WHEREAS, it is critical that all public officials earn and maintain the respect and confidence of the people they represent; and

WHEREAS, those in government hold positions of public trust that require adherence to the highest ethical standards of honesty, integrity and impartiality; and

WHEREAS, all public servants must avoid conduct which violates their public trust or which creates a justifiable impression among the public that such trust is being violated; and

WHEREAS, it is a priority of my Administration to restore the public trust and public confidence in State government; and

WHEREAS, a necessary first step in this process is to reassess the effectiveness of the ethical standards and training that guide the conduct of State officers and employees within the Executive Branch of government and the independent State authorities; and

WHEREAS, while the Executive Commission on Ethical Standards has performed a valuable role in interpreting and providing guidance on existing State ethics laws, it is important that the State of New Jersey seek additional independent review and analysis of existing ethical laws and standards;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RICHARD J. CODEY, Acting Governor of the State of New Jersey, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the Statutes of this State, do hereby ORDER and DIRECT:

1. The State of New Jersey shall engage Special Counsel for Ethics Review and Compliance (hereinafter "Special Counsel"). The Special Counsel shall be appointed by and report directly to the Acting Governor.

2. Within 120 days from the date of this Order, the Special Counsel shall conduct an Ethics Compliance Audit to identify potential improvements in ethics laws, regulations, codes, training, compliance monitoring and enforcement. The Special Counsel shall report the results of the Ethics Compliance Audit to the Acting Governor.

3. Within 120 days from the date of this Order, the Special Counsel shall present to the Acting Governor a comprehensive Ethics Report on improvements to existing ethics laws, regulations and codes and a Compliance Plan that will mandate measures that the Office of the Governor and each Executive Branch agency and independent authority must adopt in order to improve and strengthen compliance with State ethics laws.

4. The Special Counsel shall, in conjunction with the Executive Commission on Ethical Standards, develop and implement a mandatory Ethics Training Program for Executive Branch officers and employees and for the independent authorities.

5. The Special Counsel shall review the requirements of Executive Order No. 10 (2002), the Code of Conduct for the Governor and the Code of Conduct for the staff of the Office of the Governor and shall recommend any appropriate changes to the Acting Governor.
6. This Order shall take effect immediately.

GIVEN, under my hand and seal this 17th day of November in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Four, and of the Independence of the United States, the Two Hundred and Twenty-Ninth.

/s/ Richard J. Codey

Acting Governor

[seal]

Attest:

/s/ Paul T. Fader

Chief Counsel to the Governor