

SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2607

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JULY 29, 2020

The Senate Environment and Energy Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 2607 with committee amendments.

This bill, as amended, would require that the land use plan element of a municipal master plan include a climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment. The assessment would: (1) analyze current and future threats to, and vulnerabilities of, the municipality associated with climate change-related natural hazards; (2) include a build-out analysis of future residential, commercial, industrial, and other development in the municipality, and an assessment of the threats and vulnerabilities identified in (1) above related to that development; (3) identify critical facilities, utilities, roadways, and other infrastructure that is necessary for evacuation purposes and for sustaining quality of life during a natural disaster, to be maintained at all times in an operational state; (4) analyze the potential impact of natural hazards on relevant components and elements of the master plan; (5) provide strategies and design standards that may be implemented to reduce or avoid risks associated with natural hazards; (6) include a specific policy statement on the consistency, coordination, and integration of the climate-change related hazard vulnerability assessment with certain other plans adopted by the municipality; and (7) rely on the most recent natural hazard projections and best available science provided by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The bill would apply to any land use plan element adopted after the date the bill is enacted into law.

The bill would also require the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), upon request by a planning board, to provide technical assistance, as practicable, to a municipality preparing a climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment required by the bill.

The committee amendments to the bill would:

(1) replace the bill's requirements for a climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment with new requirements, described above;

(2) specify that the technical assistance provided by the DEP to a municipality preparing a climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment be provided as practicable; and

(3) make a technical correction.