

**LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE TO
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
ASSEMBLY Nos. 2391 and 1689**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 27, 1997

The Assembly Committee Substitute for Assembly Bill Nos. 2391 and 1689 of 1996 requires the Commissioner of Education to identify and publish a list of local boards of education, educational services commissions, county special services school districts, and any other established agencies providing cooperative transportation services. Any school district responsible for the transportation of county vocational school pupils or special education pupils to and from a school, other than a local district school, shall utilize one of the agencies identified by the commissioner for the transportation of the pupils, except when the district can provide the transportation at a lower cost or the transportation to be provided by the agencies does not fall within the policies of the resident school district regarding length of ride and assignment of students to a route based on student age or classification.

Under the provisions of the substitute, any school district which has in the prior year provided payments in lieu of transportation for any nonpublic school pupil or which cannot provide transportation in the ensuing school year must attempt to provide transportation through an agency identified by the commissioner prior to determining to pay aid in lieu of transportation. The school district is to make its determination on the manner in which transportation services shall be provided and notify the nonpublic school and the parent or guardian of the nonpublic school pupil of that determination by August 1 prior to the beginning of the school year. The county superintendents are required to assist local boards of education and the chief school administrators of nonpublic schools in coordinating the calendars and schedules of the public and nonpublic schools to facilitate the coordination of pupil transportation in a county. The commissioner shall report to the Governor and the Legislature within three years on its effectiveness in promoting regionalized transportation services.

The Office of Legislative (OLS) notes that the enactment of this bill would not result in any additional costs to the State for the Department of Education (DOE) to identify and publish a list of local boards of education, educational services commissions, county special services school districts, and other established agencies providing cooperative transportation services. DOE indicates that it would be able to absorb the additional responsibilities imposed under the bill with current staff members. OLS also notes that this bill would

generate savings for those local school districts that are able to utilize more cost effective cooperative transportation services and/or provide transportation services to nonpublic school pupils instead of making in-lieu-of payments.

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.