

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 1663

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 18, 2021

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 1663 (1R). with committee amendments.

As amended and reported by the committee, Assembly Bill No. 1663 makes permanent the "New Jersey Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NJNSGP)" in the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (OHSP), which expired in January 2020, pursuant to P.L.2017, c.246.

This bill provides that the NJNSGP is directed to provide grants out of any annually appropriated funds to eligible nonprofit organizations at the greatest risk of attack: (1) to hire certain permanent or temporary security personnel; and (2) for acquisition of certain target hardening equipment.

As amended, the bill requires the OHSP to request annually as part of its budget proposal a minimum of \$2,000,000 to fund the NJNSGP. The NJNSGP shall award grants of up to \$10,000 for nonprofit organizations to hire permanent or temporary security personnel for the purpose of preparing against threats, attacks, or other violent acts. Security personnel under the bill include federal, State, county, and municipal law enforcement officers, special law enforcement officers, and licensed security officers. In addition, the bill awards grants of up to \$50,000 for nonprofit organizations to acquire target hardening equipment. The bill requires that any funds distributed under the program are not to be utilized for travel or security investments made outside the State.

The bill defines an "eligible nonprofit organization" as a nonprofit organization located in this State which is exempt from federal taxation pursuant to federal law.

Applicants for grants from the program are permitted to apply for either security personnel or equipment grants, or both, in each year of the program, but OHSP may only award funds for either security personnel or equipment in a fiscal year. The grant may be used by the applicant to hire security personnel for an event in the State primarily organized by the applicant away from the applicant's physical location as recorded on the grant application and for which the applicant bears

legal liability. To receive a grant, the applicant is to be evaluated as to whether it is at high risk for a terrorist attack, threats, domestic extremism, and other violent acts.

The OHSP is to assign a preference for applicants who have not received either a federal or State security grant in the last two grant cycles.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amendments reduce the amount the OHSP would be required to request annually as part of its budget proposal from a minimum of \$5,000,000 to \$2,000,000 to fund the NJNSGP.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) finds the cost of this legislation to be indeterminate. While the bill requires the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (OHSP), in, but not of, the Department of Law and Public Safety, to annually request an appropriation of at least \$2 million to fund and administer the program, it is uncertain if the full amount of the appropriation may be approved and how many eligible nonprofit organizations may apply for funding and demonstrate certain security needs.

The OLS notes the bill would make permanent the New Jersey Nonprofit Security Grant Program, a three-year pilot program established in the OHSP in 2017.

The bill requires the OHSP to provide to eligible nonprofit organizations maximum grants of up to \$10,000 to hire permanent or temporary security personnel and up to \$50,000 to acquire target hardening equipment for the purpose of preparing against threats, attacks, or other violent acts. Five percent of the appropriated funds are to be allocated to the OHSP for administration of the grant program. The OLS notes these provisions are consistent with requirements in the expired three-year pilot program.