

SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 970

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 30, 2020

The Senate Higher Education Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 970.

This bill requires a member of a governing board of a public institution of higher education to complete a training program developed or approved by the Secretary of Higher Education. Under the bill, the secretary would prescribe the subject matter of the training, which will include, but need not be limited to, information concerning governance responsibilities, ethical standards, due diligence, the requirements of the “Senator Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act,” and the open public records law, issues associated with laws on privacy, board member fiduciary responsibilities, and the types of financial, organizational, legal, and regulatory issues associated with discharging the duties of a governing board member.

Under the bill, the secretary could provide the training directly or arrange for, or specify, the entity or entities to provide the training, and certify completion of the training for each governing board member. In the case of a county college, the bill provides that the secretary will designate the New Jersey Council of County Colleges to provide the training.

The bill provides that the training must be completed no later than six months after the date that the person is appointed as a member of the governing board. A person who is serving as a member of a governing board prior to the bill’s effective date must complete the training no later than six months after the effective date.