ASSEMBLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4889

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 23, 2021

The Assembly Women and Children Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4889 and with committee amendments.

As amended by the committee, this bill requires a sexual violence liaison officer to be appointed to each State Police station and municipal and county police department.

The bill specifically requires the Superintendent of State Police to designate the Station Intervention Officer as the sexual violence liaison officer for each State Police station. The chief of police of a municipal or county police department, as appropriate, is to appoint a full-time sworn member to serve as the sexual violence liaison. The liaison for the State Police and for municipal and county police departments is responsible for serving as the in-house expert on how to conduct sexual violence cases; acting as the primary point-of-contact for each local sexual violence program and county Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) to coordinate an effective community response; when appropriately trained, providing in-house training on sexual violence; monitoring the compliance with sexual violence best practices set forth in the statutory law and Attorney General policies; and serving in any other capacity deemed appropriate by the superintendent or chief of police.

The liaison for municipal and county police departments also is to represent the department at county meetings of the SART. The bill provides for a regional investigator of the Victims Services Unit in the Division of State Police to represent the State Police at these meetings. The State Police sexual violence liaison officer is required to be a member of the Victim Services Unit of the division; a county or municipal police officer liaison is required to be a full-time sworn member of the department. The State Police member or department police officer also is required to complete specialized sexual violence training as specified by the superintendent or chief of police, as applicable.

Under the bill as introduced, a State Police member or police officer is
disqualified from serving as a sexual violence liaison officer if the member or officer has been the subject of an investigation regarding sexual violence, sexual misconduct, domestic violence, stalking, or

sexual harassment; or if a court has issued a protective or restraining order against the member or officer. Under the committee amendments, the member or officer would be disqualified if there is a pending internal affairs or criminal investigation.

The bill authorizes a sexual assault liaison officer to simultaneously serve as a domestic violence liaison officer and Megan's Law resource officer.

The committee also amended the bill to authorize municipal and county police departments to appoint more than one sexual violence liaison officer and to appoint a liaison officer from another municipal or county police department, provided that liaison officer can adequately perform the duties set forth in the bill.

As amended by the committee, Assembly Bill No. 4889 is identical to Senate Bill No. 3075 (1R) (Weinberg/Pou), which was reported by the Senate Law and Public Safety Committee on December 10, 2020.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to provide that the member or officer would only be disqualified if there is a pending internal affairs or criminal investigation of the member or officer.

The committee amendments also authorize local police departments to appoint more than one sexual violence liaison officer and share a sexual violence liaison officer if that officer can adequately perform the duties for both departments.

As reported by the committee, Assembly Bill No. 4889 is identical to Senate Bill No. 3075 (1R) which was also reported by the committee on this date.