

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4532

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 13, 2021

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4532, with committee amendments.

This bill requires the Police Training Commission in the Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety to include cultural diversity and implicit bias training in the basic training course for police officers appointed to a police department or force.

Current law requires the Department of Law and Public Safety to develop or identify a uniform cultural diversity training course, including an on-line tutorial, which includes instruction promoting positive interaction with all members residing in the community, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation. The training course is available to every State, county, municipal, and campus police department or force for in-service training of its officers. This bill would require this cultural diversity training to be administered to police officers during their mandated basic training.

The bill further requires the Department of Law and Public Safety to develop or identify training course materials concerning implicit bias in policing. The Police Training Commission also is required by the bill to include the implicit bias training course materials in the basic training for police officers. The bill defines “implicit bias” as having attitudes towards people or associating stereotypes with them without conscious knowledge.

Finally, the bill requires instructors at basic training academies for police officers to receive specialized training in cultural diversity and implicit bias in policing.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

The committee amendments update section 2 of the bill to reflect changes to the responsibilities of the Police Training Commission imposed to the enactment of the “New Jersey Cannabis, Regulatory, Enforcement, Assistance, and Marketplace Modernization Act,” P.L.2021, c.16. Section 85 of P.L.2021, c.16 codified and expanded elements of the law enforcement certification process for police officers and others to become a Drug Recognition Expert in order to detect, identify, and apprehend drug-impaired motor vehicle operators.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) projects that the bill may result in a one-time marginal State expenditure increase by the Department of Law and Public Safety (DLPS) and the Police Training Commission (PTC) to develop, or update, the basic training course curriculum and any materials to provide both cultural diversity and implicit bias training to police officers and instructors. Any further periodic cost increases would result from the intermittent updating of the course curriculum, instruction, and examination.

The OLS estimates that the State's expenditure increase may be marginal as the present PTC training curriculum provides cultural diversity and implicit bias training. Also, the implementation of P.L.2016, c.23 and P.L.2020, c.68, required the incorporation of implicit bias and cultural diversity training materials for law enforcement officers and made cultural diversity and implicit bias training mandatory for law enforcement officers. The OLS estimates that meeting the additional requirements of this bill may not be overly labor-intensive and the concerned departments may be able to absorb the additional workload within their existing operating budgets.