SENATE WOMEN'S ISSUES, CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

# SENATE, No. 1492

with committee amendments

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: NOVEMBER 18, 1996

The Senate Women's Issues, Children and Family Services Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 1492 with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill would guarantee all parents equal access to their children's medical, dental, insurance, child care and school records. The bill would provide that the place of residence or other identifying information about either parent would not appear on any records distributed. The bill would also authorize the court to deny access to the records if it finds that it is not in the best interest of the child or if the access is sought only for the purpose of causing the other parent to suffer a detriment.

The bill would allow parents access to a child's record only if the release of those records is not prohibited by federal or State law.

This bill embodies recommendation number 7 of the report of the Commission to Study the Law of Divorce, issued April 18, 1995.

The committee amended the bill to clarify that a parent would have access to a child's records only if the release of those records is not prohibited by federal or State law.

The bill was also amended by committee to specify that a child's parent, guardian or legal custodian would be allowed to petition the court to limit a parent's access to a child's records.

This bill is identical to Assembly Bill No. 72 (1R), sponsored by Assemblymen Kavanagauh and Cohen, which was also amended and released by this committee on November 18, 1996.