

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE TO
ASSEMBLY, No. 2610
STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 2, 1998

Assembly Bill No. 2610 of 1996 creates the "Address Confidentiality Program" in the Department of State to protect victims of domestic violence. The bill authorizes the Secretary of State to establish and maintain a confidential address for victims of domestic violence to prevent their assailants from finding them. The bill permits the Secretary to arrange to receive first-class mail addressed to the program participant's actual confidential address. The bill also authorizes the Secretary to arrange to receive other kinds and classes of mail at the participant's expense.

The Department of State and the Office of Management and Budget have not submitted an updated fiscal note worksheet on this bill. However, the department estimated the cost of implementing a similar bill in the prior session at \$36,600 in the first year following enactment. This figure is based on the department's estimate that approximately one-half (2,125) of the 4,250 women served by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Domestic Violence Hotline in 1994 would participate in this program. The total number of women estimated to be served by the hotline in FY 1998 is 5,200. Based on the department's assumption that approximately one-half of the hotline users would participate in the program, the estimated number of participants in the confidentiality program would increase to 2,600. Included in this estimate are salary and fringe benefit costs of \$24,600 for one clerk typist; \$2,000 for printing; \$5,000 for postage; and \$5,000 for data processing equipment. The department estimates the bill's second and third year costs at \$32,500 and \$33,500, respectively, allowing for a deduction of certain start-up costs and an annual inflation rate of approximately 4 percent.

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concurs with this estimate based on the department's assumptions. However, OLS observes that the department's assumption regarding the population to be served by this program may not prove accurate. Information on which to base a more reliable estimate is not readily available. 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.