

ASSEMBLY HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4801

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 7, 2019

The Assembly Health and Senior Services Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 4801.

As amended, this bill establishes the New Jersey Violence Intervention Program (NJVIP).

Specifically, the bill requires the Office of the Attorney General to establish, advertise, and administer grants through the NJVIP, conduct program evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the violence intervention programs, and provide written reports to provide transparency regarding the effectiveness of the programs, and hold public forums to gather community input regarding the programs.

The bill requires the Office of the Attorney General to award funds from the New Jersey Violence Intervention Program on a competitive basis to municipalities, health agencies, law enforcement agencies, hospitals, and non-profit organizations that serve communities with disproportionately high rates and numbers of homicides and other incidents involving the use of firearms, as determined by the Office of the Attorney General.

The bill provides that the Office of the Attorney General is to prioritize certain applicants, such as applicants whose proposals do not contribute to mass incarceration, and applicants who are hospital-based or hospital-linked violence intervention programs, which are to receive first priority, as provided for in the bill. The bill also provides for grant application guidelines.

The bill permits the Office of the Attorney General to use up to eight percent of the funds appropriated or made available, or such percentage as may be authorized under program guidelines for funding made available to the New Jersey Violence Intervention Program through federal funding sources, for technical assistance and for the costs of implementing and administering the program, including but not limited to employment of dedicated grants management and programmatic personnel, and annual program evaluation and analysis of the effectiveness of violence reduction initiatives. These evaluations are to be made available to the public.

The bill requires that the Office of the Attorney General annually hold three public hearings: one hearing in each of the northern,

central, and southern regions of the State. The public input are to be used to assess whether the grant-making metrics and process for issuing grants needs to be revised.

The bill requires the Office of the Attorney General to provide a report to the Legislature annually on the activities of the program, descriptions of the initiatives and impact on communities served through the grants, and any other information the Office of the Attorney General deems to be appropriate.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments:

- 1) make various technical changes;
- 2) refer to firearm violence;
- 3) define “hospital-based or hospital-linked violence intervention program;”
- 4) remove references to an appropriation, community-based organizations, and grant applications;
- 5) require the Office of the Attorney General to prioritize applicants whose proposals do not contribute to mass incarceration and applicants who are hospital-based or hospital-linked violence intervention programs;
- 6) require a public agency or entity that is not a law enforcement agency and is applying for a grant to include violence reduction or prevention as a major component of its mission;
- 7) provide that grants support initiatives that primarily target a reduction of violence among individuals who have been identified as having the highest risk of perpetrating or being victimized by violence in the near future based on the best available medical and public health research;
- 8) require the Office of the Attorney General to award funds from the New Jersey Violence Intervention Program on a competitive basis to hospitals and give first priority to certain hospitals, as provided for in the bill; and
- 9) permit the Office of the Attorney General to use up to eight percent of available funds to provide technical assistance to the New Jersey Violence Intervention Program.