

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE TO

[First Reprint]
ASSEMBLY, No. 2259

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 10, 1996

Assembly Bill No. 2259 (1R) of 1996 establishes a licensing program in the Department of Health and Senior Services for hospice care programs. Only those hospice care programs which are certified for participation in the federal Medicare program would qualify for licensure and only those hospice care programs that have a license issued by the department would be permitted to operate in the State. The bill defines a "hospice care program" as a coordinated program of home, outpatient and inpatient care and services operated by a public agency, private organization, or subdivision of either of these entities, that provides care and services to meet the physical, psychological, social, spiritual and other special needs that are experienced during the final stages of illness, dying and bereavement. The care and services a hospice care program would be required to provide are also delineated in the bill. The bill further allows the department to charge a nonrefundable fee for the filing of an application for a license for a hospice care program, as fixed by regulations and not exceeding \$2,000.

The Department of Health and Senior Services and the Office of Management and Budget have not provided any fiscal information on the legislation.

The Office of Legislative Services estimates that this bill will have little fiscal impact. There are currently 44 Medicare-certified hospices in New Jersey that would be eligible to apply to the department for licensure. As the department may charge a filing fee to each applicant of up to \$2,000, these fees should be adequate to cover the costs of the application process with no additional cost to the State. However, the total cost of implementing this bill cannot be determined at this time as it is dependent on the department's degree of participation in the licensure process with regard to investigations and inspections, beyond that required by federal Medicare standards, prior to issuance of a license and periodically thereafter.

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67.