

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE TO

[First Reprint]
ASSEMBLY, No. 389

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: NOVEMBER 12, 1996

Bill Summary

Assembly Bill No. 389 (1R) of 1996 establishes four regional diagnostic and treatment centers for child abuse and neglect affiliated with medical centers in the State that meet standards adopted by the Commissioner of Human Services, in consultation with the Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect. Each center's staff shall include, at a minimum, a pediatrician, a consulting psychiatrist, a psychologist and a social worker who are trained to evaluate and treat children who have been abused and neglected and their families. The regional centers would:

- C Evaluate and treat child abuse and neglect,
- C Be a resource for the region and develop additional resources within a region,
- C Provide training and consultative services,
- C Provide 24-hour daily emergency phone consultation,
- C Be a source for research and training for additional medical and mental health personnel dedicated to the identification and treatment of child abuse and neglect, and
- C Provide liaison with the appropriate Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) district office and county prosecutor's office.

The bill appropriates \$1.5 million from the General Fund to implement the program.

Agency Comments:

The Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Office of Management and Budget have not provided any fiscal information on the legislation.

Office of Legislative Services Comments:

To implement the legislation, DHS would issue a Request for Proposal to solicit bids from qualified providers that wish to establish a regional diagnostic and treatment center in each of the four regions of the State. Once proposals are received and reviewed, the adequacy of the \$1.5 million General Fund appropriation can be better determined.

It is noted, however, that funds have been appropriated to DYFS to establish and support diagnostic and treatment centers at medical centers in the State. For example, the FY 1997 appropriations act appropriated \$409,000 for "Regional Child Abuse Treatment Centers" and appropriated \$1 million for "School Based Mental Health/Child Abuse Outreach" which has, in part, been allocated to Northwest Covenant Medical Center for child abuse diagnostic and treatment activities. Other DYFS contracts with medical centers are used in total or in part to provide child abuse diagnostic and treatment

services to children and their families. Whether existing child abuse diagnostic and treatment services provided by medical centers under contract to DYFS would meet the proposed standards that would have to be promulgated by the Commissioner of Human Services, in consultation with the Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, and whether existing programs are staffed in accordance with the bill's requirements is not known.

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

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