LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 518

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

DATED: MAY 2, 2024

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Provides for expansion of county transportation services to include disabled veterans; provides funding source for expansion.

Type of Impact: Annual county revenue and expenditure increases; annual State expenditure increase; reallocation of revenues and expenditures from the New Jersey Transit Corporation to the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs.

Agencies Affected: Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs; the New Jersey Transit Corporation; county governments.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Local Expenditure Increase	Up to $1.70 million	Up to $1.86 million	Up to $2.03 million
Local Revenue Increase	Up to $1.70 million	Up to $1.86 million	Up to $2.03 million
State Expenditure Increase	Indeterminate	Indeterminate	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that this bill would increase local revenues and expenditures by up to $1.70 million in FY 2025. This increase is based on the estimated amount of State grants that will be made available to counties by the Department of Veterans' Affairs to expand services provided under the existing Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Program to include disabled veterans traveling to and from medical counseling appointments within the State for their service-connected conditions. The OLS estimates available State grants to be $1.86 million in FY 2026 and $2.03 million in FY 2027.

- Under current law, 8.5 percent of the revenues deposited into the Casino Revenue Fund are statutorily dedicated for the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Program administered by the New Jersey Transit Corporation. This bill reallocates four percent of these amounts from New Jersey Transit to the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to provide grants to counties to reimburse them for their veteran transportation costs.

- The State would incur some indeterminate amount of upfront costs to help counties identify transportation service needs in the veteran community, which may need to be revisited periodically, along with annual workload increases to administer the grant program. Because the bill reallocates a portion of the funding already being provided by the State for transportation assistance for senior citizens and disabled residents to fund the grant program, the actual provision of grants to counties would not increase annual State costs.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill expands county transportation services for disabled veterans. This bill requires the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to coordinate with county governments on an expansion of existing county-administered transit services under the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Program in order to provide transportation services for disabled veterans to and from medical counseling appointments at a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs facility within the State for their service-connected conditions. The bill also requires the department to help counties identify transportation service needs within the veteran community.

Under current law, 8.5 percent of the revenues deposited into the Casino Revenue Fund are statutorily dedicated for the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Program administered by the New Jersey Transit Corporation. This bill reallocates four percent of these amounts to the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to provide grants to counties to provide the outlined transportation services to disabled veterans. The bill takes effect on the first day of the sixth month following enactment.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS concludes that this bill would increase local revenues and expenditures by up to $1.70 million in FY 2025. This increase is based on the estimated amount of State grants that will be made available to counties by the Department of Veterans' Affairs to expand services provided under the existing Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Program to include disabled veterans traveling to and from medical counseling appointments within the State for their service-connected conditions. This represents four percent of the statutorily dedicated amounts ($42.52 million) anticipated in the FY 2025 Governor's Budget for the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Program administered by New Jersey Transit. The revenues dedicated for this program are estimated to grow 9.2 percent between FY 2024 and FY 2025. Assuming this same level of growth continues, State grants to counties to provide reimbursement for their costs to provide veteran transportation will increase to $1.86 million in FY 2026 and $2.03 million in FY 2027. To the extent that dedicated revenues for the program differ from this growth rate, this fiscal estimate would need to be adjusted accordingly.

The State would incur some indeterminate amount of upfront costs to help counties identify transportation service needs in the veteran community, which may need to be revisited

periodically, along with annual workload increases to administer the grant program. Because the bill reallocates a portion of the funding already being provided by the State for transportation assistance for senior citizens and disabled residents to fund the grant program, the actual provision of grants to counties would not increase annual State costs.

Section: *State Government*

Analyst: *Camryn Mathews*
Assistant Fiscal Analyst

Approved: *Thomas Koenig*
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).