

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 2548

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 24, 1997

Assembly Bill No. 2548 of 1996 imposes a \$2.00 per ticket tax on sales of baseball tickets by the owner of an existing minor league baseball team that plays in a publicly financed stadium if the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues (minor league baseball) fails to consent to the location of another qualifying minor league team at a stadium outside of a 25 mile radius of the existing team's home stadium.

A "qualifying minor league franchise" means a minor league franchise under ownership or contract to purchase if the owner or purchasing entity has the right to use a facility that is in compliance with the physical facility requirements of the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues. The bill provides procedures for the request and formal denial of consent to location, with notice to the State Treasurer. The proceeds from the tax will be distributed to the counties contiguous to the county of the existing team, to support youth recreational programs.

There is no information available to the Office of Legislative Services that would permit it to predict the likelihood of a request for consent by a qualifying team or the likelihood or timing of a denial of consent. While at least four new minor league team locations are under consideration in New Jersey, there are only two minor league teams playing in New Jersey and only one plays in a publicly financed stadium. If the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues had failed to consent to the location of another qualifying minor league team at a stadium outside of a 25 mile radius of that team's Trenton home stadium for the entire 1996 baseball season, then based on that team's reported attendance of 437,396, the 1996 liability of that team's owners would have been \$874,792. Under the bill, collections would be deposited to the "County Recreation Activities Fund" for annual appropriation to the counties contiguous to the county in which the existing franchise is located, allocated on the basis of population, for youth recreational programs. The counties contiguous to Mercer County, in which the only team currently playing in a publicly financed stadium is located, are Hunterdon, Somerset, Monmouth, Middlesex and Burlington.

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.