SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2722

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: SEPTEMBER 22, 2020

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 2722.

As amended, this bill clarifies the effective date of P.L.2019, c.387, which increases workers' compensation for the loss of a hand or foot. This bill makes it clear that the provisions of P.L.2019, c.387 will apply to all claims pending, but not yet settled, or filed on or after the date of enactment of P.L.2019, c.387, which was January 21, 2020. P.L.2019, c.387 will not be applicable to cases which have been reopened by an Application to Modify a Formal Award pursuant to R.S.34:15-27.

The bill increases the burial expense allowance in workers' compensation matters, if a death results from a workplace accident or occupational disease, from $3,500 to $5,000.

As amended and reported by the committee, Senate Bill No. 2722 is identical to Assembly Bill No. 4134 (1R), which also was reported by the committee on this date.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The amendments add another section to the bill to increase the burial expense allowance in workers' compensation matters, if a death results from a workplace accident or occupational disease, from $3,500 to $5,000.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) notes that this bill may result in indeterminate annual increases in costs to the State and local government units due to the revision of the effective date of P.L.2019, c.387, which may broaden the eligibility pool of potential claims for workers' compensation payments set forth in that law.

The OLS expects the bill's $1,500 increase in the maximum amount of workers' compensation benefits that may be used to pay for funeral and burial expenses for certain workers' compensation beneficiaries to grow State and local government entities' annual expenditures by an indeterminate, likely insignificant, amount.