LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
SENATE, No. 299
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
222nd LEGISLATURE

DATED: NOVEMBER 5, 2026

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Implements Blue Band Program to address preeclampsia in New Jersey.

Type of Impact: One-time increase in State expenditures; potential annual State expenditure reductions.

Agencies Affected: Department of Health.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	
One-Time State Expenditure Increase	Up to $200,000
Potential Annual State Expenditure Reduction	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) finds that one-time costs to the Department of Health will increase by up to $200,000 to implement the voluntary, Statewide Blue Band Program. The exact scale of the cost increase will depend upon the parameters of implementation and the extent to which the department will be able to draw on existing federal, state, and other resources.

- Longer-term healthcare savings to the State would be realized if the Blue Band Program were successful in reducing the pregnancy-related complications and adverse health outcomes associated with preeclampsia.

BILL DESCRIPTION

The bill establishes the Blue Band Program in the Office of Maternal and Child Health in the Department of Health to reduce pregnancy-related complications associated with preeclampsia by alerting health care providers, via a blue wristband worn by a pregnant or postpartum woman, to the woman's risk of such complications.

The Office of Maternal and Child Health will: (1) implement requirements for, and provide information to hospitals and FQHCs on participating in, the program; (2) establish a procedure by which hospitals and FQHCs may voluntarily participate in the program; and (3) develop guidelines

for participating hospitals and FQHCs to distribute blue wristbands to pregnant and postpartum women at risk for, or diagnosed with, preeclampsia. The office will develop educational resources to support participating hospitals and FQHCs in implementing the program and make these resources available on the office's website.

The bill requires the office to submit an annual report to the Governor and Legislature on the implementation of the program and the program's impact on maternal mortality in the counties in which participating hospitals and FQHCs are located.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS finds that one-time costs to the Department of Health will increase by up to $200,000 to implement the voluntary, Statewide Blue Band Program. The exact scale of the cost increase will depend upon the parameters of implementation and the extent to which the department will be able to draw on existing federal, state, and other resources. The OLS notes that longer-term healthcare savings to the State would be realized if the program were successful in reducing the pregnancy-related complications and adverse health outcomes associated with preeclampsia.

Under the bill, the department will incur startup costs to: develop and implement a procedure for hospitals and FQHCs to enroll in the voluntary program, develop educational resources to support participating hospitals and FQHCs in implementing the program, develop informational and training materials for health care providers and first responders, develop patient education materials, and provide participating hospitals and FQHCs with a list of approved vendors to supply the blue wristbands for use in the program. Annual reporting requirements will increase the department's workload to a certain extent, but the department should be able to meet these requirements with existing staff and resources.

To the extent that the department can purchase or utilize programmatic materials, professional training materials, and educational materials from other states that have similar, longstanding programs, such as Minnesota and Washington, State costs will be lower. Alternatively, if the department were to utilize a federal funding stream, such as the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, to fund implementation of the Blue Band Program, departmental costs would be reduced or eliminated.

For reference, the Connecticut Department of Public Health supports the state's Urgent Maternal Warning Signs Bracelet Initiative with federal Maternal Health Innovation Grant funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration. According to the Connecticut Department of Public Health, between September 30, 2024 and September 29, 2025, the department allocated $76,500 to the Connecticut Hospital Association to support implementation of this initiative, including: staffing for the initiative's rollout, implementation, and ongoing management in Connecticut hospitals; development and coordination of training and educational materials and logistical support for participating hospital staff; development and implementation of communications materials and media campaigns targeting hospital staff, emergency medical services personnel, health care providers, and the public; and continuing education materials for health care professionals. As of May 2026, all Connecticut hospitals with maternity care programs,

and the State's one freestanding birthing center, have distributed the bracelets to postpartum patients, and nearly 500 hospital staff, health care providers, and emergency medical services personnel have been educated on the bracelet initiative.

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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.).