

FISCAL NOTE TO
SENATE, No. 773

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: SEPTEMBER 24, 1996

Senate Bill No. 773 of 1996 eliminates the \$5 fee imposed upon firefighters applying for certification as a firefighter I. Regulations promulgated by the Division of Fire Safety in the Department of Community Affairs currently require this fee. Firefighters may apply for certification as a firefighter I after completing a training course or 18 months of service, meeting certain other requirements, and paying the \$5 fee. Firefighter I certification is required as a prerequisite for more advanced training programs.

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has advised the Office of Legislative Services (OLS) that the Division of Fire Safety has issued 24,094 voluntary firefighter I certifications as of August 13, 1996, and reports that there are an estimated 15,906 remaining firefighters eligible to apply for this certification. The Division of Fire Safety also estimates that approximately 2,000 new firefighters will enter the service annually. The DCA reports that, while exact dollar amounts cannot be given, if the remaining 15,906 firefighters were to apply for certification, the revenue loss to the State would be \$79,530. However, the DCA has informally advised the OLS that it cannot be determined how many of the remaining 15,906 firefighters would apply for this certification and therefore an accurate revenue loss cannot be determined. The OLS notes that 60.2 percent of the estimated total number of 40,000 firefighters have applied for and received this certification. Therefore, if one assumes that 60.2 percent of the annual increase of 2,000 firefighters would apply for and receive this certification, it would result in an additional annual revenue loss to the DCA of \$6,020.

The DCA notes that this is a voluntary certification, one that is not required in order to be a firefighter. The DCA also notes that the \$5.00 fee does not cover the cost of the certification program.

The OLS concurs with the information provided by the DCA.

This fiscal note has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67.