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**Murphy pandemic response will be**

**overnor's race**

Rep bl cans ro sed that M rphy was lty of over-reliance on e ec t ve orders sett n pol c es and cond t ons by fat bypass n the Le slat re. They acc sed h of shandl n the response to cond t ons n n rs n ho es and lon -ter care fac l t es res lt n n tho sands of the v lnerable elderly fall n ll and dy n .

The pande c too a s n f cant toll on those n veterans' fac l t es n Para s and Menlo Par a d co pla nts that proper safety protocols were nored and protect ve eq p ent n short s pply.

For er So erset Co nty Asse bly an Jac Cattarell the pres pt ve Rep bl can bernator al no nee has ept p steady cr t c s of M rphy's handl n of the cr s s e phas n the pact on s all b s nesses dr ven nto clos res and ban r ptes.

There s no q est on that M rphy has oved w th ca t on n ov n toward a restorat on of pre-pande c l fe. He's defended h s act ons as ded by sc ent f c ev dence and the e pert se of p bl c health profess onals.

H s rat onale has held p well and w th vacc nes ava lable red ct ons n nfect ons hosp tal at ons and fatal t es the lon so ht "ret rn to nor alcy" ay be at hand.

If for nstance crowds thron beaches and boardwal s on Me oral Day J ly 4 f rewor s l ht p the s y and "bac to school" sn't j st a reta l sale M rphy w ll e er e as a far ore for dable cand date.

New Jerseyans w ll re e ber the phrases ntrod ced nto the vernac lar th s past year — "flatten the c rve re ote learn n as p soc al d stanc n contact trac n " — b t t w ll be w th a sense of rel ef that they've end red and w ll reward M rphy for t.

There have been ssteps and flawed j d ents by the ad n strat on lar ely beca se t confronted an nprecedented cr s s for wh ch there was no h story or pr ore per ence to fall bac on.

In a ca pa n sett n these q est ons w ll be ra sed b t they st be presented as le t ate pol cy d fferences rather than part san second- ess n .

It will be necessary for Murphy to fend off the critics