

# ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

**ASSEMBLY, No. 3957**

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 3957 (1R).

This bill makes a FY 2020 supplemental Grants-in-Aid appropriation of \$5,000,000 to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to the NJSHARES - S.M.A.R.T. Program to fund financial assistance grants to New Jersey residents who suffered financial losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill provides that the \$5 million would be appropriated from the Universal Service Fund for utility payment assistance. The bill directs the commissioner to design and establish program criteria and guidelines consistent with the bill in order to award grants to eligible homeowners and tenants in an expeditious manner so to enable them to comply with their utilities obligations.

The bill directs the Commissioner of Community Affairs to award grants to homeowners and to residential tenants who suffered financial loss during the declaration of a Public Health Emergency and of a State of Emergency due to the coronavirus disease 2019. To be eligible for a grant under this program a homeowner or tenant may not be eligible for, or a recipient of funding from, private insurance or from any other available funding opportunity.

The bill authorizes the commissioner to implement this program through the award of contracts, or through the delegation of its authority to award grants, to private nonprofit organizations, public agencies, or both.

As reported by the committee, Assembly Bill No. 3957 (1R) is identical to Senate Bill No. 2362 (1R), which also was reported by the committee on this date.

### FISCAL IMPACT:

This bill is not certified as requiring a fiscal note.