

ASSEMBLY SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE
AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 5799

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 9, 2021

The Assembly Special Committee on Infrastructure and Natural Resources reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 5799.

This bill would require the Department of Environmental Protection to prepare a report on the recharge areas of confined aquifers in the State. Confined aquifers are underground volumes of water that have impermeable layers of rock or soil above and below the water, causing it to be naturally pressurized. Ground water can still flow into confined aquifers; however, it often flows in from a distant area upslope of the main aquifer, known as the "recharge area."

The report would: (1) include a map that shows, as far as is practicable, the three-dimensional extent of all major confined aquifers in the State; (2) include a map that shows the recharge areas of all major confined aquifers in the State; (3) provide an analysis of the watershed characteristics, geology, and land use of each recharge area, indicating what proportion of each recharge area is developed versus undeveloped; (4) provide an analysis of the feasibility of preserving, as open space, an increased amount of each recharge area; (5) provide an analysis of the feasibility of artificially recharging each confined aquifer; (6) provide recommendations for State laws and municipal ordinances to increase the quantity and quality of water that recharges each confined aquifer; and (7) provide recommendations for State and municipal initiatives, including public awareness campaigns, to increase the quantity and quality of water that recharges each confined aquifer.