

ASSEMBLY TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND UTILITIES
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO
ASSEMBLY, No. 392

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 2, 2022

The Assembly Telecommunications and Utilities Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 392 with committee amendments.

As amended and reported, this bill authorizes certain local authorities, including sewerage authorities, municipal utilities authorities, and county utilities authorities, to distribute live recordings of public hearings in lieu of certain transcript requirements. Under current law, when considering an adjustment to service charges, local authorities are required to hold a public hearing with the purpose of presenting evidence that the adjustment is necessary and to allow individuals to question the need for adjustment. Current law requires this public hearing to be transcribed and made available, upon request, to interested parties at a reasonable cost.

This bill allows a local authority to provide a live recording of a public hearing to an interested party in lieu of providing a written transcript. The live recording may consist of video and audio of the proceeding, or audio only. However, these authorities could not charge the interested party for a live recording. The bill also requires these authorities to satisfy any applicable requirements of the State's open public records act.

As amended and reported, this bill is identical to Senate Bill No. 435 (1R), which was also amended and reported by the committee on this date.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2022-2023 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments expand the provisions of the bill to include municipal utilities authorities and county utilities authorities. Accordingly, the amendments provide that these local authorities may also distribute live recordings of public hearings in lieu of certain transcript requirements.

The amendments also remove a provision of the bill that specified that sewerage authorities would be required to meet any applicable requirements of the federal “Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990,” 42 U.S.C. s.12101 et seq.