

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 5752

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 16, 2021

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 5752 (1R).

This bill requires the Commissioner of Corrections to appoint a workforce skills training development officer to administer, enhance, and supplement the workforce skills training programming for inmates in State correctional facilities.

Under current law, the Commissioner of Corrections, in consultation with the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development, is required to establish a mandatory workforce skills training program in each State correctional facility. This bill requires the Commissioner of Corrections to appoint a workforce skills training development officer to administer, enhance, and supplement these programs.

In administering the mandatory workforce training program in each State Correctional facility, the workforce skills training development officer is required to: improve upon the facility's most successful workforce skills training program offerings, as determined by the rate of enrollment and completion of the programs; introduce new workforce skills training program offerings to inmates of the facility; and provide workforce skills training programming, to be modified as needed, which is consistent with actual post-release employment opportunities and reflects the State's emerging industry and business workforce needs.

As amended, the bill provides that the workforce skills training development officer is required, on a regular basis but not less than once per year, to meet with a representative of the New Jersey Business and Industry Association, the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce, the New Jersey State Building and Construction Trades Council, and the New Jersey Council of County Vocational-Technical Schools in order to administer, enhance, and supplement the workforce skills training programming available at a State correctional facility.

The provisions of the bill also require the Commissioner of Corrections to consult with the workforce skills training development officer in promulgating any rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of the mandatory workforce skills training program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) projects an annual indeterminate State expenditure increase to appoint a workforce skills training development officer to administer, enhance, and supplement the workforce skills training programming for inmates in State correctional facilities. The OLS lacks sufficient information to quantify the expenditure increase, as it is unclear if the Department of Corrections (DOC) would need to hire a new person for the position or if current staff responsible for the role would need to put in overtime hours. Furthermore, the bill does not specify the new program offerings for enhanced workforce skills training to be made available by the DOC.