

ASSEMBLY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
AND AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
**ASSEMBLY, No. 698**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: JUNE 16, 2021

The Assembly Community Development and Affairs Committee reports favorably an Assembly Committee Substitute for Assembly Bill, No. 698.

Under current law, the New Jersey Department of Corrections and each agency that operates a federal facility in this State that incarcerates persons convicted of a criminal offense are required to collect and maintain an electronic record of the residential address of each individual entering their custody. That information is provided to the Secretary of State, who uses that data to adjust the federal decennial census data by reallocating the incarcerated population from the location of the correctional facility as reported by the United States Bureau of the Census to that person's residential address on record. The current law requires the secretary to report the adjusted data to the Apportionment Commission for drawing the State's legislative districts.

This bill expands the current law to require that incarcerated individuals from the State be counted at their residential address on record for municipal, county, and congressional redistricting purposes. Under the bill, the Secretary of State would report the same adjusted data to the members of the New Jersey Redistricting Commission for the establishment of congressional districts; to the members of each county district commission for the establishment of the county districts in such counties electing members of the governing body from districts; and to the members of each ward commission for the establishment of the municipal wards in such municipalities electing members of the governing body from wards. The adjusted data would be the basis for drawing such districts.

As under current law, the bill provides that, to the greatest extent practicable, congressional districts, county districts, and municipal wards must be drawn so as to meet equal population requirements calculated under both the adjusted and non-adjusted datasets, and residences at unknown geographic locations within the State would not be used to determine the ideal population of any set of districts or wards.