

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR  
CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

**SENATE, No. 1870**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: FEBRUARY 15, 2018

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1870.

This bill requires the Child Fatality and Near Fatality Review board established pursuant to P.L.1997, c.175 (C.9:6-8.83 et seq.) to study the effects of racial and ethnic disparities on infant mortality.

The purpose of the study would be to: identify Statewide and regional infant death rates, trends, patterns, and racial and ethnic disparities in adverse birth outcomes, and medical, non-medical, and system-related factors that may have contributed to infant deaths and treatment disparities; review the extent to which racial and ethnic disparities in infant mortality in a geographic area indicate the need to increase access to health care services among racial and ethnic populations in that area; and identify ways to reduce or eliminate racial and ethnic disparities that contribute to infant mortality.

When conducting the study, the board would be allowed seek the advice of persons specializing in the fields of neonatal and post neonatal pathology, maternal and infant health, minority health advocacy, or other related fields.

The bill stipulates that within one year of the enactment of the bill and at least every three years thereafter, the board would prepare and submit to the Governor and the Legislature a report containing the study's findings concerning the effects of racial and ethnic disparities on infant mortality and recommendations for legislative or other actions that could be taken to: reduce infant mortality and improve birth outcomes in the State; reduce or eliminate racial and ethnic disparities that contribute to infant mortality; and increase access to health care services among racial and ethnic populations in the State.

Each report prepared by the board pursuant to the bill, with the exception of the first report, would identify the extent to which the board's prior recommendations have been successfully implemented and the impact the implementation of the recommended changes has had on infant mortality in the preceding years.