

# SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

### **SENATE, No. 1008**

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: OCTOBER 28, 1996

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1008 (1R).

Senate Bill No. 1008 (1R) would require governmental employers to give any State or local law enforcement officer or firefighter who is a “duly authorized representative” of the Emerald Society to a leave of absence with pay to attend any State or national convention of the organization. The leave of absence would be for the duration of the convention with a reasonable time allowed for travel to and from the convention.

Current law already requires employers to give law enforcement officers and firefighters who are members of certain designated organizations a leave of absence for such conventions.

The committee discussed the fact that this bill may constitute a State mandate upon local governments but does not authorize resources to offset the additional direct expenditures required for implementation; the committee released the bill with the understanding that decisions will be made following release as to the appropriate progress of the bill through the Legislature.

#### FISCAL IMPACT

In a fiscal estimate prepared by the Office of Legislative Services (OLS) on an earlier version of the bill, the OLS was advised by a representative of the Emerald Society that there are 10 chapters of the Emerald Society operating in New Jersey. Those ten chapters collectively have approximately 1,950 currently active members. The society has an executive board comprised of 20 State members and 8 representatives from each of the ten chapters, each of whom is eligible to attend the annual convention. (The representative stated that only full-time paid police officers and firefighters are eligible for membership in the Emerald Society.)

The Emerald Society representative has advised the OLS that while there will be a cost to this bill of paying the salary of delegates while they attend the convention, the cost will be mitigated by the effects of swing-shift scheduling of personnel common in police and fire departments. A delegate would be required to be paid for the

convention attendance only if the delegate were scheduled to work on any of the days that the convention is held. If any (or all) of those days are a delegate's scheduled days off, the delegate would not be required to be paid for those days.

The OLS is not able to calculate the precise cost of this bill to the delegates' employers due to a lack of specific information regarding the identities of the delegates, the rate of pay of the delegates, and the uncertainties caused by the swing-shift scheduling of the delegates.