

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 955

with Senate committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 17, 1996

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 955 (1R) with amendments

Senate Bill No. 955 (1R), as amended, requires the Department of the Treasury to establish a State-sponsored affinity card program. The card will be known as the "New Jersey Nature Card".

The bill requires the State Treasurer to determine which financial institutions could participate as an issuer of affinity cards and to send to them a request for proposal (RFP) regarding a New Jersey affinity card program. The State Treasurer will then enter into a contract with a financial institution to be the issuer of the State-sponsored affinity card and negotiate the most favorable rate for the State's fees.

The bill also requires that fees raised from the State-sponsored affinity card program are to be deposited by the State Treasurer into a special non-lapsing fund. The moneys in the fund will not be expended except in accordance with appropriations from the fund made by law. Any act appropriating moneys from the fund will identify the particular project or projects to be funded by the moneys.

Moneys in the fund will be appropriated according to the following formula:

(1) One-third for use by the State to acquire lands for recreation and conservation purposes under the State Green Acres program in the Department of Environmental Protection;

(2) One-third for use by the State to provide State grants, on an up to 50% matching basis, to qualifying tax exempt nonprofit organizations to acquire lands for recreation and conservation purposes in accordance with the program and criteria therefor established for the award of matching grants to qualifying tax exempt nonprofit organizations for recreation and conservation purposes pursuant to the "Open Space Preservation Bond Act of 1989," P.L.1989, c.183, the "Green Acres, Clean Water, Farmland and Historic Preservation Bond Act of 1992," P.L.1992, c.88, and the "Green Acres, Farmland and Historic Preservation, and Blue Acres Bond Act of 1995," P.L.1995, c.204, or similar Green Acres bond

acts; and

(3) One-third for deposit in the "hunters' and anglers' license fund" created pursuant to R.S.23:3-11 and R.S.23:3-12, to be used by the Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife for the same purposes as other moneys deposited in the "hunters' and anglers' license fund."

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amended the bill at the request of the sponsor to require that the State-sponsored affinity card be issued; create special fund into which the revenues from the card are to be deposited; give the card a name; designate the uses to which the revenues from the card may be appropriated; and require expenditures from the fund to be by an act of appropriation.

FISCAL IMPACT

An estimate of the amount of additional State revenues that this bill will generate is not available at this time.