

FISCAL NOTE TO
ASSEMBLY, No. 380

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: August 6, 1996

Assembly Bill No. 380 of 1996 requires the director of the Office of Education in the Department of Corrections to establish remedial reading programs for adult inmates. The bill also requires the department to grant commutation time for good behavior or work credits for the successful completion of the program to persons who were deficient in reading skills.

The Department of Corrections states that remedial reading is currently an integral component of the educational services available to adult aged inmates. Therefore, the Office of Educational Services would not have to create new programs, but would be required to ensure that currently available remedial reading programs have a capacity sufficient to service the needs of an anticipated increase in the number of participants.

As of June 30, 1994, there were approximately 5,018 adult aged pupils whose reading deficits required remedial reading instructions. These pupils were served by approximately 77 certified teachers system wide. Enactment of this bill could have the effect of increasing this population by about 30 to 40 percent as a direct result of the "good time" incentive, increasing the population by 1,505 to 2,007.

The department states that enactment of the bill would require 25 additional certified teachers and one assistant supervisor to handle the increased pupil population, for an annual salary and fringe benefits cost of \$1,327,453. An additional \$301,000 for classroom related materials would be required, for a total first-year cost of \$1,628,453. The cost of providing additional classroom space was not estimated.

The Office of Legislative Services notes that the department's calculations are based on a 30 percent increase in pupil population. If the pupil population increases by 40 percent, or 2,005, 33 certified teachers and one supervisor would be required, for a first-year salary and fringe benefits cost of \$1,734,294. Classroom related materials would be an additional \$401,000, for a total first-year cost of \$2,135,294.

This fiscal note has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67.