ASSEMBLY, No. 5761

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 18, 2021

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman JOHN ARMATO
District 2 (Atlantic)
Assemblywoman CAROL A. MURPHY
District 7 (Burlington)

SYNOPSIS

Requires feasibility study to examine establishment of regional medical examiner office facility in Southern New Jersey and collaborative development of new medical examiner education initiatives; appropriates $40,000.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 11/8/2021)

AN ACT establishing a feasibility study related to medical examiner services and training in Southern New Jersey and making an appropriation.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. a. The Office of the Chief State Medical Examiner shall contract with an appropriate entity to conduct a feasibility study related to addressing the needs and enhancing the operations of the Office of the Chief State Medical Examiner in the southern region of the State. The feasibility study shall examine:

(1) the development of a regional State Medical Examiner's Office facility in the southern region of the State, which shall include an assessment of:

(a) the anticipated need for a regional facility, including a determination of the likelihood that the State Medical Examiner's Office will assume jurisdiction over additional county medical examiner offices;

(b) the size of facility that would be needed to meet regional needs, including the size of the physical plant and anticipated staffing needs;

(c) the advantages and disadvantages of establishing morgue facilities and administrative offices in a single location;

(d) the advantages and disadvantages of constructing a new facility as opposed to adapting an existing facility for this purpose; and

(e) the costs of acquiring and maintaining a computerized tomography scanner;

(2) collaborating with one or more medical schools operating in the southern region of the State to establish a forensic medical examiner fellowship program, develop a death investigation program for medicolegal investigators and law enforcement, enhancing education and training for medical students and medical residents related to forensic medical examination, and establishing new graduate and undergraduate courses in forensic medical examination; and

(3) any legislation, administrative action, or other governmental action that may be needed to implement any recommendations included in the report produced from the feasibility study.

b. The Office of the State Medical Examiner shall transmit a copy of the report produced from the feasibility study conducted pursuant to subsection a. of this section to the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature.

c. There is appropriated to the Office of the Chief State Medical Examiner from the General Fund the sum of $40,000 for

the purposes of contracting with an appropriate entity to conduct the feasibility study required under this section.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill requires the Office of the Chief State Medical Examiner (Office) to contract with an appropriate entity to conduct a feasibility study related to addressing the needs and enhancing the operations of the Office in the southern region of the State.

Specifically, the feasibility study will examine:

1) the development of a regional Chief State Medical Examiner Office facility in the southern region of the State, including an assessment of: the anticipated need for a regional facility; the size of facility that would be needed to meet regional needs, including the size of the physical plant and anticipated staffing needs; the advantages and disadvantages of establishing morgue facilities and administrative offices in a single location; the advantages and disadvantages of constructing a new facility as opposed to adapting an existing facility for this purpose; and the costs of acquiring and maintaining a computerized tomography scanner; and

2) collaborating with one or more medical schools operating in the southern region of the State to establish a forensic medical examiner fellowship program, develop a death investigation program for medicolegal investigators and law enforcement, enhance education and training for medical students and medical residents related to forensic medical examination, and establish new graduate and undergraduate courses in forensic medical examination.

The feasibility study is to additionally include recommendations for legislation, administrative action, or other governmental action that may be needed to implement any recommendations included in the report of the feasibility study. The Office will be required to transmit a copy of the report of the feasibility study to the Governor and to the Legislature.

The bill appropriates the sum of $40,000 to the Office from the General Fund for the purposes of contracting with an appropriate entity to conduct the feasibility study required under the bill.