

# ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR **ASSEMBLY, Nos. 2391 and 1689**

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: MARCH 3, 1997

The Assembly Education Committee favorably reports an Assembly Committee Substitute for Assembly Bill Nos. 2391 and 1689.

This substitute 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, would utilize one of the agencies identified by the commissioner for the transportation of the pupils. The district would not be required to utilize one of the agencies if 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 the assignment of students to a route based on student age or classification.

The substitute also provides that 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 shall provide the agency with any unique limitations or restrictions of the required transportation. If the costs to provide transportation by the agency identified by the commissioner are less than the in-lieu-of payments, the agency would provide 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. Also, the substitute directs the commissioner to report to the

Governor and the Legislature within three years on its effectiveness in promoting regionalized transportation services students and the advisability of expanding its provisions to transportation services provided to other students.

As reported by committee, this substitute is identical to Senate Bill No.780 (1R) with committee amendments.