

# ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### **SENATE, No. 3585**

with committee amendments

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: MARCH 18, 2019

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 3585, with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill establishes the Office of Homelessness Prevention in the Department of Community Affairs. The purpose of the office is to coordinate among State and local agencies and private organizations that provide services to persons who are homeless or those at risk for homelessness, and to implement a Statewide strategy to address homelessness.

The bill also establishes the “New Jersey Homelessness Prevention Task Force.” The purpose of the task force is to serve as an advisory body to the Office of Homelessness Prevention, to develop recommendations, through an intensive collaborative effort among representatives of State government, providers of services to the homeless, advocacy organizations, and other concerned representatives of the public, and to develop, promote, and support efforts for the most effective means of coordinating and funding programs to meet the various needs of persons within this State who are homeless or at risk for homelessness.

Under the bill, the Office of Homelessness Prevention will compile data on State programs and local coalitions that provide assistance to persons who are homeless. The bill permits the transfer of the Homeless Management Information System, currently administered in the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, to the Office of Homelessness Prevention.

Finally, the bill appropriates \$3 million from the General Fund to the Department of Community Affairs to fund the Office of Homelessness Prevention.

As amended and reported Senate Bill No. 3585 is identical to Assembly Bill No. 5204, as also amended and reported by the committee on this date.

#### COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to revise the findings and declarations; broaden the mission of the New Jersey Homelessness Prevention Task Force; add the Director of the Division of Family Development to the task force; and clarify that members of the task

force may be reimbursed for necessary travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties within the limits of funds available to the task force.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that the bill would result in a \$3 million increase in State expenditures during the fiscal year of enactment, and an indeterminate annual increase in expenditures thereafter, due to the operations of the Office of Homelessness Prevention (office) and the New Jersey Homelessness Prevention Task Force.

The bill appropriates \$3 million from the General Fund to the support the office's first year of operations. The OLS cannot identify the portion of this appropriation that will be used to support (1) the up-front costs of establishing the office, and (2) the ongoing costs of operating the office, nor can the OLS project how long the initial \$3 million appropriation will support these costs. Consequently, the OLS is unable to quantify the annual increase in DCA expenditures that is expected to result from the bill after the first year of enactment.

The following State and local entities may experience a marginal increase in administrative expenses resulting from the requirement to provide certain information to the office concerning persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness: the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Health, the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission, public schools, municipalities, counties, and the Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority.

The bill also authorizes the transfer of the Homeless Management Information System, which is currently administered by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA), to the office. Any funds currently allocated by the NJHMFA to support the system would also be transferred to the DCA. No information is available to the OLS on the current cost to the NJHMFA of administering the system.