

FISCAL NOTE TO
SENATE, No. 2202

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JULY 9, 1997

Senate Bill No. 2202 of 1997 provides for organizational changes to the State Parole Board in response to a recommendation of the Governor's Study Commission on Parole. Under the bill, the Governor is authorized to designate a vice-chairman from among the regular associate members of the Parole Board to assume the Chairman's duties and responsibilities whenever the chairman is absent or incapable of performing those duties and responsibilities. The Governor also is authorized to appoint a permanent alternate member. This alternate member would assume the duties and responsibilities of any absent or incapacitated associate member.

The State Parole Board states that there are 8 associate members of the Parole Board, with an average absence of 18 working days per year, for a total number of 144 working days which would need to be covered by an alternate board member. The per diem salary of an alternate member would be \$319.83 per day, and an annual cost of \$46,056. Travel reimbursement based on 144 days of service with an average reimbursable mileage of 100 miles round-trip per day would be \$3,600, for a total annual cost of about \$50,000.

The Department of Corrections notes that the ability to assign an alternate member during the absence of an associate member would eliminate approximately 15 lost hearings per day. With a release rate of 64 percent, a rescheduling factor of two weeks and a per diem cost of \$58.50 per day, the use of an alternate member could save the Department of Corrections up to \$7,862 for each hearing day salvaged.

The Office of Legislative Services concurs and adds that if the alternate member fills in for the 144 previously vacant hearing days, a savings of about \$1.1 million could be realized.

This fiscal note has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67.