

# SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### SENATE, No. 1271

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: AUGUST 17, 2020

The Senate Higher Education Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1271.

Under current law, when the governing board of a public research university or a State college determines that it is advisable for the institution to establish a branch campus out-of-State or out-of-country that will serve at least 500 students of the institution, the board must submit the plan for the branch campus to the Secretary of Higher Education for review and recommendations.

This bill amends the law to:

- clarify that the provisions of the bill also apply to additional locations, not just branch campuses;
- specify that the board must first gain the approval of the secretary prior to establishing a branch campus or additional location;
- provide that secretary approval is required for a branch campus or additional location that serves at least 100 students instead of at least 500 students;
- require the board's plan to specify a commitment that the branch campus or additional location will comply with the provisions of the open public records act; and
- provide that the secretary may approve the establishment of a branch campus or additional location if the secretary determines that the branch campus or additional location: serves a compelling State interest; does not impose excessive costs or reputational risk to the State; does not impose a risk to the security interests of the State or federal government; and does not conflict with existing State or federal laws or regulations.

The bill specifies that, in making a determination to approve a branch campus or additional location, the secretary may utilize the assistance of an external consultant team, solicit comments from interested parties including faculty and members of professional staff not holding faculty rank at the public research university or a State college, and conduct a site visit at the proposed site of the branch campus or additional location.

The bill also specifies that faculty and members of the professional staff not holding faculty rank will receive the same salary and benefits as the employees of the institution within the State.