

ASSEMBLY COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 1104

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: DECEMBER 3, 2018

The Assembly Commerce and Economic Development Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 1104.

As reported, this bill would establish a New Jersey “Economic Gardening Program.” Economic gardening is an approach to economic growth and development that provides assistance to existing small businesses which qualify as “second-stage growth businesses.”

Under the bill, a business qualifies as a “second-stage growth business” if it:

- has maintained its principal place of business in New Jersey for at least the last two years;
- has annual revenues totaling between \$600,000 and \$50,000,000;
- employs at least five but not more than 100 full-time employees;
- demonstrates growth in annual revenue or jobs, or both, in two of the last five years;
- delivers products or services to customers outside the business’ local market area or demonstrates the capacity to do so;
- is in a target industry; and
- is organized for profit to perform a lawful, commercial function.

The bill directs the Business Action Center to establish the program, and to work in conjunction with the New Jersey Economic Development Authority and State, local, and private business assistance entities to develop and promote the program.

The program would provide qualified businesses customized services tailored to their needs in the form of personalized counseling or management consulting. These services would include:

- review of core business strategies,
- market research and business development, and
- guidance on increasing a business’ visibility and credibility.

The bill authorizes the Business Action Center to partner with business assistance organizations to provide services to qualified businesses.

The bill provides for a General Fund appropriation of an amount necessary to effectuate the purposes of the bill and allows the Business

Action Center to seek and accept gifts, grants, or donations from private or public sources for funding the costs of program services.

The bill requires the Business Action Center to report on the program annually to the Governor and the Legislature.