

# ASSEMBLY COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### **ASSEMBLY, No. 1902**

with committee amendments

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: DECEMBER 11, 1997

The Assembly Community Services Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 1902.

As amended by committee, this bill requires a place of public accommodation, municipal, county and State facility, and a bus or other public utility to prominently display a sign which states that a person with a disability who is accompanied by a service animal is entitled to have access. The sign shall be conspicuously displayed in an area readily accessible to the public and the sign shall conform to regulations adopted by the Division on Civil Rights.

Under the federal "Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990," Pub.L.101-336 and the State "Law Against Discrimination," P.L.1945, c.169 (C.10:5-1 et seq.), an individual with a disability who is accompanied by a service animal is protected from discrimination.

This bill attempts to increase public awareness of the right of a person with a disability, accompanied by a service animal, to have access to public accommodations, government facilities and certain public utilities.

The amendments specify that disability means, with respect to an individual, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of the individual. The amendments also change the reference from service or guide dog, to service animal, which means a guide dog, signal dog or other animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Additionally, the amendments clarify that the signs shall be conspicuously displayed and shall conform to regulations adopted by the Division on Civil Rights.

Finally, the amendments expand the scope of the bill by: changing retail establishment to place of public accommodation; changing municipal, county and State buildings to municipal, county and State facilities; and adding buses and other utilities.