

EXECUTIVE OFFICE



INTER-COMMUNICATION

From: Donald Linky 72To: Governor ByrneDate: July 1, 1981(Institution or Department)

Re: Pinelands

In view of the substantial controversy which has erupted upon the introduction of Steve Perskie's Pinelands amendments while you were away, I expect that there will be substantial pressure on you to take a public position on the bill. The bill was introduced with considerable confusion over whether it had your endorsement. It has clearly provoked comments in the press that you have weakened your basic commitment to the Pinelands.

I see no benefit in continuing to negotiate with Perskie, and urge that you state publicly that you see no reason to amend the Pinelands Act during this Legislature. I believe that the risk to your lasting record of achievement with the Pinelands is far more important than any consideration for Perskie's purported constituency.

The issue at this point is more with the perception of your commitment than with the details of the bill. In my view, the bill is still a retreat from the basic goals of the Act, and the public criticism of it is justified. Nevertheless, even if the bill is further amended, I cannot see how we would avoid the image that you have backed off on your strongest stand on a principle during the second term of this Administration. Your record would risk being qualified by a purported compromise which, in my judgment, does nothing to insure the long-term survival of the preservation program. If anything, a successful effort by Perskie this year to weaken the Act with you as Governor would appear only to encourage further attempts to weaken the Act in future years with a governor who has less of a personal stake and commitment to this initiative.

While you may wish to reassert that you would sign legislation only if it has the support of a majority of the Pinelands Commission, you might also consider a statement that you feel the issue of any changes be debated during the election campaign and any amendments considered by the incoming Legislature and Governor.