

ASSEMBLY AGING AND SENIOR SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4861

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 13, 2021

The Assembly Aging and Senior Services Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 4861.

As amended, this bill requires the Department of Health (DOH) to display, at all times, the total number of confirmed deaths resulting from coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and confirmed COVID-19 cases among employees, volunteers, and other persons providing services at long-term care facilities, as well as among residents of long-term care facilities. The data are to be continuously updated to ensure the reported information reflects the most current information for the period commencing from the date of the first reported case of COVID-19 in New Jersey through the date for which the most recent data are available. The numbers will reflect both Statewide data and facility-specific data, to the extent that facility-specific numbers can be reported without violating State or federal health data privacy rules.

The bill defines "long-term care facility" to mean a nursing home, assisted living residence, comprehensive personal care home, residential health care facility, or dementia care home licensed pursuant to P.L.1971, c.136 (C.26:2H-1 et seq.). This definition includes veterans' homes, the nursing homes operated by the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs to serve the State's veterans.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments revise the bill's reporting requirements to: 1) require the DOH to display, in addition to the total number of confirmed deaths resulting from COVID-19, as included in the introduced bill, the total number of COVID-19 cases; and 2) clarify that the reported data is to include statistics from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic through the most recent date for which the data are available. The amendments further provide that the reported data is to include both Statewide numbers and numbers specific to each long-term care facility, to the extent these numbers can be reported without violating State or federal health privacy rules.

The committee amendments additionally remove separate references to veterans' homes, as these facilities are currently licensed

as nursing homes in New Jersey and so already fall within the definition of “long-term care facility” set forth in the bill.

Finally, the committee amendments make various technical changes to correct grammar and syntax and to update the synopsis of the bill to reflect the amendments.