

SENATE COMMUNITY AND URBAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2362

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 27, 2020

The Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 2362.

This bill would make a FY2020 supplemental Grants-in-Aid appropriation of \$10,000,000 to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to the NJSHARES - S.M.A.R.T. Program to fund financial assistance grants to New Jersey residents who suffered financial losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill provides that \$5 million would be appropriated from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund for rent and mortgage assistance and \$5 million would be appropriated from the Universal Service Fund for utility payment assistance. The bill directs the commissioner to design and establish program criteria and guidelines consistent with the bill in order to award grants to eligible homeowners and tenants in an expeditious manner so to enable them to meet their rent, mortgage, and utilities obligations.

The bill directs the Commissioner of Community Affairs to award grants to homeowners and to residential tenants who suffered financial loss during the declaration of a Public Health Emergency and a State of Emergency due to the coronavirus disease 2019. To be eligible for a grant under this program a homeowner or tenant may not be eligible for, or a recipient of funding from, private insurance or from any other available funding opportunity.

The bill authorizes the commissioner to implement this program through the award of contracts, or through the delegation of its authority to award grants, to private nonprofit organizations, public agencies, or both.