

SENATE, No. 957

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED MARCH 18, 1996

By Senators CARDINALE and SINAGRA

1 AN ACT requiring high technology finger imaging identification of
2 public assistance recipients, supplementing Title 30 of the Revised
3 Statutes, supplementing and amending P.L.1947, c.156 (C.44:8-107
4 et seq.), and amending P.L.1983, c.85.

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6 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
7 of New Jersey:

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9 1. (New section) The Legislature finds and declares that welfare
10 fraud would be curtailed by establishing and implementing a high
11 technology finger imaging identification program designed to eliminate
12 multiple enrollments by public assistance recipients. A mandatory
13 program of high technology finger imaging identification should
14 generate substantial financial savings to the State.

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16 2. (New section) a. The Commissioner of Human Services shall
17 establish a high technology finger imaging identification program in the
18 Division of Family Development for the purpose of curtailing multiple
19 enrollments by adult recipients of the aid to families with dependent
20 children program, P.L.1959, c.86 (C.44:10-1 et seq.), and the general
21 public assistance program P.L.1947, c.156 (C.44:8-107 et seq.).

22 b. As a condition of receiving assistance under the aid to families
23 with dependent children program and the general public assistance
24 program, recipients shall participate in the high technology finger
25 imaging identification program established pursuant to this act.

26 c. The data collected and maintained through the use of the high
27 technology finger imaging identification program shall be used for the
28 sole purpose of preventing multiple enrollments in the aid to families
29 with dependent children program and the general public assistance
30 program. However, nothing contained herein shall preclude the
31 commissioner from administratively expanding this program to cover
32 recipients of other forms of public assistance pursuant to agreements
33 established with State or federal government.

34 d. The commissioner, county welfare agencies, and director of

EXPLANATION - Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 welfare of each municipality shall not use or disclose the data collected
2 and maintained through the high technology finger imaging
3 identification program for any purpose other than the prevention of
4 multiple enrollments in the respective public assistance programs.

5 e. The commissioner shall promulgate all necessary regulations to
6 implement the provisions of this act, including imposing sanctions on
7 recipients who file multiple enrollments and on persons who knowingly
8 violate the prohibition on use or disclosure of finger imaging data, as
9 set forth in subsection d. of this section.

10 f. The commissioner shall conduct periodic audits to monitor
11 compliance with regulations to ensure that any data collected and
12 maintained as part of the high technology finger imaging identification
13 program is accurate and complete and that no illegal use or disclosure
14 of data has taken place.

15 g. The commissioner shall solicit proposals and shall contract for
16 the services of a firm which is able to design the high technology
17 finger imaging identification program.

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19 3. Section 1 of P.L.1983, c.85 (C.44:10-3.1) is amended to read as
20 follows:

21 1. Each county welfare agency shall issue a photo-identification
22 card [to] and implement the high technology finger imaging
23 identification program, established pursuant to P.L. _____, c.
24 (C. _____)(pending before the Legislature as this bill), for each adult
25 recipient of aid to families with dependent children as a condition of
26 receiving [such] the aid.

27 (cf: P.L.1983, c.85, s.1)

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29 4. (New section) As a condition of receiving public assistance, an
30 applicant or recipient, as the case may be, shall participate in the high
31 technology finger imaging identification program, established pursuant
32 to P.L. _____, c. (C. _____)(pending before the Legislature as this bill).

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34 5. Section 12 of P.L.1947, c.156 (C.44:8-118) is amended to read
35 as follows:

36 12. The director of welfare of each municipality shall as to such
37 municipality:

38 (a) Supervise by periodic investigation every person receiving
39 public assistance, such investigation to be made by visitation at least
40 once a month;

41 (b) Reconsider from month to month the amount and nature of
42 public assistance given and alter, amend or suspend the same when the
43 circumstances so require;

44 (c) Devise ways and means for bringing persons unable to maintain
45 themselves to self-support or to the support of any other person or
46 agency able and willing so to do;

1 (d) Keep full and complete records of such investigation,
2 supervision, assistance and rehabilitation, and of all certifications of
3 persons for employment or benefits and cancellations thereof, in such
4 manner and form as required by the commissioner; and

5 (e) Bring about appropriate action for commitment to any State or
6 county institution when the best interests of the needy persons would
7 be so served.

8 (f) Implement the high technology finger imaging identification
9 program established by the Commissioner of Human Services,
10 pursuant to P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature
11 as this bill).

12 (cf: P.L.1947, c. 156, s.12)

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14 6. (New section) The Commissioner of Human Services shall
15 submit to the Legislature and the Governor no later than six months
16 after the effective date of this act, and annually thereafter, a high
17 technology finger imaging identification program implementation
18 report, including, but not limited to, the following information: a
19 schedule for the implementation of the program for each county and
20 municipality, statistical and financial information concerning
21 effectiveness of the program in meeting its objectives, and
22 recommendations for changes in the law or regulations governing this
23 program that the commissioner deems necessary.

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25 7. (New section) Implementation of the high technology finger
26 imaging identification program with respect to applicants for, or
27 recipients of, benefits under the program of aid to families with
28 dependent children shall be subject to the granting of such waivers of
29 federal government regulations as may be necessary.

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31 8. This act shall take effect immediately.

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34 STATEMENT

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36 This bill would require that the Commissioner of Human Services
37 establish a high technology finger imaging identification program in the
38 Division of Family Development to be implemented by county and
39 municipal welfare agencies for the aid to families with dependent
40 children and general public assistance programs, respectively.

41 Finger imaging identification uses computerized non-invasive
42 technology to discover multiple fraudulent enrollments in the
43 assistance programs by matching the finger image of one applicant for
44 assistance against all recipients in the database. The finger imaging
45 data is to be used for the sole purpose of preventing multiple
46 enrollments. The program is expected to curtail welfare fraud and

1 provide substantial savings to the State, as it did in Los Angeles
2 County, California, which saved six million dollars in six months. In
3 1992 New York State enacted legislation adopting pilot programs to
4 require high technology finger imaging identification for recipients of
5 home relief in two upstate counties, Rockland and Onondaga. In
6 1995, Massachusetts enacted legislation to establish a similar pilot
7 program for AFDC recipients, and the Governor there has proposed
8 legislation to provide for Statewide finger imaging identification in the
9 AFDC program.

10 The Department of Human Services (DHS) intends to implement
11 Statewide high technology finger imaging identification for AFDC and
12 GA recipients and applicants as part of the Governor's "Work First
13 New Jersey" welfare reform initiative, using existing resources in the
14 department's recommended budget for Fiscal Year 1997.
15 (Implementation of this requirement with respect to AFDC recipients
16 would be subject to federal approval under existing federal law.) DHS
17 is currently operating a pilot finger imaging program for GA recipients
18 and applicants in 103 municipalities within the counties of Bergen,
19 Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Morris, Passaic, Somerset and Union.

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Requires high technology finger imaging for welfare recipients.