

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO **SENATE, No. 3736**

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 15, 2023

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 3726.

As amended, this bill establishes a one-year pilot program for certain persons with disabilities in the Department of Human Services.

Under the bill, the purpose of the pilot program is to: (1) create a vocational program for individuals with disabilities; (2) provide individuals with disabilities opportunities to learn recreational, social, and vocational skills; (3) provide individuals with disabilities the ability to engage in recreational, social, and vocational activities in order to develop relationships within the community; and (4) provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to explore their interests and build confidence in their abilities.

As amended, the bill provides that the pilot program is to: (1) select one or more direct support professionals, as this term is defined in the bill, who possess training tailored to the specific needs of program participants, to assist these individuals with social, vocational, and recreational activities and skills; (2) select at least three individuals who meet certain qualification criteria to participate in the program; (3) provide program participants a minimum of six hours of weekly recreational, social, and vocational development activities as provided for in the bill; (4) collect data on a regular basis regarding the development of the program participants; and (5) provide quarterly progress reports, as well as a final, year-end report to participants' parents or guardians, as appropriate.

Under the amended bill, no later than three months following the completion of the pilot program, the Commissioner of Human Services is to prepare and submit a report to the Governor and Legislature containing information necessary to assess the success and budgetary needs of the pilot program. Any information included in the report concerning program participants will be de-identified.

In order to effectuate the purposes of the pilot program, the amended bill appropriates up to, but not more than, \$85,000, to be

determined by the Commissioner of Human Services and subject to the approval of the Director of the Division of Budget and Accounting in the Department of the Treasury.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments provide that progress reports will be provided to a program participant's parents only if the parent is the program participant's legal guardian or if the program participant otherwise consents to release such information to the parent.

The committee amendments require that any information concerning program participants included in the report submitted by the Commissioner of Human Services is to be de-identified.

The committee amendments provide that the appropriation provided by the bill will be subject to the approval of the Director of the Division of Budget and Accounting in the Department of the Treasury.

The committee amendments make various technical changes, including revising the synopsis of the bill, to address grammar, syntax, and style issues, as well as to harmonize terminology.