

# ASSEMBLY AGING AND SENIOR SERVICES COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### **ASSEMBLY, No. 5173**

with committee amendments

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: MARCH 20, 2023

The Assembly Aging and Senior Services Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 5173.

As amended by the committee, this bill requires that the hourly reimbursement rate for home health aide services, as well as personal care services and homemaker services, provided through the Statewide Respite Care Program and the Jersey Assistance for Community Caregiving (JACC) Program, in which the services are provided on a weekday, are no less than the Medicaid fee-for-service reimbursement rate for personal care services, which is set at \$24.52 in FY 2023. When the same services provided through these programs are provided on a weekend or on a State or federal holiday, the reimbursement rate is required to be no less than the amount of the Medicaid fee-for-service reimbursement rate for personal care services plus \$1, or \$25.52 in FY 2023.

In addition, the bill codifies into statute the current monetary cap each program reimburses an eligible participant in a calendar year. For the Statewide Respite Care Program, the cap is currently set at \$6559.63 per calendar year. For the JACC Program, the cap is currently set at \$11,158.56 per calendar year. This cap does not include any additional costs associated with a monthly case management fee. As amended, the bill provides that the program caps can be increased to a higher amount approved by the Commissioner of Human Services through regulation.

The bill also requires that an amount sufficient to carry out these provisions be appropriated each fiscal year from the General Fund to the Department of Human Services.

The Statewide Respite Care Program provides relief and support to uncompensated caregivers from the demands of the daily care of functionally impaired persons. The JACC Program provides services and supports to certain eligible senior citizens to supplement and strengthen the capacity of caregivers. Currently, home health aide services, personal care services, and homemaker services provided under the Statewide Respite Care Program are reimbursed at \$17 per hour for services provided on a weekday and \$18 per hour for services provided on a weekend or a State or federal holiday. The same services provided under the JACC Program are reimbursed at \$15.50

per hour for services provided on a weekday and \$17 per hour for services provided on a weekend or a State or federal holiday.

As released from committee, this bill is identical to Senate Bill No. 2362 (1R).

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments revise the amounts of the monetary caps established by the bill for the Statewide Respite Care Program and the Jersey Assistance for Community Caregiving (JACC) Program to reflect those programs' current cap amounts. As introduced, the bill capped the programs at \$6,088 per calendar year for the Statewide Respite Care Program and \$10,733 per calendar year for the JACC program. As amended, the bill would establish program caps of up to \$6559.63 for the Statewide Respite Care Program and \$11,158.56 per calendar year for the JACC program. The committee amendments expressly authorize the Commissioner of Human Services to approve increases to the program caps.

The committee amendments make a technical change involving grammar to better clarify that the reimbursement rate of \$1 above the Medicaid fee-for-service reimbursement rate applies when the services are provided on either a weekend or on a State or federal holiday.