

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 2614

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 24, 2021

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 2614 (1R).

This bill, titled the “21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act,” requires the Office of Information Technology and agencies in the Executive Branch of State Government to provide citizens with a modern, digital experience by updating the platforms through which these agencies provide services to businesses and members of the general public.

The bill requires each Executive Branch agency (agency) to submit, within one year following its enactment and every year thereafter, an information technology modernization and improvement plan (plan) to the Chief Technology Officer and Chief Innovation Officer for the State of New Jersey. The plan is to describe how each agency will improve the provision of digital services by leveraging data analytics and related tools to ensure an effective rendering of all publicly facing websites on mobile devices, increasing the use of data analytics to improve website operation, enhancing the delivery of digital services through the adoption of cloud computer services, and digitizing government processes and workflows. Additionally, the plan is to outline ways to improve wireless connectivity Statewide, including underserved urban and rural communities, as well as recommendations to expedite the implementation of the necessary infrastructure for wireless connectivity.

The bill also requires the plan to outline a process to be utilized by the agency to ensure that each agency website intended for public use is mobile-friendly and accessible by persons with disabilities within one year following the submission of each agency’s plan. Each agency’s plan is to be developed within the limits of fiscal and other resources available. Each agency is to make its plan available to the public electronically through a link displayed on its website.

The bill requires the Chief Technology Officer to consult with the Chief Innovation Officer in conducting certain responsibilities. The bill adds the following responsibilities to the role of Chief Technology Officer: 1) to regularly consult with the New Jersey Information Technology Project Review Board to evaluate the feasibility of using artificial intelligence, machine learning, and commercial cloud

computing, as well as other emerging technologies, by agencies to provide public services and the development of data analytics capabilities to enable data-driven policy development by agencies; and 2) to develop a process to promulgate, and update no less than every other year, a set of metrics to assess each agency's implementation of a modern digital experience. The set of metrics are to be reevaluated every three years.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) finds that the bill will result in an indeterminate annual increase in State costs. The bill requires each Executive Branch agency to submit an information technology modernization and improvement plan within one year, and then to ensure that every agency website is mobile-friendly and accessible to persons with disabilities within one year of submitting the plan.

The bill does not provide deadlines for the other provisions of the plan, including enhanced use of data and analytics, enhancing the delivery of digital services, and digitizing government processes and workflows. The bill provides that the plan is to be developed within the limits of fiscal and other resources available to the agency, so the availability of resources is likely to be a constraint upon the ambition and scope of these plans.