

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE TO
ASSEMBLY, No. 2681
STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: APRIL 9, 1997

Assembly Bill No. 2681 of 1997 amends the section of law dealing with transportation services for pupils attending public and nonpublic schools. The bill provides that a board of education shall not satisfy the current requirement to provide transportation services to elementary school pupils attending nonpublic schools by purchasing tickets or their equivalent for regular route bus service if the pupil's parent or guardian objects to the provision of transportation services in this manner. In some situations in which the district is not providing transportation services directly to nonpublic school students, rather than providing the pupil's family with an aid-in-lieu of payment to finance the required transportation, the district is providing students with tickets to ride public buses, regardless of the age of the pupil requiring the transportation. Under the bill's provisions, if the parent or guardian objects, then the school district would be required to make the aid-in-lieu of payment.

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) notes that the enactment of this bill could result in additional costs to local school districts that are currently providing bus tickets to eligible elementary school students attending nonpublic schools. It will not result in any additional costs to the State. Information provided by New Jersey Transit indicates that the cost of 10 student bus tickets ranges from \$6.75 to \$10.25 depending on how far a student travels. Using a 180 days school year, the total cost to the district of purchasing bus tickets for an eligible student would range between \$243 and \$369 in a school year. For each parent or guardian of a nonpublic elementary school pupil who objects to the district providing bus tickets to meet its transportation requirement, there will be an additional cost to the district ranging from \$306 to \$432 which represents the difference between the aid-in-lieu of payment (\$675) that the school district will be required to pay the family and the cost of purchasing bus tickets. OLS does not have any information on the number of school districts that are currently providing bus tickets to nonpublic school students or the number of such students receiving tickets to estimate the cost of this legislation. However, the Department of Education indicates that it is currently in the process of collecting such data and it may be available at some time in the near future.

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.