

ASSEMBLY LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 2722

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 7, 2020

The Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 2722.

As amended and reported by the committee, Assembly Bill No. 2722 requires the Commissioner of Corrections to institute a 30-minute shift overlap in each of the 13 correctional facilities in this State for the purpose of information dissemination between correctional police officers beginning and ending their shifts.

Under the program of shift overlap established in the amended bill, a correctional police officer whose shift has ended would be required to remain at his or her post for 30 minutes after the end of the shift to report what happened during that shift to the incoming officer.

Shift overlap enhances the safety and well-being of the officers and inmates in correctional facilities by allowing for the sharing of information between incoming and outgoing officers, particularly on issues such as gang activities and contraband.

According to the Assembly Prison Gang Violence Task Force final report, issued December 12, 2006, the Department of Corrections historically provided for shift overlap periods of up to 30 minutes, but gradually reduced these periods until they were ultimately phased out altogether due to budget constraints.

According to the sponsor, this has resulted in increased danger to inmates and correctional police officers, increased use of institutional lockups and search details, and decreased morale among correctional police officers.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amended the bill to change the reference to “corrections officers” to “correctional police officers” in accordance with the provisions of P.L.2019, c.219.