

# ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### **ASSEMBLY, No. 5151**

with committee amendments

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: DECEMBER 16, 2024

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 5151.

As amended, this bill provides that a newspaper utilized, or permitted to be utilized, by a person or public body, as defined in section 3 of the "Open Public Meetings Act," P.L.1975, c.231 (C.10:4-8), from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 for the purpose of complying with any requirements for issuing or publishing a public notice or legal advertisement, including, but not limited to, for providing adequate notice of a meeting, the solicitation of bids, qualifications, or proposals, or the publication of any ordinances, synopses, or summaries of official documents, is deemed eligible for the same purposes from January 1, 2025 to March 1, 2025 if the newspaper's publication is in print or electronic format. Under the bill, a price paid for publication is prohibited from exceeding an amount specified in current law. Additionally, a fee is not permitted to be charged, and registration is not to be required, for viewing public notices or legal advertisements published in an electronic format.

#### COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

- Specify that, in addition to newspapers that are utilized for complying with required public notices, newspapers that are permitted to be utilized are also eligible for complying with required public notices;
- Specify that individual persons are also able to issue or publish materials as provided for in the bill;
- Provide that the issuance of public notices also includes the solicitation of bids, qualifications, or proposals, or the publication of any ordinances, synopses, or summaries of official documents, and include reference to certain statutes. In its original form, the bill just included providing adequate notice of a meeting;
- Provide that a price paid for publication is prohibited from exceeding an amount specified in current law;

- Specify that a fee is not permitted to be charged, and registration is not to be required, for viewing public notices or legal advertisements published in an electronic format;
- Add a definition of "electronic format" to mean an Internet website and other technology having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical, electromagnetic, or similar capabilities that is operated by or for a newspaper for publication, and to use that term to describe allowed publication under the bill; and
- Provide that the bill is to take effect immediately, and conform the bill's title and synopsis to a related Senate bill.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This bill is not certified as requiring a fiscal note.