

SENATE LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2842

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 14, 2019

The Senate Law and Public Safety Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 2842.

As reported the committee, this bill requires the Commissioner of Corrections to institute a 30-minute shift overlap in each of the 13 correctional facilities in this State for the purpose of information dissemination between corrections officers beginning and ending their shifts.

Under the program of shift overlap established in the bill, a corrections officer whose shift has ended would be required to remain at his or her post for 30 minutes after the end of the shift to report what happened during that shift to the incoming officer.

Shift overlap enhances the safety and well-being of the officers and inmates in correctional facilities by allowing for the sharing of information between incoming and outgoing officers, particularly on issues such as gang activities and contraband.

According to the Assembly Prison Gang Violence Task Force final report, issued December 12, 2006, the Department of Corrections historically provided for shift overlap periods of up to 30 minutes, but gradually reduced these periods until they ultimately were altogether phased out due to budget constraints. This has resulted in increased danger to inmates and corrections officers, increased use of institutional lockups and search details, and decreased morale among corrections officers.