

# Longport's DiLorenzo wraps up S.J. Chamber term filled with accomplishments

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Southern New Jersey

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With more than 3,000 members from seven counties, the Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey was founded 146 years ago in 1873. Now as President Deborah P. DiLorenzo counts the days to her retirement at the end of this month, on behalf of the chamber's board of directors, I'd like to recognize and applaud DiLorenzo's many accomplishments at our helm.

A longtime resident of Longport, DiLorenzo isn't just revered by chamber members, who are a who's who of South Jersey business leaders, she is widely respected on both sides of the political aisle.

And thanks to her, the chamber is universally regarded as the voice of South Jersey business in Trenton.

Critical to Atlantic County in 2016 with DiLorenzo's leadership, the chamber fought the expansion of gaming outside of Atlantic City by forming and leading the grassroots coalition to oppose the 2016 ballot question. The "No North Jersey Casinos" Coalition is credited with playing a major role in the defeat by voters of the proposed constitutional amendment.

Back in 2011, Gov. Chris Christie named DiLorenzo to the Hanson Commission, which he formed for recommendations on how to make gaming prosper. Christie then appointed DiLorenzo to the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority. She was reappointed in 2013 and 2017 and currently chairs the Convention Center & Marketing Committee.

In 2005, DiLorenzo formed the chamber's Board Council on Responsible Government Spending and then proceeded to research, write and release, over a four-year period, three reports containing more than 100 recommendations, which if implemented represented \$1 billion in taxpayer savings. These well-researched ideas gained the chamber incredible accolades and the positive attention of state political and business leaders alike.

DiLorenzo credits these reports with landing her a spot on Gov.-elect Chris Christie's 10-person Transition Executive Committee in 2009. Christie also appointed DiLorenzo chair of the New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development subcommittee.

DiLorenzo is the chamber's first woman president and she recruited Kathleen Davis, the first woman COO. In 2010, the first woman chaired the chamber's board of directors. Since 2000, the year I joined the chamber, the number of female and minority representatives on the board has doubled.

I feel so fortunate to be one of them, representing a very small business among South Jersey's largest employers. I serve on the chamber's board of directors because DiLorenzo personally committed long ago to a chamber leadership that better reflects the regional business community.

There is so much to applaud DiLorenzo for including her successful five-year chamber leadership succession plan to put homegrown future leaders in place

and her leadership of the chamber's effort in 2016 to reinstate New Jersey's reciprocal income tax agreement with Pennsylvania, which has been in place for more than four decades. Doing away with the agreement would have negatively impacted tens of thousands of residents who live in New Jersey and work in Pennsylvania.

As this chapter of DiLorenzo's career ends and a new one begins, on behalf of the chamber's board of directors, I want to thank DiLorenzo for everything she's done to advance business in South Jersey.

And on a personal note, I'll cherish her friendship and support of my business for a very long time.

*Lisa Simon, of Cherry Hill and Margate, is the CEO of Spryte Communications, a health-care public relations firm. She is ending her six-year term on the Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey Board of Directors.*