ASSEMBLY LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 793

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 5, 2020

The Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 793.

As reported by the committee, Assembly Bill No 793 directs the Juvenile Justice Commission to establish an arts education pilot program for juvenile offenders in the State.

In establishing the pilot program, the bill requires the commission to consult with the New Jersey State Council on the Arts to oversee the development, operation, administration, and evaluation of the program. The pilot program is to involve the development of three model arts education programs to deliver innovative arts-based programming for juvenile offenders in detention and correction facilities during a five-year period. The model programs are to be developed through organizational partnerships including, but not limited to, State and local arts organizations, community-based agencies, philanthropic entities, and the private sector, and are to be self-funded. The commission is to select three programs to participate in the pilot program, based upon the organization's ability to successfully implement model arts-based programming.

Under the bill, the commission is required to include an evaluation component in the pilot program. The evaluation is to be based on best practices for assessing arts-based programming for juvenile offenders and youth and, specifically, their educational outcomes and student progress in problem solving, comprehension, critical thinking and reasoning, and positive development. During the initial four years, each model program is required to undergo an annual evaluation conducted by the commission. After the program's fourth year, the commission is to submit to the Governor and the Legislature an evaluation of the pilot program and a recommendation concerning whether the program should be continued and expanded within the State.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2020-2021 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.