

ASSEMBLY COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 2312

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 10, 1996

The Assembly Community Services Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 2312.

This bill establishes a permanent Advisory Council on Adolescent Pregnancy in, but not of, the Department of Health and Senior Services. The advisory council would consist of 23 members including the Commissioners of the Departments of Health and Senior Services, Human Services, Education, Community Affairs, and Labor, ex officio, or their designees, and 18 public members including four teenagers and 14 members representing community based religious, health and social service organizations which serve adolescents as well as health professionals and educators. Of the 18 public members, three are to be appointed by the President of the Senate, three by the Speaker of the Assembly and 12 by the Governor. The public members would serve a term of three years.

The advisory council would have the following duties: (1) to review past policy proposals; (2) to develop policy proposals to prevent adolescent pregnancy, reduce out-of-wedlock births and improve services to at-risk, pregnant, and parenting adolescents; (3) to assist with and promote a coordinated and comprehensive approach to the social, economic, and health problems of adolescent pregnancy and parenthood; (4) to collect information on ongoing and new efforts aimed at preventing adolescent pregnancy and improving services to adolescent parents; (5) to promote and encourage community input, communication and education regarding adolescent pregnancy; (6) to provide advice to local agencies and schools seeking to prevent adolescent pregnancies and assist adolescent parents; and (7) to coordinate activities generated by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy and the Family Planning Program in the State Department of Health and Senior Services.

The advisory council would report on its activities, findings and recommendations biannually, or more frequently if appropriate, to the Governor and the Legislature.

The bill also appropriates \$95,000 to the advisory council to carry out the purposes of this bill.