, definitely in Montclair. Montclair's BOE finally started paying attention to and doing work to research what was in its numbers, and for two years in a row, they have come up with surpluses in excess of \$10 million. To a lesser extent, we'd see surpluses like this on the Municipal side if the leadership were willing to require transparency and accountability for all departments.

If meritocracy were put in place for the municipal workers and the school systems, we'd see a lot more productivity with better results for the town services for the residents and educational product for the students. We are lucky to have someone willing to address the hard issues that Christie is addressing as our Governor.

[Reply](#)

Mark Colegrove

Flag as inappropriate

[5:35 pm on Saturday, June 23, 2012](#)

Try better parenting the teacher bashing!



Maxim Sapozhnikov

Flag as inappropriate

[11:34 pm on Wednesday, June 20, 2012](#)

>> And as for 'unfairly targeting' wealthy New Jersey residents, I think they >> can afford a little targeting.

That's what criminals say when they kidnap rich people's children for ransom - "hey, they can afford it!"

[Reply](#)

Wayne's World

Flag as inappropriate

[11:34 pm on Wednesday, June 20, 2012](#)

At the end of the day, I care mainly about taxes and a fairer government. As far as I am concerned, our cities have sucked the life out of our state with virtually no results to show for it. Despite the Abbott funding disaster, schools in all of our major cities continue to be complete failures. County government is wasteful and duplicative - AND should be abolished with abandon. I have NEVER heard any politician even suggest this. At the state level, there should be more focus on core services that benefit everyone and less on ancillary ones, particularly roads, public transport and public safety. To get our budget under control, public workers are going to have to concede some of their benefits which are very generous by today's standard.

What most people, particularly the baby boomers, still don't understand is that our nation is in great flux. GONE is the prosperity of the past 50

years. In a world of rising consumption and dwindling resources, the harsh reality being played out every day is that we MUST to do with less, STARTING NOW. The overspending sins of the past 40 years have come home to roost. The rhetoric is that the "rich" should just pay more. Not only is the concept of "rich" a total fallacy (with exception of the Bill Gates' of the world) but the economics do not support this view. We are ALL being dragged down not just by exterior forces but by America's increasing mediocrity, and then we are told that those of us who still can should PAY for it!

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Hugh Mahon

Flag as inappropriate

11:34 pm on Wednesday, June 20, 2012

It's getting harder for the Governor to run his ongoing campaign meetings and hide behind Corzine's record, Codey's comments or the fact that some in the legislature want another look at the Governor's questionable tax shortfall math. He has always expected a smooth rubber stamp from the "Christicrats" controlled by Democratic political "Bosses" in both the north and south. But just because HE (and his corporate ,out of State backers) think it should be law doesn't make it right for New Jersey.

[Reply](#)

eyes wide shut

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11:34 pm on Wednesday, June 20, 2012

The man with more Chin's than a Chinese phone book likes to look good in front of people picked to support him..This man makes Snooki look like an Ivy League Grad

[Reply](#)

Glen108

Flag as inappropriate

7:52 am on Thursday, June 21, 2012

My property taxes have gone up almost 12% since Mr. Christie became governor. He promised they would go down. Certainly cuts were made to our township's schools, large cuts. The NJ Transit fare I pay to midtown has been raised over 20% and off-peak has been eliminated making that increase over 35%. I read many police officers have been furloughed in NJ. The tolls on the Turnpike and Parkway are higher. Yet I have seen no tax relief whatsoever from this governor, just unfulfilled promises, name-calling and blame and a lot of self-promotion. My bottom line is that I pay thousands(!) more in taxes, fares and tolls for greatly diminished schools, transportation and police.

