

# SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### SENATE, No. 2977

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 19, 2023

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 2977.

This bill requires the New Jersey Transit Corporation to ensure that Access Link drivers are paid “time-and-a-half” for operating an Access Link paratransit vehicle during a commercial vehicle travel restriction for inclement weather issued by the Commissioner of Transportation. The bill specifies that the enhanced compensation is only available for hours worked during the actual period of the commercial vehicle travel restriction.

As reported by the committee, Senate Bill No. 2977 is identical to Assembly Bill No. 2857 (1R), which also was reported by the committee on this date.

#### FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that the bill would increase expenditures for the New Jersey Transit Corporation (NJ Transit) associated with the payment of increased wages to certain employees who operate Access Link vehicles during certain commercial vehicle travel restrictions.

According to data available through an online employment marketplace, the average hourly wage for an Access Link operator in Newark, New Jersey is roughly \$28 per hour. Based on this amount, the bill would increase NJ Transit’s personnel costs by approximately \$14 per hour for each person who operates an Access Link vehicle during an applicable commercial vehicle travel restriction.

However, the OLS is unable to quantify the annual fiscal impact of the bill because the OLS is unable to predict: (1) the number of hours in which weather-related commercial vehicle travel restrictions will be imposed each year; and (2) the number of Access Link service routes that will be impacted by such restrictions.