

SENATE LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2765

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: AUGUST 21, 2020

The Senate Law and Public Safety Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 2765.

As reported by the committee, Senate Bill No. 2765 requires the Civil Services Commission to undertake various initiatives to increase diversity and inclusivity within law enforcement agencies.

The bill directs the Civil Service Commission to conduct, or hire a qualified vendor to conduct, an analysis of the racial composition of law enforcement agencies in this State. The goal of the analysis would be to identify the agencies that might benefit most from eliminating the preference in hiring based upon residency.

In conducting the analysis, the commission or vendor is to:

- (1) examine the racial composition of law enforcement agencies;
- (2) examine the salaries of law enforcement officers;
- (3) analyze and compare the data from (1) and (2);
- (4) examine the variances in salaries based upon geography and socioeconomic factors; and
- (5) examine how residency hiring preferences affect the incidence of diversity in law enforcement agencies.

The bill also directs the commission to create a program with the goal of achieving at least one of the following two objectives:

- (1) sponsoring free or low-cost preparatory courses for the entry level law enforcement examination for residents of any low-income community, as defined in the bill, or of any municipality with at least one “qualified opportunity zone,” as identified under federal regulations; or
- (2) providing, securing, or identifying scholarships for alternate route programs or preparatory courses for the entry level law enforcement examination for residents of any low-income community or “qualified opportunity zone.”

The bill authorizes the commission to receive gifts, grants, or other financial assistance from private sources to fund these courses or scholarships.