

ASSEMBLY HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 960

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 5, 2020

The Assembly Higher Education Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 960 (1R).

This bill provides that in the event that a student who is enrolled in or planning to enroll in an institution of higher education in the State is considered by the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority to be a dependent of his parent, and the student seeks to apply for any student financial aid programs offered by the federal or State government, the student's parent must provide the authority with a completed financial aid application. The bill requires an institution of higher education to notify the executive director of the authority of all students who report that their parent has refused to provide information to complete a financial aid application. The executive director is also required to send written notification to those parents that failure to submit a completed financial aid application on behalf of a dependent will result in the assessment of a civil penalty.

Under the bill, any person who willfully fails to disclose information required pursuant to the bill's provisions will be subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$500, to be collected in proceedings in accordance with the "Penalty Enforcement Law of 1999," P.L.1999, c.274 (C.2A:58-10 et seq.). The bill further provides that any such civil penalty collected will be conveyed to the authority to transfer to the student's account at the institution of higher education at which the student is enrolled or is planning to enroll. In the event that a student does not enroll, or is no longer enrolled, at an institution at the time a civil penalty is collected, the civil penalty will be made available to the authority for the purposes of student assistance programs administered by the authority.

As reported by the committee, this bill is identical to Assembly Bill No. 3628, which also was reported by the committee on this same date.