

# ASSEMBLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### **ASSEMBLY, No. 1428**

with committee amendments

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: FEBRUARY 12, 2018

The Assembly Women and Children Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 1428.

As amended by the committee, this bill directs the Commissioner of Education to develop and administer a three-year Child Trafficking Awareness Pilot Program to provide school district staff in selected districts with training about the warning signs and risk factors associated with child trafficking and how to prevent it. The purpose of the pilot program will be to train public school teachers, staff, and students about child trafficking, including risk factors and warning signs, and ways to identify student victims of child trafficking and help prevent child trafficking in schools. The program will include information based on research that promotes a greater understanding of: risk factors that make children more susceptible to becoming a victim of child trafficking; recruitment methods of traffickers; the behavioral indicators that a student may be a victim of child trafficking; how to report suspected cases of child trafficking to school administrators and law enforcement; and strategies to prevent children from becoming victims of child trafficking.

Under the bill, the commissioner is required to provide pilot districts with a list of resources from established and reliable sources for training teachers, staff, and students and sample school policies and protocols for identifying a suspected victim of child trafficking and responding to a disclosure from a suspected victim. At the program's conclusion, the commissioner is required to submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature on the implementation of the pilot program and the commissioner's recommendation on the feasibility of implementing the program on a Statewide basis.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2018-2019 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

#### COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amended the bill to stipulate that the pilot program established in the bill would provide school district staff and students with training about the warning signs and risk factors associated with child trafficking and how to prevent child trafficking, instead of how

to identify and respond to child trafficking, as originally provided in the bill.

The committee amendments clarify that students, along with teachers and staff, would also be included in the training provided by the pilot program, and that the program would train teachers, staff, and children about child trafficking, including risk factors and warning signs.

The committee also amended the bill to mandate that: the information provided by the pilot program be based on research and include information that promotes a greater understanding of strategies to prevent children from becoming victims of child trafficking; and the commissioner provide pilot districts with a list of resources from established and reliable sources for training teachers, staff, and students.