

SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 1542

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: NOVEMBER 18, 1996

The Senate Transportation Committee favorably reports Assembly Bill No. 1542 (1R).

This bill directs the Commissioner of Transportation to allocate and transfer \$1,282,500 from an existing item or items in the FY 1997 Transportation Trust Fund capital construction program to a new item for the improvement of the Bridge Street bridge in the Borough of Manville, Somerset County.

The Bridge Street bridge, an "orphan" bridge that carries traffic over the West Trenton rail line, provides the only access to the Lost Valley Section of the borough for vehicles that are larger than a pickup truck. Currently, however, this bridge has a posted weight limit of 19 tons. As a result, access to Lost Valley by larger vehicles, including emergency vehicles, is limited. Furthermore, according to the Department of Public Works in Somerset County, the most recent bridge inspection report, dated November 16, 1992, indicates that the overall condition of the bridge was rated as critical due to the low inventory ratings, i.e., the condition rating of the substructure and the superstructure have both been downgraded to poor.

Because it is important that this bridge continue to be able to provide access to a part of Manville, and because the bridge is considered to be an "orphan" bridge, under the provisions of this bill the State would provide \$1,282,500, which is 90 percent of the project costs; the remaining ten percent, \$142,500, would be the local share of project costs. This is the same funding relationship provided under the New Jersey Bridge Rehabilitation and Improvement and Railroad Right-of-way Preservation Bond Act of 1989. However, since all of those bond funds have been appropriated, financial support can now best be provided by the Transportation Trust Fund.