

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 4752

(First Reprint)

To the General Assembly:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Assembly Bill No. 4752 (First Reprint) with my recommendations for reconsideration.

Assembly Bill No. 4752 (First Reprint) requires the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers ("NJSBDCs") to work with the Business Action Center ("BAC") within the Department of State to establish a program to help small businesses with fewer than 25 employees develop an Internet presence. The bill aims to help small business owners launch websites, social media, and other online tools to advance their business purposes.

I commend the bill's sponsors for exploring ways to help business owners leverage the Internet and social media to their advantage. In an increasingly digital world, a strong online presence is crucial for businesses to establish and promote their brand. I am advised, however, that Assembly Bill No. 4752 (First Reprint) would duplicate existing efforts being undertaken by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority ("EDA") pursuant to its "Small Business E-Commerce Support Program" ("E-Commerce Program"). The E-Commerce Program launched in December 2022 and has assisted approximately 68 businesses to date with website development and optimization, as well as the development of e-commerce platforms and digital marketing plans. The EDA's efforts required a significant amount of planning and investment, which is only expected to grow in the future. Therefore, it would be an inefficient use of State resources to ask the NJSBDCs, in conjunction with BAC, to replicate that work.

For the foregoing reasons, I am recommending amendments to allow BAC to work in consultation with the EDA and NJSBDCs on ensuring the public has access to relevant information about the

E-Commerce Program and other existing programs that help businesses develop an online presence. Creating a one-stop information shop for business owners to learn about available opportunities will ensure that as many eligible businesses as possible can obtain the assistance they need.

Accordingly, I herewith return Assembly Bill No. 4752 (First Reprint) and recommend that it be amended as follows:

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| <u>Page 2, Title, Line 1:</u> | Delete "Small Business Development" and insert "Business Action Center" |
| <u>Page 2, Title, Line 2:</u> | Delete "Centers" |
| <u>Page 2, Title, Line 2:</u> | Delete "establish a program" and insert "collect and produce certain information" |
| <u>Page 2, Section 1, Lines 9-10:</u> | Delete "Small Business Development Centers, in consultation with the" |
| <u>Page 2, Section 1, Line 12:</u> | After "shall" insert ", in consultation with the New Jersey Economic Development Authority and the New Jersey Business Development Centers," |
| <u>Page 2, Section 1, Line 12:</u> | Delete "a program to" and insert "and maintain publicly available information and guidance to help small businesses learn about available programs that" |
| <u>Page 2, Section 1, Lines 13-14:</u> | Delete "The program shall be limited to businesses in the State with fewer than 25 employees." |
| <u>Page 2, Section 1, Lines 15-16:</u> | Delete "program shall be staffed with full-time employees and volunteers and shall" and insert "guidance shall provide information on available programs that" |
| <u>Page 2, Section 1, Lines 28-29:</u> | Delete in their entirety |
| <u>Page 2, Section 2, Line 31:</u> | Delete "Small Business Development Centers" and insert "Business Action Center" |
| <u>Page 2, Section 2, Lines 32-33:</u> | Delete "establishing a program to help small businesses develop an Internet presence" and insert "creating guidance" |
| <u>Page 2, Section 2, Lines 36-37:</u> | Delete "to recruit volunteers" |
| <u>Page 2, Section 2, Line 37:</u> | Delete "administering" and insert "compiling" |

Page 2, Section 2, Line 37:

After "promoting" insert
"information about"

Page 2, Section 2, Line 38:

Delete "program" and insert
"available programs"

[seal]

Respectfully,

/s/ Philip D. Murphy

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Parimal Garg

Chief Counsel to the Governor