LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
SENATE, No. 3411
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
222nd LEGISLATURE

DATED: JULY 1, 2026

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Establishes Social Media Research Center at four-year public institution of higher education.

Type of Impact: Annual State expenditure increase; annual revenue and expenditure increases for the selected four-year public institution of higher education.

Agencies Affected: Office of the Secretary of Higher Education; selected four-year public institution of higher education.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	Annual
State Expenditure Increase	Indeterminate
Selected Four-Year Public Institution of Higher Education Revenue Increase	Indeterminate
Selected Four-Year Public Institution of Higher Education Potential Expenditure Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) finds that this bill will lead to an annual State expenditure increase to support the establishment of a Social Media Research Center at a four-year public institution of higher education. The magnitude of the State expenditure increase will depend on the amount annually appropriated for the center.

- The OLS notes that, while the bill does not explicitly include an appropriation for the center, the FY2027 Governor's Budget recommends a $500,000 appropriation for a Social Media Research Center.

- The four-year public institution of higher education selected to house the Social Media Research Center would experience expenditure increases from utilizing the funds provided through the annual appropriations act and any other funds received from grants, gifts, donations, or other public or private sources.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill establishes a Social Media Research Center at a four-year public institution of higher education for the purpose of carrying out collaborative and interdisciplinary research, analysis, and outreach activities to help New Jersey navigate the usage of social media, particularly among children and adolescents. The Secretary of Higher Education is required to choose the four-year public institution of higher education at which the center will be hosted.

The center will conduct research to understand social media use, mitigate the negative impacts of social media, and promote healthy and responsible social media use. The bill authorizes the center, in addition to its own research, to administer a grant program for research on social media.

Under the bill, the Social Media Research Center is to be funded through an annual appropriation by the Legislature, and by any grants, gifts, donations, or other additional funds received by the center from public or private sources for research related to social media.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS finds that this bill will lead to an annual State expenditure increase to support the establishment of a Social Media Research Center at a four-year public institution of higher education. The magnitude of the State expenditure increase will depend on the amount annually appropriated for the center. The OLS notes that while the bill does not explicitly include an appropriation for the center, the FY2027 Governor's Budget recommends a $500,000 appropriation for a Social Media Research Center. Proposed budget language requires the Secretary of Higher Education, in disbursing the appropriation, to select an institution of higher education to study the relationship between digital technology and children's mental health and wellbeing.

The four-year public institution of higher education selected to house the Social Media Research Center would experience expenditure increases from utilizing the funds provided through the annual appropriations act and any other funds received from grants, gifts, donations, or other public or private sources.

For the purposes of comparison, the OLS notes that there is a recurring appropriation in the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education's portion of the State budget for the New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center, which is a research center housed at the Rutgers University School of Public Health that provides high-quality, multi-disciplinary research on gun violence causality and prevention. Since FY2019, full-year expenditures made by this center have ranged between $500,000 and $3 million.

Section: *Education*

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This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).