

## Corzine signs bill easing college credit transfers

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New Jersey college students will find it easier to transfer credits from two-year colleges to four-year institutions under a law signed yesterday by Gov. Corzine.

Starting Sept. 1, 2008, college students who complete associate degrees will not have to repeat courses when pursuing baccalaureate degrees. The new program will require four-year schools to accept community college credits.

The bill, signed by the governor at Camden County College, was sponsored by Assemblywoman Pamela R. Lampitt (D., Camden), Assemblyman Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr. (D., Middlesex), Assemblyman Craig A. Stanley (D., Essex), and Assemblyman Michael J. Doherty (R., Warren and Hunterdon).

Lampitt said she got the idea for the legislation while meeting voters on the campaign trail two years ago. A woman complained that some of her daughter's college credits from a community college were not accepted when she transferred to a four-year school. Her worries prompted Lampitt to look into the issue.

"Many students have had to repeat courses," Lampitt said. "That's just not right."

Corzine noted that many students now needlessly spend money and time repeating courses.

"This partnership will eliminate that burden," he said.

Lampitt also said the new program will strengthen the NJ STARS scholarship program, which encourages high school seniors in the top 20 percent of their school classes to consider community colleges after graduation. NJ STARS students who finish community college with at least 3.0 grade-point average get more state aid to attend a four-year college, so the state now pays twice for any courses that do not transfer.

The new law does not require private colleges to participate.

Lampitt said public higher education institutions will report to a state commission that will ensure compliance.