

# ASSEMBLY HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### **ASSEMBLY, No. 1654**

with committee amendments

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: MAY 6, 2010

The Assembly Health and Senior Services Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 1654.

As amended by the committee, this bill requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to provide certain information relating to child abuse and neglect to parents of newborn infants.

The bill provides specifically as follows:

- DCF is to include information in both English and Spanish about the availability of home visitation resources and tips on child safety in the resource guide concerning child abuse and neglect that hospitals and birthing facilities currently provide to parents of newborn infants pursuant to section 1 of P.L.1998, c.136 (C.26:2H-12.6a). (DCF oversees the home visitation program, which is designed to improve the physical and emotional health and well-being of infants, children, and families through community-based education and support to families in their homes.)
- The term, "pamphlet" is replaced by the term, "resource guide" in order to reflect the terminology used by DCF.
- In addition to the resource guide, DCF, in consultation with the Department of Health and Senior Services, is to prepare a pamphlet in both English and Spanish that includes information on the prevention of shaken baby syndrome and detailed suggestions for how to cope with a crying baby.
- The pamphlet is to be distributed to each parent present during the infant's birth, by the personnel at a hospital or birthing facility, prior to the mother's discharge, as part of the hospital or birthing facility's discharge procedures.
- DCF is to distribute the pamphlet to all hospitals and birthing facilities in the State at no charge, update it as necessary, and make additional copies available to health care providers upon request.

As reported by the committee, this bill is similar to Senate Bill No. 573 (1R) (Beach/Sweeney), which is pending before the Senate.

The bill is also similar to Assembly Bill No. 725 (1R) of 2008 (Greenwald/Fisher/Munoz/Tucker), which was reported by this committee during the prior session, passed the General Assembly by a

vote of 78-0-0 on February 5, 2009, and was pending in the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee at the conclusion of the 213th Legislature.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2010-2011 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

#### COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amendments to the bill:

- delete the requirement that a health care professional, designated by the hospital or birthing facility, discuss the information contained in the resource guide with the newborn infant's parents prior to the mother's discharge, as part of the hospital or birthing facility's discharge procedures;
- require that the resource guide include information about the availability of home visitation resources; and
- require DCF to prepare, and hospitals and birthing facilities to distribute to parents of newborn infants, a pamphlet that includes information on the prevention of shaken baby syndrome and detailed suggestions for how to cope with a crying baby.