

ASSEMBLY SCIENCE, INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY  
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

**ASSEMBLY, No. 5161**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: FEBRUARY 16, 2023

The Assembly Science, Innovation and Technology Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 5161.

As reported, this bill requires the Director of the Division of Housing and Community Resources in the Department of Community Affairs, in consultation with the Commissioner of Transportation, to establish a grant program to encourage local governments to develop and install, in accordance with federal law, street pole banners promoting New Jersey as an innovation hub in various fields of science, technology, and engineering. The purpose of the program is to provide grants to local governments which develop and install banners promoting local and regional achievements in fields such as bioscience, telecommunications, and clean energy, and which promote the local or regional area as part of an innovation hub.

Under the bill, a municipality that wants to participate in the grant program is required to submit an application to the division in a manner and on such forms as determined by the director. The application is required to include information detailing the municipality's proposed plans for the grant funding as outlined in the bill.

After reviewing the applications, the director, in consultation with the commissioner, is required to select a total of nine municipalities, including three municipalities in each of the northern, southern, and central regions of the State, to participate in the program and is to seek a cross section from urban, suburban, and rural areas of the State.

Within one year of receiving a grant, each participating municipality is required to submit a report to the director detailing certain information as provided in the bill.

The director is required to compile the reports for inclusion in a comparative profile of the participating municipalities and post the profile for public inspection on the division's Internet website in an easily accessible location.

Under the bill, within one year of posting the comparative profile, the director is required to submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature. The report is to contain information on the implementation of the grant program, including the director's recommendation on the feasibility of implementing the program on a

Statewide basis, and a list of best practices concerning the promotion of local and regional achievements in certain fields. The director is required to post the report for public inspection on the division's Internet website in an easily accessible location.

The bill appropriates \$100,000 from the General Fund to the division to effectuate the purposes of the bill.