

SENATE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

**SENATE, No. 2189**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: NOVEMBER 17, 1997

The Senate Environment Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 2189.

This bill would appropriate \$9 million to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) from the "Green Acres, Farmland and Historic Preservation, and Blue Acres Bond Act of 1995," P.L.1995, c.204, for the purpose of providing State grants and low-interest loans to assist local government units to acquire, for recreation and conservation purposes, lands along or near the coast that have been damaged by storms or storm-related flooding. This sum represents the entire amount especially authorized by the bond act for post-storm acquisitions in the coastal area under the newly created coastal Blue Acres program. The sum needs to be appropriated as soon as practicable so that DEP and local officials may respond quickly to acquisition opportunities that may arise after coastal storms. Under this portion of the coastal Blue Acres program, a qualifying local government unit receives a grant of 50% and a low-interest loan of up to 50% of the cost of acquisition of storm-damaged property. Properties may be acquired under the program only from willing sellers. Actual expenditure of any appropriated funds for any particular project requires the approval of the Joint Budget Oversight Committee or its successor.

This bill is identical to Assembly Bill No. 1466.