

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1947

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 8, 1997

The Senate Education Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1947 with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill establishes the School Transportation Study Commission which would be composed of 23 members: 8 members of the Legislature, the Commissioner of Education, and 14 members of the public, including 2 parents whose children receive either regular, courtesy or nonpublic busing, and one representative each from the New Jersey Association of School Administrators, the New Jersey Education Association, the New Jersey School Bus Owners Association, the Advisory Committee for Nonpublic Schools of the New Jersey Department of Education, the Joint Council of County Special Services School Districts, a jointure commission, the School Transportation Supervisors of New Jersey, the New Jersey School Boards Association, the New Jersey Association of School Business Officials, the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, the New Jersey Council of County Vocational Schools, and the New Jersey Council of Educational Services Commissions. The public members representing the various organizations will be appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the appropriate organization.

The commission is directed to study the school transportation system of this State and investigate the advisability of alternative systems for providing school transportation, including a county or regionally-based transportation system. The commission will also examine courtesy busing, safety busing, special education busing and nonpublic school busing to determine the ways in which these aspects of school transportation may be provided in a more equitable and cost-effective manner.

Under the bill, the commission will have all the powers granted pursuant to chapter 13 of Title 52 of the Revised Statutes, including subpoena power. The commission will issue a final report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature no later than six months after its organizational meeting, and the

commission will expire 30 days after the submission of that report.

The bill appropriates \$10,000 from the General Fund to fund the work of the commission.

Amendments were adopted which add to the membership of the commission the Commissioner of Education and a representative each from a jointure commission and the New Jersey Council of Educational Services Commissions.