SENATE, No. 319

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Senator RONALD L. RICE
District 28 (Essex)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes requirements for conducting health impact assessments of pending legislation; makes an appropriation.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.

AN ACT concerning review of the estimated health effects of pending legislation, supplementing chapter 13F of Title 52 of the Revised Statutes, and making an appropriation.

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

1. a. The Planning Healthy Communities Initiative of the Rutgers University Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy and Rutgers Biomedical and Health Services, or a successor entity as may be jointly designated by the President of the Senate, the Minority Leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the General Assembly, and the Minority Leader of the General Assembly, shall prepare a health impact assessment on a specific legislative bill when so requested by a majority of the legislative committee considering that bill.

b. A legislative committee requesting a health impact assessment shall set a time limit of up to 30 days for completion of the health impact assessment. The legislative committee shall specify, but not limit, areas of impact to be covered by the statement, provided that any health impact assessment prepared pursuant to this section shall include an analysis of any disparate effects the bill will or may be expected to have on the health of minority populations within the State, including racial, ethnic, and cultural minorities.

c. A health impact assessment prepared pursuant to this section shall be based on the best available empirical information and professional assumptions available to the Planning Healthy Communities Initiative or successor entity within the time required for completing the assessment. In preparing a health impact assessment pursuant to this section, the Planning Healthy Communities Initiative or successor entity shall be authorized to access any necessary information as may be held by any State department, division, office, or agency or any other State, county, or local governmental entity, provided that nothing in this section shall be deemed to require or authorize the disclosure of any personal identifying or confidential information in violation of State or federal privacy laws.

d. The Planning Healthy Communities Initiative or successor entity may limit the number of health impact assessments it prepares pursuant to this section to retain quality while operating within its available resources, and may decline a request for a health impact assessment if complying with the request would not be feasible while operating within its available resources.

e. A health impact assessment prepared pursuant to this section shall constitute, upon delivery to the requesting committee, a public document that shall be published on the Legislature’s Internet

website together with any other legislative materials pertaining to the bill that is the subject of the assessment.

f. The Planning Healthy Communities Initiative or successor entity shall collaborate with State departments, divisions, offices, or agencies as may be appropriate to identify any appropriate sources of State, federal, and private funding to carry out duties of the Planning Healthy Communities Initiative or successor entity set forth in this section.

2. There is appropriated $500,000 from the General Fund to the Department of State, of which the Secretary of State shall allocate the total amount to the Planning Healthy Communities Initiative or successor entity to effectuate the purposes of section 1 of this act.

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill establishes a process for the Legislature to request health impact assessments of pending legislation.

Specifically, the Planning Healthy Communities Initiative (PHCI) of the Rutgers University Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy and Rutgers Biomedical and Health Services, or a successor entity as may be jointly designated by legislative leadership, is to prepare a health impact assessment on a specific legislative bill when so requested by a majority of the legislative committee considering that bill.

A committee requesting a health impact assessment will be required to set a time limit of up to 30 days for completion of the health impact assessment. The legislative committee is to specify, but not limit, areas of impact to be covered by the statement, provided that any health impact assessment will include an analysis of any disparate effects that the bill will or may be expected to have on the health of minority populations in the State, including racial, ethnic, and cultural minorities.

A health impact assessment prepared under the bill is to be based on the best available empirical information and professional assumptions available to the PHCI within the time required for completing the assessment. In preparing an assessment, the PHCI will be authorized to access any necessary information as may be held by any State department, division, office, or agency or any other State, county, or local governmental entity, provided that nothing in the bill will require or authorize the disclosure of any personal identifying or confidential information in violation of State or federal privacy laws.

The PHCI may limit the number of health impact assessments it prepares to retain quality while operating within its available

resources, and may decline a request for an assessment if complying with the request would not be feasible while operating within its available resources.

A health impact assessment prepared pursuant to the bill will constitute, upon delivery to the requesting committee, a public document that will be published on the Legislature's Internet website together with other legislative materials concerning the bill that is the subject of the assessment.

The bill appropriates $500,000 to the Department of State for allocation to the PHCI to carry out its duties under the bill. In addition, the PHCI may collaborate with State departments, divisions, offices, or agencies as may be appropriate to identify additional sources of State, federal, and private funding that may be appropriate.