

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1599

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 6, 2021

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 1599.

This bill would require the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFA) to allow operators of shelters for the homeless and others who place persons in homeless shelters to have access to real-time information about the occupancy status of shelter beds, as collected by the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), to determine the availability of shelter beds in the vicinity. Each homeless shelter operator would be required to update information about available shelter beds not later than one hour after a bed becomes available, or an available bed has been filled. These provisions will allow operators of homeless shelters that are currently full to ascertain whether there are available beds in nearby shelters so as to enable them to direct individuals in need of emergency shelter to locations that can accommodate them. This bill also requires a shelter for the homeless to cooperate in providing any necessary information to the database, as determined by the HMFA, the Department of Community Affairs, and the Department of Human Services, as a condition of being eligible to receive funding for the shelter from the Departments of Community Affairs and Human Services.

The bill would not apply to shelters for victims of domestic violence.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments make a technical change to the bill that removes duplicative language requiring shelter operators to update information in the Homeless Management Information System that appeared twice in the bill as introduced.