

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 482

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JULY 5, 1996

Assembly Bill No. 482 of 1996 permits a certified animal control officer, who has completed appropriate training and is so authorized by the municipal governing body employing or contracting for that certified animal control officer, to investigate and sign complaints and arrest offenders for violations of local and State animal control, animal welfare and animal cruelty laws and ordinances. The bill also clarifies that the training received by certified animal control officers would include training in animal cruelty laws as well as animal control and animal welfare laws. Furthermore, the bill provides that if a certified animal control officer is responsible for the arrest and prosecution of a violator, the fines, penalties and moneys collected would be remitted by the court to the municipality that hired the officer, to be used by the municipality to defray enforcement and training costs. If a local Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals or the New Jersey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is responsible for the arrest, the fines, penalties and monies collected would be remitted to that society as currently provided by law.

Department Comments:

The Department of Health (DOH) and the Office of Management of Budget have not provided any information on the legislation. However, on similar legislation, Assembly Bill No. 1354 of 1994, DOH estimated that its operational costs would increase by \$4,000, \$4,000 and \$2,000, respectively, over the next three fiscal years.

Office of Legislative Services Comments:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) is not able to estimate the cost of the legislation to the State; however, DOH's previous estimates as to the additional costs it anticipates incurring appear to be reasonable. OLS notes that municipalities may incur costs to train certified animal control officers and may realize additional revenues which may defray any additional costs associated with training or enforcement. Such additional costs and revenues cannot be determined.

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.