



Opinion: New Jersey's troubled fiscal state inspires little confidence in Christie administration

christie budget crop.jpg

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie gestures as he gives details on his 2014 state budget in Trenton, in this Feb. 26, 2013 file photo. *(AP Photo/Rich Schultz)*

Times of Trenton guest opinion column By **Times of Trenton guest opinion column**
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By Carl Golden

The disclosure last week that the Christie administration had overstated anticipated state revenues yet again — this time by some \$275 million — has added to the growing perception that the state's finances are in a shambles and unlikely to recover anytime soon.

Overly optimistic revenue estimates have been a near constant in the administration, requiring hasty mid-year or end-of-year scrambling to cut spending, divert funds from other sources and postpone one year's obligations into the next.

The impact this year has been made even more severe by the closing of four casino hotels in Atlantic City and the shutdown of a fifth looming in November, further reducing revenue for both state and local governments, to say nothing of the loss of nearly 8,000 jobs.

Moreover, the state's bond rating — the cost of borro

Whatever the administration proposes in 2015 will play out in a heavily political environment — the Assembly elections in November, a decision by Christie on his own future, and continued jockeying for inside position by Democrats interested in seeking the governor's office.

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