

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE TO  
**ASSEMBLY, No. 2342**  
**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: MAY 28, 1997

Assembly Bill No. 2342 of 1996 establishes the "Osteoporosis Prevention and Treatment Education Program" in the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS). The program would be designed to allow the department to:

1. Review, coordinate, and when necessary, expand successful osteoporosis-related programs provided by public, private and State-run entities;
2. Provide to patients, health care professionals and physicians, educational materials, research results and information on services and treatment options available to individuals afflicted with the disease;
3. Evaluate community-based services for sufferers of osteoporosis and make recommendations on ways to improve the quality and accessibility of those services;
4. Establish an osteoporosis services information clearinghouse;
5. Promote the establishment of support groups for osteoporosis sufferers, their families and care givers;
6. Evaluate the State's funding mechanisms available for osteoporosis-related services; and
7. Create a public awareness and outreach program highlighting the value of prevention and early detection of osteoporosis.

The bill also requires the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services to establish a 15-member Interagency Council on Osteoporosis. Among the council's responsibilities would be to help the department in developing osteoporosis-related programs, including the program established in the bill, and to hold public hearings and conduct studies on issues relating to osteoporosis. The council would also prepare a report of its findings and recommendations for legislative and programmatic changes and present the report to the Governor and the Legislature no later than 18 months following its establishment.

Finally, the bill appropriates \$300,000 to effectuate its purposes.

The DHSS and the Office of Management and Budget have not provided any information on this legislation. However, on a current similar bill, Assembly Bill No. 891 (1R) of 1996 which establishes an osteoporosis prevention and education program in DHSS and an Osteoporosis Prevention and Education Advisory Council, DHSS estimated the cost at \$68,000, \$71,000 and \$73,000, respectively, in each of the next three fiscal years. This includes salary costs of \$57,000, \$60,000 and \$62,000 over the next three fiscal years for a

full-time public health consultant.

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) notes that the DHSS received \$270,000 in the FY1997 appropriations act for an "Interagency Council on Osteoporosis"; thus little or no additional State funds may be needed to implement this legislation. As the council had not yet been created, the DHSS formulated a plan for the expenditure of these funds to facilitate, develop and implement Statewide osteoporosis education and awareness activities. On March 5, 1997, the Joint Budget Oversight Committee approved a transfer of \$145,000 of this appropriation to a Direct State Services account to implement osteoporosis education and awareness programs, with the remaining \$125,000 funding osteoporosis related grants. In addition, the FY1998 recommended budget includes language which would reappropriate unexpended balances in this grant account to FY1998 (if approved, the OMB estimates \$20,000 would carry forward from this account into FY1998).

Many of the activities developed by DHSS for the expenditure of the FY1997 appropriation duplicate those required in the program established by this bill. In addition, as the bill creates an Interagency Council on Osteoporosis that would have the expertise to advise the department on the implementation of the osteoporosis program, the OLS does not believe a full-time public health consultant is necessary for the purpose of this bill. Other administrative costs associated with the program and council could be absorbed within the current appropriation for osteoporosis activities. Thus, no additional State funds would be needed to implement this bill.

Moreover, if the \$300,000 appropriation provided in this bill is intended for costs associated with the development of the program and the creation of the council, it appears that this amount may not be necessary as the DHSS is already undertaking some of these activities, in the current fiscal year. However, the appropriation could also be used to expand the current activities and provide for additional osteoporosis related grants.

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.