

The New York Times

## City Room

Blogging From the Five Boroughs

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MAY 16, 2013, 5:36 PM

### New Jersey Lawmakers Use Manhattan City Hall to Push Tobacco Plan

By [JAVIER C. HERNANDEZ](#)

It had all the trappings of a city news conference, including a starring role for the City Council speaker. But the topic at hand in City Hall's Red Room on Thursday was New Jersey.

A team of lawmakers from across the Hudson joined Christine C. Quinn, the Council speaker, to announce a plan to raise New Jersey's age to legally buy cigarettes, to 21 from 19, modeled on a [similar proposal](#) introduced by Ms. Quinn in New York City last month.

The sight of the New Jersey politicians caused some confusion in a room that is usually reserved for city business.

Richard J. Codey, a state senator and former governor, said he agreed the spectacle was odd. But he explained that he saw the issue as national and that he was eager to appear in New York after Ms. Quinn made the invitation.

"When we have more people on board it makes us stronger, not weaker," he said.

Ms. Quinn, a Democratic candidate for mayor, promised to hold the next event in Trenton.

Mr. Codey, also a Democrat, interjected. "Hopefully you'll come as the mayor."

"New Jersey's lips to God's ears," Ms. Quinn said.

Later, when a reporter asked if Mr. Codey was prepared to endorse the speaker for mayor, Ms. Quinn jokingly said, "Moving on."

Mr. Codey walked to the podium and said Ms. Quinn had not asked him. "I like a lady to ask," he said.

Mr. Codey endorsed Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg for a third term in 2009.