

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2159

with Senate committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 23, 1997

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 2159 with amendments.

Senate Bill No. 2159, as amended, increases the maximum value of State land that may be sold without specific legislative authorization.

Under existing law, the head or principal executive of any State department, with the written approval of the Governor, is authorized to sell and convey the State's interest in any real property (and the improvements thereon) held by the department or to grant an easement in or across such property, provided that: (1) the department does not need the property for the public interest and the sale or easement is in the best interest of the State, and (2) that the value of the property is \$100,000 or less, or the value of the easement is \$10,000 or less.

This bill increases from \$100,000 to \$500,000 the maximum value of property the sale of which would not be subject to legislative authorization and from \$10,000 to \$100,000 the maximum value of an easement for which legislative authorization would not be required, and provides for the annual adjustment of this maximum value for inflation. In addition, the bill clarifies that this change does not affect, alter, amend or repeal provisions in other statutes concerning the disposition of public lands for recreation and conservation, farmland preservation, or any other public purpose.

The bill also requires the notification in writing of municipalities in which are located properties the State has determined to sell or grant an easement for at least 14 days prior to any further action taken by a department for the completion of the sale or the granting of the easement; notification will be required regardless of the value of the property to be sold or the easement to be granted. In addition, notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the sale or conveyance by the head or principal executive of any State department of all or part of the State's interest in any real property and the improvements thereon or the grant of an easement in or across such property will require the approval of the State House Commission without regard to the value of the property or easement

or to means by which the property was acquired by the State, unless the sale or conveyance or grant is a disposition of public lands for recreation and conservation, farmland preservation, or any other public purpose.

Under current law, the Comptroller of the Treasury is a member of the State House Commission. The duties of the Comptroller are performed by the Director of the Division of Budget and Accounting. The bill amends current law to reflect this and also authorizes the Executive Branch members of the commission (the Governor, the State Treasurer, and the Director of the Division of Budget and Accounting) to name designees to serve. The bill also provides for the appointment of alternates for the legislative members of the commission.

Finally, the bill requires the State House Commission to meet at least quarterly.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to decrease the maximum value from \$3,000,000 to \$500,000 for the sale of property without legislative authorization; to increase the maximum value from \$10,000 to \$100,000 for easements that may be granted without legislative authorization; to allow the easement value to be increased for inflation; to require the State House Commission to meet at least quarterly; to provide for the appointment of alternates for the legislative appointments to the State House Commission; to require notification of municipalities in which are located properties the State has determined to sell or grant an easement to; and to require the approval of the State House Commission prior to the sale of all State lands or the granting of easements with certain exceptions.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This bill has not been certified as requiring a fiscal note.