SENATE COMMUNITY AND URBAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1065

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 8, 2020

The Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 1065.

This bill, amending the "Law Against Discrimination," P.L.1945, c.169 (C.10:5-1 et seq.), would allow individuals who own or obtain assistance animals to enjoy full and equal access to all rental housing accommodations.

The bill sets forth procedures for having assistance animals in rental housing. The bill directs the Division on Civil Rights in the Department of Law and Public Safety to adopt rules or regulations to effectuate the provisions of the bill.

Under the bill, landlords, proprietors, lessors, property owners, and operators of rental housing accommodations are subject to civil penalties for prohibiting an individual from owning an assistance animal.

The bill provides assistance animals and their owners with protections in housing accommodations under the “Law Against Discrimination.”

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

- make the protections afforded under the bill applicable to “assistance animals’ in place of “therapy dogs;”
- establish revised procedures for requests from a person to make an exception to a housing provider's policy prohibiting or restricting animals on the housing provider's property because the person requires the use of an assistance animal;
- provide that a housing provider would not be liable for injuries caused by a person’s assistance animal permitted on the housing provider’s property; and
- include recent updates to a statute amended by the bill. The updated language is unrelated to the subject of the bill.