

ASSEMBLY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4272

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 15, 2020

The Assembly Community Development and Affairs Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4272.

This bill would establish a civilian review board in every municipality to review and investigate complaints against members of the police force of the municipality. In those municipalities that have State Police serve in the role of the municipal police force, the civilian review board would review and investigate complaints against members of the State Police serving in that capacity within the municipality. These boards would serve to foster transparency, fairness, and equality in policing practices and policies, which in turn will help promote positive relations between police and the local communities they serve.

The bill also permits a county to establish a civilian review board to review and investigate complaints against members of the police force or the State police, as applicable, for a municipality that elects to be subject to its county civilian review board. Such municipality would not be required to have its own civilian review board.

A municipal civilian review board would consist of seven members who are appointed by the mayor or other chief executive officer of the municipality with the consent of the governing body of the municipality. A county civilian review board would consist of seven members appointed by the board of chosen freeholders or, if the county is organized pursuant to the provisions of the "Optional County Charter Law," P.L.1972, c.154 (C.40:41A-1 et seq.), the county executive, the county supervisor, or the county manager, as applicable, with the consent of the board of chosen freeholders. The members would be residents of the municipality or county, as applicable, who are qualified persons with training or experience in community relations, civil rights, law enforcement, juvenile justice, sociology, or other relevant fields for terms of six years, with certain shorter terms for the initial board members to allow for staggered terms.

A civilian review board would be permitted to utilize resources of the municipality or county to the extent that funds for the utilization of such resources are made available by the municipality, county, State, or other entity.

A civilian review board would report any findings and recommendations concerning complaints to the mayor or other chief executive officer of the municipality, the governing body of the municipality, and the county prosecutor. In the case of a municipality in which the State Police serves in the capacity of a municipal police force for the municipality, the board also would report any findings and recommendations concerning complaints to the Attorney General.