

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1536

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 6, 2022

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1536.

This bill would increase the annual payments by the State to veterans with certain wartime service-connected disabilities from \$750 to \$1,800.

The amount is paid to a veteran who has sustained a total loss of sight, or who has paraplegia and permanent paralysis of both legs and lower parts of the body, or who has osteochondritis and permanent loss of the use of both legs, or who has hemiplegia and permanent paralysis of one leg and one arm or either side of the body, resulting from injury to the spinal cord, skeletal structure, or brain, or who has had hands or feet amputated, or who has lost the use of both feet or both legs, due to multiple sclerosis, sustained through enemy action, or accident, or resulting from disease contracted while in active military service.

The amounts have not been changed since 1981. There are approximately 185 persons receiving the benefit.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services concludes that the incremental State cost to provide the higher annual allowance to veterans with certain wartime service-connected disabilities to be \$194,250 per year. Costs would be higher or lower each year depending upon the number of veterans who are eligible to receive the allowance.

As of March 2021, there were 185 blind and otherwise disabled veterans receiving an allowance under the Blind Veterans' Allowance Program and the Paraplegic and Hemiplegic Veterans' Allowance Program. Veterans may be eligible for both allowance payments.