

ASSEMBLY LABOR COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR **ASSEMBLY, No. 2093**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: SEPTEMBER 19, 1996

The Assembly Labor Committee reports favorably the Assembly Committee Substitute for Assembly Bill No. 2093.

The bill directs each State department or State agency which is not part of a department to establish a Joint Safety and Health Committee with at least eight members, four of whom are employer members and four of whom are employee members. If the department or agency is unionized, the bill requires that the committee be established with the participation and the written consent of both the employer and the unions and that the unions select the employee members of the committee. If the department or agency is not unionized, the bill requires that employee members be volunteers who are not managers or supervisors.

The bill requires the committee to have not fewer than two committee representatives at each facility with 25 or more employees of the department or agency, and requires that half of the representatives be employees and half of them be employer representatives, selected in the same manner as the committee members.

Each committee is required to: hold regular meetings; collect and analyze information, including information provided by onsite facility representatives, regarding safety and health conditions at the facility; collect and analyze information, including information provided by on-site facility representatives, regarding the effectiveness of safety and health programs; reduce and prevent injury and illness by disseminating information to employees and raising employee awareness regarding safety and health conditions and the best practices; and prepare written reports for the employer of its findings and recommendations.

The on-site facility representatives at each facility are required by the bill to hold regular meetings, usually not less than once each month, and prepare written minutes of the meetings. The on-site facility representatives are directed to collect and analyze information regarding safety and health conditions at the facility, by means including inspections of the facility and investigations of accidents and exposures, for which the committee representatives must be given

timely and reasonable access, and prepare written reports for the committee and the employer of their findings and recommendations, including recommendations for the abatement of any hazards.

The employer is required to provide a written response to a recommendation within a reasonable time, not exceeding 14 days in the case of a recommendation for hazard abatement. The bill requires that committee members and on-site facility representatives be paid their regular wage when performing committee duties and provided with training to enable them to carry out their duties as committee members.

The bill also establishes a Workplace Safety and Health Commission to review and report on the impact of the bill and related legislation on participating employers and their employees and make recommendations regarding modifications in the provisions of the bill and regarding possible legislation to induce employers other than the State to establish Joint Safety and Health Committees.