

ASSEMBLY COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 969

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 15, 1996

The Assembly Community Services Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 969 with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill provides procedures with which the Departments of Human Services, Corrections, and Military and Veterans' Affairs must comply prior to implementing a decision to: temporarily remove, except in the case of an emergency condition, all persons residing in a State facility under their respective jurisdictions; permanently remove all such persons; reduce the number of such persons below two thirds of the capacity of the facility; or privatize any services, functions or units of the facility.

The bill requires each of the respective departments to:

 C provide public notice and obtain public input through a minimum of three public hearings Statewide before implementing a decision to close, reduce or privatize a facility, at least one of which shall be held in the county in which the facility is located, with at least 30 days between the date of each hearing;

 C give all persons the opportunity to testify in person or to submit written testimony;

 C compile a report of the testimony received at the hearings for submission to the Governor and the Legislature; and

 C have an independent public or private agency or organization prepare a report on the impact of the proposed closing, reduction or privatization of the facility.

The committee amendments add language which permits the temporary removal of patients or residents residing in a State psychiatric hospital, a State developmental center, a State correctional institution or facility, or a veterans' facility, in the case of an emergency condition.

This bill was prefiled for introduction in the 1996-1997 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review which has been performed.