

ASSEMBLY INSURANCE COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 1677

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 4, 1996

The Assembly Insurance Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments, Assembly Bill No. 1677.

Current law requires the driver of a vehicle involved in an accident to provide his name and address and exhibit his operator's license and registration certificate to the other driver. Current law also requires that if a law enforcement officer investigates a vehicle accident, he must complete a motor vehicle accident report and send it to the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) within five days. Current police practice typically is to separate the drivers and obtain information from them individually. Thus, when a police officer is present, the drivers often leave the scene of an accident without the basic information they are required to provide each other by law. Moreover, neither the drivers nor their insurers obtain any information about the other driver to begin processing a claim until the accident report has been filed and is made available.

This bill is intended to address this situation by requiring the DMV to prepare and distribute to law enforcement agencies abbreviated accident information forms calling for basic information about the driver and occupants of vehicles involved in an accident. Law enforcement officers would be responsible for ensuring that such forms are completed by each driver and occupant in a vehicle and distributed to the other drivers.

The committee amended the bill by removing the requirement that the telephone number of a vehicle operator be included on the abbreviated accident information form and by changing the requirement that "each operator" of a vehicle involved in the accident complete an abbreviated accident information form to the requirement that "each occupant" of a vehicle involved in the accident complete the form.