

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR
CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2844

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 31, 2022

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 2844.

As amended by the committee, this bill increases the maximum number of respite care service hours funded through the Department of Children and Families (department) for certain families.

Under the bill, the family of a child that is eligible to receive respite care services funded through the department, is to be eligible to receive up to 90 hours of respite care services, provided by either an agency-hired or self-hired respite worker, over a 90-day period through funding provided by the department.

The Commissioner of Children and Families (commissioner) is to use available State and federal funds to effectuate the bill's provisions. As amended, the bill appropriates \$13 million from the General Fund to the department to effectuate the provisions of the bill.

The bill defines "respite care" to mean the provision of temporary, short-term care for, or the supervision of, an eligible child on behalf of the caregiver, in emergencies or on an intermittent basis to relieve the daily stresses and demands of caring for a child with a functional impairment. Respite care may be provided hourly or daily, may be provided by an agency-hired or self-hired respite worker or a volunteer, but may not exceed service and cost limitations as determined by the commissioner.

Under the bill, "agency-hired respite worker" means a respite care worker who is recruited, trained, and employed by a qualified agency under contract with the department; and "self-hired respite worker" means a respite care worker who is recruited, trained, and paid directly by a family of a child that is eligible for respite care services.

As reported by the committee with amendments, Senate Bill No. 2844 is identical to Assembly Bill No. 1902 (2R), which was also reported by the committee on this date.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments appropriate \$13 million from the General Fund to the Department of Children and Families to effectuate the provisions under the bill. The amendments revise the bill's title and synopsis to reflect the appropriation.