ASSEMBLY BUDGET COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]
ASSEMBLY, No. 2722

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 22, 2021

The Assembly Budget Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 2722 (1R).

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 correctional police officers beginning and ending their shifts.

Under the program of shift overlap established in the amended bill, a correctional police 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 were ultimately phased out altogether due to budget constraints.

According to the sponsor, this has resulted in increased danger to inmates and correctional police officers, increased use of institutional lockups and search details, and decreased morale among correctional police officers.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concurs with the Department of Corrections (DOC) that this bill will increase State expenditures. The DOC estimates that a 30-minute shift overlap would cost approximately $30.3 million to the State. The bill would require the Commissioner of the DOC to institute a shift overlap of a 30-minute duration in each of the 13 correctional facilities in the State for the purpose of information dissemination between correctional police officers beginning and ending their shifts.