

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR
CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 3579

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 6, 2021

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 3579.

This bill amends section 34 of P.L.1974, c.119 (C.9:6-8.54) to require a permanency hearing for a child placed in the custody of a relative, other suitable person, or the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCPP), after a finding that the DCPP has made reasonable efforts to prevent placement or that reasonable efforts to prevent placement were not required, be held at least every six months commencing from the date after the initial permanency hearing, if the child remains in placement more than 12 months. Current law requires that permanency hearings take place no later than 12 months after placement in such cases but does not require that subsequent hearings take place every six months if the child remains in placement for more than 12 months.

The bill also amends section 50 of P.L.1999, c.53 (C.30:4C-61.2) to require that a permanency hearing providing for court review and approval of a placement plan be held at least every six months commencing from the date of the initial permanency hearing if a child remains in placement for more than 12 months. Current law requires that this hearing be held within 30 days after the determination of an exception to the reasonable effort requirement to reunify the child with the parent or no later than 12 months after the child has been in placement. The law does not require that subsequent hearings take place every six months if the child remains in placement for more than 12 months.