

# ASSEMBLY LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

## **SENATE, No. 454**

with committee amendments

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: FEBRUARY 3, 1997

The Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 454 (1R).

Senate Bill No. 454 (1R), the "Juvenile Offender Rehabilitation Act," permits counties to establish "boot camps" for juvenile offenders.

Under the provisions of the bill, the governing body of any county, or the governing bodies of two or more counties, may establish and maintain a boot camp for juvenile offenders. These boot camps, which use regimentation and structured discipline, coupled with substantial counseling and aftercare or mentoring services, have been shown to develop positive attitudes and behavior traits in juvenile offenders and dramatically improve a juvenile offender's potential for rehabilitation and re-integration into the community.

While the counties would have significant latitude in the operation of these camps, the bill does specify that the camps should consist of a residential phase for a minimum of four weeks during which the offender is subjected to highly structured routines of discipline, physical exercise, work, and various types of counseling, including vocational, educational, personal development and, if appropriate, substance abuse counseling. This residential phase is to be followed by a six to nine month aftercare or mentoring program pursuant to which the juvenile will receive additional counseling and assistance.

Juvenile offenders may be recommended for the program by their sentencing judge or, if incarcerated in another facility, apply for admission. After successful completion of the program, the sentencing judge would determine whether the juvenile should be placed on parole. A juvenile who fails to comply with the requirements of the program is to be placed in the custody of the Juvenile Justice Commission and assigned to another facility to fulfill his term of incarceration. An offender who fails to complete the program or is removed from the program is permanently barred from re-admission.

Finally, the bill provides that these programs are deemed to be

education programs and would be funded by State aid from the proceeds of the State lottery.

The committee amended the bill to provide that a court may place a juvenile adjudicated delinquent in a county boot camp pursuant to section 24 of P.L.1982, c.77 (C.2A:4A-43).

As reported by the committee, this bill is identical to Assembly Bill No. 1458.