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**To:** Veldran, KatherineKatherineVeldran@gov.sc.gov  
**Date:** 9/24/2014 7:33:56 PM  
**Subject:** CHIVUKULA STATEMENT ON DIWALI, FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS | Politicker NJ

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## CHIVUKULA STATEMENT ON DIWALI, FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

By [Gita Bajaj](#) | November 4th, 2013 - 3:58pm

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CHIVUKULA STATEMENT ON DIWALI, FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

(TRENTON) Assembly Deputy Speaker Upendra J. Chivukula sends best wishes on the occasion of Diwali, the Indian festival of lights, celebrated by an estimated one billion people worldwide. The five-day festival which started on Sunday, November 3, continues through Thursday, November 7, 2013.

Diwali is the most popular Indian festival celebrated by a majority of the state's Indian-American population including Hindus, Jains, Sikhs and Buddhists. At more than 3.2 percent, Indian-Americans are the largest component of New Jersey's fastest-growing Asian-American group, which accounts for an estimated nine percent of the state's nearly nine million population.

CHIVUKULA (D-Somerset\Middlesex) issued the following statement:

"In the spirit of Diwali, the Indian festival of lights, my best wishes for the material, physical and spiritual well being of the people of New Jersey;

"Diwali is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Deepavali,' which means a row of lights. During the festival, the faithful light their homes and businesses with diyas, which are decorate clay lamps fired by oil;

"The lighting of the lamp signifies a desire for illumination by spiritual knowledge over the darkness of ignorance. These lamps are kept lit throughout the night to invoke the blessings of Laxmi, the Hindu Goddess of spiritual and material wealth;

"The lamps of Diwali also illuminate a path to understanding and awareness of a rich heritage. For those interested in capturing the spirit of the festival, a walk down Oak Tree Road in Edison or Newark Avenue in Jersey City could be an illuminating experience;

"It is the mingling of cultures and traditions that helps us open our hearts and minds to each other and deepens our human experience. It is the cross pollination of ideas and ideology that fosters our coexistence in harmony;

"Perhaps the unity in our diversity is aptly illustrated in the Sanskrit verse below which reverberates through many Indian homes during the festival of Diwali and could apply to people of all faiths;

Sanskrit Shloka from Upanishad

ॐ असत्ंमंसदगमय ।  
तमसंमंजयत्तस्मिमय ।  
मृत्योरममृतगमय ।  
ॐ शान्तिश्शान्तिश्शान्तिः॥

Om Asato Ma Sad-Gamaya  
Tamasoma Jyotir-Gamaya  
Mrityor-ma Amritam Gamaya  
Om Shaantih, Shaantih, Shaantih

Translation

Lead us from the Untruth to the Truth  
Lead us from the Darkness of ignorance to the Light of spiritual knowledge  
Lead us from Mortality to Immortality or the Eternal  
Om, Peace, Peace, Peace

"A measure (AR-123) I sponsored honors an important tradition of a burgeoning segment of our state's population by urging New Jersey school districts with high Indian-American populations to declare the first day of the five-day festival of Diwali a holiday. The measure provides all Indian-American children with the opportunity to celebrate this wonderful festival with their family and friends."

Under current state law, Diwali is included in the list of religious holidays during which students are permitted to be absent from school. The statute ensures that a student's absence on a religious holiday will be recorded as an excused absence and that the student cannot be deprived of any opportunity for any award or of the right to take an alternative test or examination.

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## The Back Room

### Monmouth U Poll: 21% believe Christie went to Mexico to build NJ trade relations

Gov. Chris Christie's job approval ratings have declined by a small but notable amount since this summer. The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* found that his out-of-state travel and the surrounding presidential buzz, which had been a positive asset in the past, may be a factor in this slight downturn. On the other hand, he appears to continue to weather the ongoing Bridgegate investigation. In fact, most New Jerseyans say it's time to wrap up the legislative inquiry even though they don't believe the governor has come clean.

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### CD3: firefighter letter sparks questions in labor

### The Wire: Christie's Springsteen vulnerability

### Soliman to host fundraising luncheon for Fulop

### Donovan burnishes GOP support with co-chairs

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## Wake-Up Call

## Morning Digest: September 24th

Mobbed - again - in CT diner, Christie says he's here to show Foley is 'the kind of Republican that Chris Christie supports' STAMFORD, CT - Round two of Chris Christie's stumping streak with Republican hopeful Tom Foley in Connecticut shared many of the same optics as the New...

## Op-Ed

### Legislation needed for publicly financed gubernatorial elections

By JEFF BRINDLE It is critical that the Legislature soon enact a pending bill that would ensure the state's Gubernatorial Public Financing Program is available in the event of a special election for governor. Not only is there no current legal... [Read More >](#)

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### Five ideas for strengthening the state's political parties

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(Trenton, NJ) -- On September 23, 2015 I shall dig this up and eat whatever crow I've got coming, but in the meantime only a listicle... [more »](#)

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**Sports and politics do mix: Welcome the next NFL Commissioner, Condi Rice** There are many sports fans who insist on believing that old bromide that sports and politics do... [more »](#)

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*The following letter was sent today to Republican state legislators, county chairs, state committee members, and New Hampshire...* [more »](#)

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## Quote of the Day

### quote of the day

"For a sign of the GOP worries, just look at whose names have cropped up in the last month as prospective candidates: Mitt Romney and Jeb Bush. It's a direct result of the growing anxiety that Republicans lack a statesman-like candidate who can compete with Hillary Clinton on stature. Romney's prescient warnings during the 2012 presidential debates about the geopolitical threat posed by Russia and the risk of prematurely withdrawing troops in Iraq have sparked a wave of

nostalgia for a third campaign."

- National Journal

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## Poll

Who wins this 2017 general election match-up for governor?:

A. Randy Brown

B. Steven Fulop



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6. MacArthur: 'I support strong action' in Syrian, Islamic State conflict
7. Former Tick Tock Diner manager gets 8 years for plotting to kill his uncle
8. NBC News: Federal charges ruled out for Christie in Bridgegate scandal
9. Quintana calls for Newark summit with Christie; on a 2015 Primary: 'I see it as very difficult to beat the machine'
10. Nurses and healthcare workers back Tedesco and Cho in Bergen County

1. Christie: Mroz and Chivukula to BPU
2. CD2: Hughes goes up on television for the first time
3. Assembly Higher Ed Committee releases Cryan's tuition assistance bill
4. Fulop fundraises for Lake Como mayoral candidate
5. Lawmakers, agency reps spar over bill to dissolve Waterfront Commission
6. Menendez's bill for Ukrainian military assistance, Russia sanctions, passes out of committee
7. Echoing Christie, O'Toole says SCI should end its 'legislative meddling'
8. Former Manalapan Mayor found guilty on 11 counts, including wire and mortgage fraud and obstruction of justice
9. Sources: intensified talks around legislative committee examining Bridgegate spark backroom interpretations
10. NBC News: Federal charges ruled out for Christie in Bridgegate scandal

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