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Concerned Citizen

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9:26 pm on Thursday, June 21, 2012

Welcome to Republican Politics circa 2012 "I got mine, screw you". The really sad thing is that the so called upper middle and upper class in NJ - those making 250K to \$1M+ a year - don't realize is that once these crooks take everything they can from the poor and the middle class - cutting services, imposing fees, raising taxes - they are coming after you and yours! I can't wait to see the tax increases on those making \$250K to \$1M to pay for tax cuts for those making \$10M annually or more



Maxim Sapozhnikov

Flag as inappropriate

9:26 pm on Thursday, June 21, 2012

Glen, unless you bought another house or had an unfortunate reassessment, your property taxes could not possibly increase 12%. There is a statutory 2% cap, and extra 2% bump is allowed once. During Christie's term, that would amount to 8.1% maximum. Either you lie, or your township violates the law (signed by none other than Gov. Christie).

[Reply](#)

Glen108

Flag as inappropriate

8:25 am on Saturday, June 23, 2012

My township committee (GOP majority) was forced to pre-empt the governor's signature with a very large increase in anticipation of his withdrawal of millions in state funds from our township's schools. It was vital they did, not only for the children but because the high quality of our schools supports our residential real estate market and therefore the tax base. I found his press event for the statute you cite (and base your accusation on) particularly ironic, even cynical, as our large increases had already been announced. Mr. Christie was governor and his pre-statute proposals were a catalyst for our township's need to implement that very large increase that all subsequent legal increases have built upon. His statute half-closed the barn door after the horse had been stolen. With the loss of Race to the Top funds in reported excess of \$400M+ because of his administration's bungling of the application the impact on our township's public schools has been immense and the increasing expenses thrown onto us. I pay the bills. I know the amounts and I can do percentages. My numbers are accurate. As to your argumentative arithmetic, signing a statute that allows a possible 8.1% increase in three years violates his promise to

implement policies that lower property taxes. You post I lie but your numbers are theoretical based on false premises that do not reflect the real results of his tenure. I don't call people I disagree with liars. I desire no further contact with you.



Maxim Sapozhnikov

5:35 pm on Saturday, June 23, 2012

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Glen, compared to the tax increase orgy that Democrats had during Corzine years, I'll take Christie's broken promises any day. The fact that your township chose to screw its residents and upend the law has nothing to do with me and everything with the "GOP majority" you voted in - obviously, Democrats have no monopoly on stupidity and corruption.

j. Gillespie

9:26 pm on Thursday, June 21, 2012

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And last summer Congressman Frelinghuysen cancelled Federal Funds to upgrade the rail lines in NJ to save money.

[Reply](#)

Nose Wayne

9:26 pm on Thursday, June 21, 2012

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Glen, Welcome to New Jersey, The TAXING STATE !!

[Reply](#)

Harry

8:25 am on Saturday, June 23, 2012

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you uniondemocrats have destroyed Jersey.....time for you to move to greece

[Reply](#)

Tom12345

9:42 am on Sunday, June 24, 2012

Flag as inappropriate

Bravo, Harry, I hope there are more people like you live in NJ. You did do the math that is why you know who did destroy the Garden State.

Harry

8:25 am on Saturday, June 23, 2012

Flag as inappropriate

how dumb are Jersey democrATS? Pretty dumb

[Reply](#)

Charlie Hanson

8:25 am on Saturday, June 23, 2012

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"Town Hall" means "Open to the Public". This was not a town hall.

[Reply](#)

benjamin rau

11:46 pm on Monday, June 25, 2012

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Sorry - the state was not built by Christie. Union workers were the people who made this a good place to live. As the numbers decline, so do the taxes they pay decline. Less money for the state to operate on. Christie cost the state more than a billion dollars his first year in office, from giving a tax break to his his friends and losing the \$400 million Race to the Top grant due to his failure to stay on top of the application. Then he continues to fail to pay the mandated state portion of public retirement funds, and blames the workers who have had to pay for his failures for those failings. Recently we see how his push to privatize public services have led to massive abuses. He has taken care of himself and his buddies, and made many members of the public believe he cares about them.

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Mark Colegrove

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10:24 am on Tuesday, June 26, 2012
RIGHT ON THE MONEY!

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