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ALBANO, MILAM & WAGNER **TOUT 'MADE IN THE USA' FLAG BILL**

(TRENTON) – With Independence Day weekend’s arrival, Assembly members Nelson Albano, Connie Wagner and Matt Milam today noted legislation they’ve sponsored would require the state to buy only United States and New Jersey flags manufactured in the United States.

“It makes absolutely no sense to allow even one dime of the public’s money to be spent on an American flag made anywhere but in America,” said Albano (D-Cumberland /Atlantic/Cape May). “It is bad enough that our state and nation’s manufacturing bases have largely evaporated as jobs were shipped elsewhere. Buying the most-recognized symbol of our nation from overseas just adds insult to injury.”

The lawmakers said the measure (A-1784) is needed to send the strong message that using taxpayer funds to purchase flags made overseas is an insult to hard-working American families.

“Residents have a reasonable and justifiable expectation that state and national flags bought with their tax dollars are made here,” said Wagner (D-Bergen).

Under federal law, every flag sold in the United States must clearly identify its country of origin. According to the Flag Manufacturers Association of America, four domestic flag producers meet the group’s “Made in the USA” requirements, including Annin & Co. of Bergen County.

“The flags of our country and our state represent more than two centuries of shared sacrifice and the promises of freedom and liberty,” said Milam (D-Cumberland /Atlantic/Cape May). “Allowing public funds to finance corporations that produce flags overseas is a smack in the face of everyone who takes pride in New Jersey and our nation.”

The bill recently passed the Assembly 78-0 and the Senate 39-0.

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