

SENATE, No. 320

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 1996 SESSION

By Senator LITTELL

1 AN ACT concerning the siting of correctional facilities in State parks  
2 and forests and supplementing Title 30 of the Revised Statutes.

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
5 *of New Jersey:*

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7 1. Within three years of the effective date of this act, the  
8 Department of Corrections shall cease operation of all correctional  
9 facilities located on the grounds of a State park or forest as defined in  
10 section 3 of P.L.1983, c.324 (C.13:1L-3).

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12 2. Preparations for the closure of correctional facilities located on  
13 the grounds of State parks and forests shall commence immediately.  
14 All inmates shall be transferred from these facilities to other suitable  
15 facilities.

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17 3. For four years following the effective date of this act, the  
18 Commissioner of Corrections shall submit to the Governor and the  
19 Legislature an annual report detailing the progress of the closures, the  
20 impact of the closures on the communities in which the facilities are  
21 located and on those to which the inmates will be transferred, the  
22 effect of the closures on inmates and on persons employed at the  
23 facilities, and such other matters as the commissioner deems relevant.

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25 4. This act shall take effect immediately.  
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28 STATEMENT  
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30 This bill prohibits the operation of juvenile and adult correctional  
31 facilities in State parks and forests. The Department of Corrections  
32 would have three years to phase out existing facilities in these areas.

33 This bill reflects growing public concern for the security and health  
34 of residents who live near these facilities, especially those in proximity  
35 to the High Point Unit of the Mountainview Youth Correctional  
36 Facility, a minimum security prison in High Point State Park. At this  
37 location, in early 1992, two escaped prisoners abducted an elderly

1 Wantage couple and forced them at gunpoint to drive out of the area.

2 Also, continuing effluent violations by the Annandale-High Point  
3 Facility Sewage Treatment Plant have raised concerns about the  
4 possible contamination of the region's ground water aquifer.  
5 Moreover, similar water pollution problems have been attributed to a  
6 malfunctioning sewage treatment plant at the satellite unit of the  
7 Mountainview Youth Correctional Facility at Stokes State Forest in  
8 Montague.

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13 Removes correctional facilities from State parks and forests within 3

14 years.