

ASSEMBLY HOMELAND SECURITY AND STATE
PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO
ASSEMBLY, No. 1701

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 15, 2023

The Assembly Homeland Security and State Preparedness Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 1701.

As amended and reported by the committee, Assembly Bill No. 1701 requires the State Office of Emergency Management to establish a permanent unit in the office to serve the needs of State residents with access and functional needs.

Under the provisions of the bill. The unit's responsibilities are to include:

- (1) determining the needs of residents with access and functional needs, before, during, and after disasters and emergencies;
- (2) determining the Statewide availability of relevant resources and assistance;
- (3) assessing and addressing the ability of residents with access and functional needs to access available resources and assistance; and
- (4) coordinating with county and local offices of emergency management and relevant resource providers to determine, expand, and implement best practices to be utilized in support of residents with access and functional needs.

The bill provides that the unit would consist of one full-time supervisor and a staff of three full-time planners to assist the needs of the South, Central, and North Jersey regions in serving State residents with access and functional needs.

The bill defines a "resident with access and functional needs" as:

- (1) a person with a disability;
- (2) an older adult;
- (3) a person with limited English proficiency;
- (4) a person with limited access to transportation that would enable the person to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of a disaster or emergency; and
- (5) a person with limited access to financial resources that would enable the person to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of a disaster or emergency.

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