

ASSEMBLY LABOR COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 5298

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 9, 2021

The Assembly Labor Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 5298.

This bill provides a definition of affirmative action to statutes concerning public works contracting. Affirmative action is defined as “good-faith steps taken to ensure equal opportunity employment for women and minority workers and workers with disabilities; but does not include employment quotas, except where otherwise permitted and appropriate under applicable laws.”

Current law requires affirmative action goals, workforce analysis, and data collection in public works contracts for racial and ethnic minorities. However, there are no comparable requirements applicable to individuals with disabilities.

The bill also adds disability-owned business enterprises to the list of requirements for each prospective bidder on a public works contract to include in their affirmative action program submitted to the State Treasurer, and instructs the State Treasurer to include individuals with disabilities in demographic data and rules and regulations pertaining to public works contracting.

Finally, the bill directs the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services to adopt a recruitment and referral program connecting private sector employers with college students, recent graduates, and others with disabilities for summer or permanent jobs.