

SENATE LABOR COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2479

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 12, 2020

The Senate Labor Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 2479.

As amended by the committee, this bill requires the Commissioner of Health to issue protocols for the sanitization of each hotel in the State.

Specifically, the protocols would include, but not be limited to, directives requiring hotels to: maintain continuous 24 hour, seven day a week coverage of a front desk by at least one employee, and by at least one additional employee per every 200 guest rooms; train a front desk employee to respond to a guests' inquiry related to health and safety, including but not limited to, the location of hospitals in the vicinity of the hotel, emergency telephone numbers, and options for seeking treatment or testing for virus diseases during a public health crisis; ensure that every guest virus diseases during a public health crisis; ensure that every guest room is cleaned and sanitized and provided with an adequate supply of clean towels, sheets, and pillowcases prior to occupancy by a new guest; ensure that every occupied guest room is cleaned and sanitized every day, and that the room is provided with an adequate supply of clean towels, sheets, and pillowcases and that the towels, sheets, and pillowcases that are changed no less frequently than once every day; ensure that all public spaces are cleaned and sanitized at least once every day, and that all guest touch-points are cleaned and sanitized regularly throughout each day; provide their employees with anti-microbial cleaning products certified by the United States Environmental Protection Agency that are approved for use against COVID-19, other coronaviruses, influenza viruses, or other viral diseases and will be used when cleaning and sanitizing each guest room, guest touch-point, and public space; and train its employees on the proper use of anti-microbial cleaning products and on proper cleaning protocols that maximize the sanitary condition of each guest room, guest touch-point, and public space.

The Bureau of Housing Inspection in the Department of Community Affairs would distribute the guidelines developed by the Department of Health and inspect each hotel in the State for the

purpose of determining the extent to which each hotel complies with the provisions of bill.

As defined in the bill: “front desk” means the physical location in a hotel where a guest may check-into or reserve a room; “guest room” means a private room made available by a hotel for occupancy by a guest, including those comprised of several interconnected rooms, such as a bathroom, living room, or multiple bedrooms, in the case of a suite; “guest touch-point” means any surface in a public space in hotel that is regularly touched by a hotel or motel guest, including, but is not limited to, doorknobs, door handles, counters, desks, tables, chairs, sofas, and electronics; “occupied guest room” means that a guest is currently checked in to a guest room regardless of whether the guest is physically present in the room; and “public space” means any space, excluding a guest room, accessible to a guest within a hotel including, but are not limited to, the lobby, including a lobby bathroom, a dining area, a hallway, an elevator, and a bathroom.

This bill does not apply to casino hotels. Casino hotels are addressed in Senate Bill No. 2478 of 2020.

As reported by the committee, Senate Bill No. 2479 (1R) is identical to Assembly Bill No. 4131 (1R) which was reported by the Assembly Appropriations Committee on May 11, 2020.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amended the bill to clarify that hotels, instead of hotel staff as originally provided in the bill, would be required to maintain certain staffing levels and provide for sanitization procedures for guest rooms, guest touch-points, and public spaces.

The committee also amended the bill to clarify that hotels must maintain continuous 24 hour, seven day a week coverage of a front desk by at least one front desk employee, and at least one additional employee per every 200 guest rooms, and to change the effective date of the bill from 60 days to 14 days.