

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 2559

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: NOVEMBER 15, 2021

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 2559 (1R).

This bill would increase the annual payments by the State to veterans with certain wartime service-connected disabilities to \$1,800.

Currently, a blind veteran receives \$750 annually under the Blind Veterans' Allowance Program. This amount has not been changed since 1971. A veteran with certain other disabilities also receives \$750 annually under the Paraplegic and Hemiplegic Veterans' Allowance Program. This amount has not been changed since 1981. This bill would increase the annual payments to \$1,800.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that the incremental State cost to provide the higher annual allowance to veterans with certain wartime service-connected disabilities to be \$194,250 per year. Costs would be higher or lower each year depending upon the number of veterans who are eligible to receive the allowance.

As of March 2021, there were 185 blind and otherwise disabled veterans receiving an allowance under the Blind Veterans' Allowance Program and the Paraplegic and Hemiplegic Veterans' Allowance Program. Veterans may be eligible for both allowance payments.