

ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 1271

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 10, 2022

The Assembly Education Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 1271 with committee amendments.

As amended, this bill would permit public school pupils in grades six through 12 one excused absence to attend a civic event each school year. School districts would be permitted to provide additional excused absences for such purposes. Excused absences taken under this bill would not be reflected on student attendance records.

Parents or guardians of pupils who wish to use an excused absence under this bill would be required to provide at least five school days' notice in advance of the intended excused absence and such documentation as the school district deems necessary to prove that the pupil meets the requirements for an excused absence pursuant to the provisions of this bill.

The bill defines "civic event" as an event sponsored by a government entity, the community, or a local nonprofit organization to address an issue of public concern such as community health and safety or environmental, economic, or community well-being.

The Commissioner of Education, with the approval of the State Board of Education, would be responsible for prescribing rules relative to absences for civic events. This would include, but not be limited to, a list of civic events where it would be mandatory to excuse a pupil. The bill would not be construed to limit the right of boards of education to excuse absences for civic events not included on the commissioner's list.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2022-2023 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to define a "civic event" as an event sponsored by a government entity, the community, or a local nonprofit organization to address an issue of public concern such as community health and safety or environmental, economic, or community well-being.