Honorable Paul A. Sarlo  
Chairman, Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee  
c/o Frank Haines  
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer  
Office of Legislative Services  
State House Annex  
PO Box 068  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0068

Dear Senator Sarlo:

I am writing in response to your request for additional information to issues raised by committee members.

Senator Pou:

Please provide information on the status of the NJ Advisory Council on End-of-Life Care established by P.L.2011, c. 113. If the council has not yet taken any action, please provide a timeline for the establishment and implementation of the council.

Response

The statute established a 21-member Advisory Council on End of Life Care which includes three ex-officio members: Commissioners of the Department of Health, Human Services and the Ombudsman for the Institutionalized Elderly. The Senate President and Speaker of the General Assembly each have two appointments and the Governor is required to appoint 14 members with Advice and Consent of the Senate. At this time, the Senate President has appointed two members and the Governor has nominated six individuals (same six were nominated in 2015 but were ultimately not confirmed during the session) who currently await confirmation by the full Senate. The Council has not met as of this writing due to lack of confirmed membership.
Senator Greenstein:

Please provide the number of complaints made to the department regarding long term care facilities; the number of complaints made to the department regarding acute care facilities; and the total number of all complaints received by the department in the previous year.

Response

In State Fiscal Year 2015, the Department received a total of 3,377 complaints: 2,487 regarding long term care facilities and 890 regarding acute care facilities. In the previous year (SFY 2014), the Department received a total of 3,502 complaints: 2450 regarding long term care facilities and 1052 regarding acute care facilities.

Please comment on the reasons why the number of complaints investigated is included in budget data (page D-152), but the total number of complaints filed is not included in budget data.

Response

The information included in the evaluation data on page D-152 is a reflection of Department activity. The number of complaints received per year cannot be directly correlated to investigations as complaints are processed in different ways. It is common for multiple complaints to be reviewed during one onsite investigation. Also, a complaint could be referred to another state agency for follow-up and not result in an onsite investigation by Department staff. To compare the number of investigations to the number of complaints would be misleading.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Cathleen D. Bennett
Acting Commissioner