

ASSEMBLY CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND REGULATED
PROFESSIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 2537

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 16, 1996

The Assembly Consumer Affairs and Regulated Professions Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 2537.

As amended, this bill provides for the licensing of genetic counselors in the State by the State Board of Medical Examiners. The bill requires that an applicant for licensure in the State must be certified by the American Board of Medical Genetics or the American Board of Genetic Counseling.

Genetic counseling is a communication process which deals with the human problems associated with the occurrence, or the risk of occurrence, of a genetic disorder, birth defect or mental retardation in a family. This process involves an attempt by one or more appropriately trained individuals to help an individual or family: comprehend the medical facts, including the diagnostic, probable course and available management of a disorder, as well as the risk of occurrence in specified relatives; understand the options for dealing with the risk of recurrence; choose the course of action that seems appropriate to that individual or family in view of the risk and the family goals and to act in accordance with that decision; and make the best possible adjustment to the disorder in affected family members and to the risk of occurrence or recurrence of the disorder.

The bill's licensing requirements do not apply to: a person licensed by the State to practice medicine and surgery when acting within the scope of the person's profession and doing work of a nature consistent with the person's training, if the person does not hold himself out to the public as a licensed genetic counselor; a student enrolled in an educational program accredited, or in candidacy for accreditation, by the American Board of Genetic Counseling, if the student is practicing as part of a supervised course of study and is clearly designated by the title "genetic counseling intern;" or a person performing limited counseling as a genetic assistant under the direct supervision of a certified medical geneticist or licensed genetic counselor. The committee amended the bill to also exempt from its licensing

requirements a person who is an advanced practical nurse when acting within the scope of the person's profession and doing work of a nature consistent with the person's training, if the person does not hold himself out to the public as a licensed genetic counselor.