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For Immediate Release

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## **THE NEW JERSEY AVIATION ASSOCIATION ASKS FOR LAW TO PREVENT THE MISAPPROPRIATION OF STATE FUNDS**

The New Jersey Aviation Association, representing the multi billion-dollar business aviation industry, today called for a state law to prevent funds

collected for a specific purpose from being diverted to other uses.

The Association proposed this action after it was revealed that approximately half the funds collected from an increase of \$3 in motor vehicle registration

fees were being diverted to uses other than that intended by the law. The funds were intended for state trooper training classes and the replacement

of the state's aging fleet of Medical Evacuation (medevac) helicopters.

"This is a clear cut misappropriation of funds," said Arlene Feldman, president of NJAA. "It is actually a violation of the intent of the law which created the

increase in fees and stated the specific uses for which those funds were to be used."

This has happened before. For many years, monies intended for aviation safety projects were used to pay salaries and office expenses. Fortunately,

that practice has been discontinued.

Senate Majority Leader Stephen Sweeney (D-Gloucester) was quoted in the press to the effect that when the bill was passed Republicans demanded

a promise that the funds be used as originally intended.

The fee increase was approved in July 2006, shortly before Governor Corzine assumed office. Since then \$30 million of the money that has been collected

has gone to uses other than that which the law intended.

According to Attorney General Anne Milgram expects approval of a medevac helicopter order shortly.. Milgram stated that the Department of the

Treasury makes funding decisions, however, she pointed out that legislators could override existing laws in the state budget. They do that regularly.

That is exactly why we need a law to close this loophole,” said NJAA’s president.