ASSEMBLY LABOR COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 1597

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 24, 2021

The Assembly Labor Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 1597.

This bill establishes the Task Force to Promote the Employment by State Agencies of People with Disabilities. The Task Force is directed to study and make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature regarding the problem of unemployment and underemployment among individuals with disabilities in the State. The Task Force will have 13 members, including one representative each for the Civil Service Commission, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the State Treasurer, the Office of the Ombudsman for Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and their Families, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, the State Rehabilitation Council, and the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, who shall serve ex officio, and five members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate for three year terms, as follows: a member representing the Association for Choices in Community Supports and Employment Services (ACCSES New Jersey); a member representing The Arc of New Jersey; a representative of a community rehabilitation program, and two individuals who have a disability.

The task force is directed to study the problem of unemployment and underemployment among individuals with disabilities, review relevant, available programs within the State of New Jersey for State agencies and local government agencies to recruit and retain in employment individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as similar programs in other states and private sector employers, and assist in the identification and implementation of strategies to expand efforts of New Jersey State and local government agencies to recruit and retain in employment individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and issue annual reports which offer a vision and provide viable recommendations on how the State can increase opportunities for employment for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities by expanding efforts of New Jersey State and local government agencies to recruit and retain in employment those individuals, including by

providing guidance and support to agencies and institutions of higher education.

The first report is to be issued to the Governor and Legislature not later than one year after the members of the task force are appointed. Each annual report shall be made available to the public by means including the posting of the report on the web sites of the State agencies represented on the task force.

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.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

(1) include local government agencies rather than just State agencies; and

(2) clarify that the task force is to make recommendations regarding how to increase opportunities for employment for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The bill in its current form refers to individuals with disabilities, without specifying intellectual and developmental disabilities, in the portion of the bill being amended.

These amendments make this bill identical to Senate Bill No. 1937 (1R) of the 2020-2021 session.