

SENATE, No. 570

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED JANUARY 29, 1996

By Senator BASSANO

1 AN ACT concerning recipients of general public assistance benefits and
2 supplementing P.L.1947, c.156 (C.44:8-107 et seq.).

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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. The Commissioner of Human Services shall establish a
8 centralized registry in the Division of Family Development of the
9 Department of Human Services to contain the names and Social
10 Security numbers, and such additional identifying information as the
11 commissioner deems appropriate, of recipients of benefits under the
12 "General Public Assistance Law," P.L.1947, c.156 (C.44:8-107 et
13 seq.). Each of the municipal welfare agencies shall provide such
14 information and assistance as the commissioner may request to carry
15 out the provisions of this act. The commissioner shall provide for the
16 periodic updating of the information contained in the registry.

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18 2. a. The commissioner shall make the information in the
19 centralized registry established pursuant to section 1 of this act
20 available to those states which are contiguous to New Jersey and shall
21 seek to establish an arrangement for the reciprocal provision of similar
22 information from these states to the Division of Family Development.

23 b. The commissioner shall also provide for the use of the registry
24 to conduct comparison checks of general public assistance recipient
25 records between municipalities within the State, as well as comparison
26 checks of general public assistance recipient records with those of
27 recipients of aid to families with dependent children benefits under
28 P.L.1959, c.86 (C.44:10-1 et seq.).

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30 3. The commissioner shall report to the Governor and the
31 Legislature no later than one year after the effective date of this act,
32 and annually thereafter, on the actions taken to carry out the
33 provisions of this act and the results thereof, and shall accompany that
34 report with such recommendations for administrative or legislative
35 actions as the commissioner deems appropriate.

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37 4. The commissioner, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure

1 Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), shall adopt rules and
2 regulations to effectuate the purposes of this act.

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4 5. This act shall take effect immediately.

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7 STATEMENT

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9 This bill requires the Commissioner of Human Services to establish
10 a centralized registry in the Division of Family Development of the
11 Department of Human Services containing the names and Social
12 Security numbers of recipients of general public assistance (GA)
13 benefits under P.L.1947, c.156 (C.44:8-107 et seq.), along with such
14 other identifying information as the commissioner deems appropriate.
15 Each of the municipal welfare agencies shall provide such information
16 and assistance as the commissioner may request to establish and
17 update the registry. The commissioner shall provide for the periodic
18 updating of the information in the registry.

19 The bill further requires the commissioner to make the information
20 in the centralized registry available to the states of New York,
21 Pennsylvania and Delaware, and to seek to establish an arrangement
22 for the reciprocal provision of similar information from these states to
23 the Division of Family Development. The commissioner shall also
24 provide for the use of the registry to conduct comparison checks of
25 GA recipient records between municipalities within the State, as well
26 as comparison checks of GA recipient records with those of aid to
27 families with dependent children recipients.

28 Finally, the bill provides that the commissioner shall report to the
29 Governor and the Legislature no later than one year after the effective
30 date of the bill, and annually thereafter, on the actions taken to carry
31 out the provisions of the bill and the results thereof, and shall include
32 with the report any recommendations for administrative or legislative
33 actions that the commissioner deems appropriate.

34 This bill is intended to preclude a recurrence of the recent incident
35 involving 425 New Jersey residents who were found to have collected
36 welfare (general assistance) payments in Newark and Manhattan,
37 which represented 23% of the 1,800 welfare recipients included in a
38 comparison of welfare rolls between the two jurisdictions. This
39 incident prompted the Governor of New York to write to the
40 governors of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts
41 and Vermont to recommend that these states share the Social Security
42 numbers of their welfare recipients. According to a New York Times
43 article of March 3, 1994, the First Deputy Commissioner of the New
44 York City Human Resources Administration indicated that it is
45 currently impossible to ascertain how many New Jersey residents are
46 still receiving welfare payments in both states, although the same

1 article reported that the director of the Division of Health and Welfare
2 in Newark stated that her department had not yet uncovered any cases
3 of New York residents receiving welfare payments in New Jersey.

4 New Jersey already matches its aid to families with dependent
5 children (AFDC) recipient files with other states periodically to check
6 for "double dipping," and the federal government assists in this effort.
7 In addition, New Jersey has been able to match its GA recipient
8 records with New York state wage information to make sure that a
9 person working in that state is not collecting GA benefits here;
10 however, to date, there has been no such interstate cross-checking to
11 ensure that New Jersey GA recipients are not collecting benefits in
12 New York or another state. The Department of Human Services
13 recently automated its GA recipient records, and 63 municipalities in
14 the State (representing 85% of the Statewide GA caseload) have
15 automated their records, which will facilitate the implementation of
16 comparison checks by Social Security number between municipalities
17 within the State, and between New Jersey and its neighboring states.

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23 Requires Commissioner of Human Services to share information with
24 contiguous states regarding Social Security numbers of general public
assistance recipients.

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