

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 4484

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 17, 2021

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4484 (1R).

This bill requires the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman (ombudsman) to establish a long-term care advocacy and educational training program.

Under the bill, the ombudsman would be required to establish, in consultation with the Department of Health, an annual long-term care training program. At a minimum, the program is to address the following subjects: the rights of residents of long-term care facilities; fostering choice and independence among residents of long-term care facilities; identifying and reporting abuse, neglect, or exploitation of residents of long-term care facilities; long-term care facility ownership; updates on State and federal guidelines, laws, and regulations that pertain to long-term care facilities; and issues, trends, and policies that impact the rights of long-term care residents. The annual training program is to be completed by the ombudsman's investigative and advocacy staff, the ombudsman's volunteer advocates, and Department of Health long-term care facility surveyors, inspectors, and complaint investigators. Subject to the availability of staff and funding, the training program is to be offered to residents of long-term care facilities, those residents' family members, advocacy organizations, government agencies, and long-term care facility employees. To develop and implement the training program, the ombudsman may contract or consult with a non-profit organization that possesses expertise on the rights of residents in long-term care settings.

As reported by the committee, Assembly Bill No. 4484 (1R) is identical to Senate Bill No. 3153, which also was reported by the committee on this date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that this bill will result in an indeterminate annual increase in expenditures to be incurred by the New Jersey Office of the State Long Term Care Ombudsman (NJLTCO) to establish and implement a long-term care training program.

One-time costs associated with developing the program will likely be minimal due to the overlap of the training content with the mission of the NJLTCO to serve as an independent advocate for older individuals receiving long-term care, as well as the availability of existing resources to assist in establishing the program. Annual costs associated with the program are indeterminate as the bill allows for the method of implementation to be determined by the ombudsman, in consultation with the Department of Health.