

# SENATE HEALTH COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### **SENATE, No. 1354**

with committee amendments

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: MARCH 20, 1997

The Senate Health Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1354 with committee amendments.

As amended by committee, this bill establishes the "Osteoporosis Prevention and Treatment Education Program" in the Department of Health and Senior Services. The program would be designed to allow the department to:

1. Review, coordinate, and when necessary, expand successful osteoporosis-related programs provided by public, private and State-run entities;
2. Provide to patients, health care professionals and physicians, educational materials, research results and information on services and treatment options available to individuals afflicted with the disease;
3. Evaluate community-based services for sufferers of osteoporosis and make recommendations on ways to improve the quality and accessibility of those services;
4. Establish an osteoporosis services information clearinghouse;
5. Promote the establishment of support groups for osteoporosis sufferers, their families and care givers;
6. Evaluate the State's funding mechanisms available for osteoporosis-related services; and
7. Create a public awareness and outreach program highlighting the value of prevention and early detection of osteoporosis.

The bill also requires the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services to establish a 15-member Interagency Council on Osteoporosis. The members of the council will include: the Commissioners of Education, Health and Senior Services and Human Services, the Assistant Commissioner of Senior Affairs in the Department of Health and Senior Services and the Director of the Division on Women in the Department of Community Affairs, or their designees, who shall serve *ex officio*; four members of the Legislature, two of whom shall be appointed by the President of the Senate and two of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly; and six public members appointed by the Governor who shall include a representative of a women's health-care organization, a public health educator, an expert in the field of osteoporosis, a health

care provider who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis and two individuals who have osteoporosis.

Among the council's responsibilities would be to help the department in developing osteoporosis-related programs including the program established in the bill, and to hold public hearings and conduct studies on issues relating to osteoporosis. The council would also prepare a report of its findings and recommendations for legislative and programmatic changes and present the report to the Governor and the Legislature no later than 18 months following its establishment.

Finally, the bill appropriates \$300,000 to effectuate the purposes of the bill.

The committee amended the bill to reflect the Governor's recent reorganization of services to senior citizens and the consolidation of these services in the Department of Health and Senior Services.

This bill is similar to Assembly Bill No. 2342 (Cottrell/Malone) which is pending before the Assembly Health Committee.