

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE TO

[First Reprint]
SENATE, No. 2209

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JULY 16, 1997

Bill Summary:

Senate Bill No. 2209 (1R) of 1996 is intended to enable the State to comply with the federal "Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Amendments of 1996." Specifically, the bill:

- C amends the State's confidentiality statute and lists those who may access child abuse records and allows for public disclosure of child abuse findings or information in child fatality and near fatality cases.
- C defines sexual abuse and establishes procedures for responding to the reports of suspected medical neglect.
- C it will not require reunification of a child with his parents when a court has found a parent committed certain criminal offenses and makes a conviction for those offenses grounds for termination of parental rights.
- C establishes in the Department of Human Services (DHS) the Child Fatality and Near Fatality Review Board to review information regarding the deaths of children due to unusual circumstances as well as fatalities and near fatalities among children known to the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS).
- C requires the Commissioner of Human Services to designate three citizen review panels to examine policies and procedures of State and local agencies to evaluate interagency coordination and compliance with State and federal mandates for the protection of children.

Agency Comments:

DHS and the Office of Management and Budget have not provided any fiscal information on the legislation.

Office of Legislative Services Comments:

The FY 1998 appropriations bill, Senate Bill No. 2500 of 1997/Assembly Bill No. 3000 of 1997 recommends \$145.9 million in State and federal funds for administrative costs of DYFS. This appropriation should be sufficient to enable DYFS to implement the procedural changes proposed by the legislation.

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

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