

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2428

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 26, 2024

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 2428.

As amended and reported, this bill codifies the Eagleton Science and Politics Fellowship Program at the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, the State University. The program will be funded by the State, and the fellows will be referred to as the John Weingart Science Fellows. John Weingart is a former Associate Director of the Eagleton Institute of Politics and a founder of the fellowship program.

A minimum of four fellows who are scientists, engineers, and health care professionals with a PhD or equivalent doctoral professional degree in natural sciences, engineering, or healthcare will be selected each year and assigned to work with the New Jersey Legislature and the Executive Branch. The director of the fellowship program will determine the placement of the fellows assigned to work in the Executive Branch, as well as recruit and select all of the fellows.

This bill appropriates \$360,000 for the stipends and the administrative costs of the program. The bill also appropriates a minimum of \$520,000 annually to support the program.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

(1) change the number of fellows selected each year to participate in the program from six to a minimum of four;

(2) change the number of fellows assigned to work with the Legislature and in the Executive Branch, respectively, from three to at least two;

(3) change the appropriation from \$338,000 to \$360,000 for the stipends and administrative costs of the program;

(4) appropriate \$520,000 on an annual basis from the General Fund to support the program; and

(5) clarify references to the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, the State University and to the Eagleton Science and Politics Fellowship Program throughout the bill.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services determines that this bill will increase State expenditures by up to \$360,000 in FY 2024 to pay for stipends and administrative costs of the Eagleton Science and Politics Fellowship Program at the Eagleton Institute of Politics of Rutgers University. The bill appropriates \$360,000 in the current fiscal year for these purposes. Beginning in FY 2025, a minimum of \$520,000 is to be appropriated annually from the General Fund for the program.