SENATE, No. 2762

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED AUGUST 3, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator ANTHONY M. BUCCO
District 25 (Morris and Somerset)

Co-Sponsored by:
Senator Bateman

SYNOPSIS

Establishes fund to reimburse municipalities for police costs related to crowding at MVC sites; appropriates $500,000.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 8/27/2020)

AN ACT providing for the reimbursement of municipalities for certain police costs and making an appropriation.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. a. The Commissioner of Community Affairs shall establish within the Division of Local Government Services in the Department of Community Affairs a fund for the purpose of reimbursing a municipality for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by the municipal police force or department for the management and control of crowds and traffic at a New Jersey Motor Vehicles Commission location during the COVID-19 emergency period.

b. The fund shall consist of moneys appropriated thereto by section 2 of P.L. , c. (pending before the Legislature as this bill), and such other moneys as may be appropriated or otherwise made available for that purpose.

c. Not more than five percent of the moneys paid into the fund during any fiscal year of the State may be used to pay the costs of the fund's administration by the Division of Local Government Services during that fiscal year.

d. A municipality may submit an application to the Division of Local Government Services for reimbursement of municipal police expenses, pursuant to subsection a. of this section, in accordance with procedures specified by the division.

e. "COVID-19" means the coronavirus disease 2019, as announced by the World Health Organization on February 11, 2020, and first identified in Wuhan, China.

"COVID-19 emergency period" means the period beginning March 9, 2020 and continuing for as long as a public health emergency, pursuant to the "Emergency Health Powers Act," P.L.2005, c.222 (C.26:13-1 et seq.), or a state of emergency, pursuant to P.L.1942, c. 251 (C.App.A.9-33 et seq.), or both, that has been declared by the Governor in response to COVID-19, is in effect.

2. There is appropriated the sum of $500,000 from a portion of the federal block grant funds allocated to the State from the federal "Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act," Pub.L.116-136, to the Division of Local Government Services in the Department of Community Affairs for the reimbursement of reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by a municipality for the management and control of crowds and traffic at a New Jersey Motor Vehicles Commission location during the COVID-19 emergency period, to the extent this funding is available for this purpose.

3. This act shall take effect immediately, shall be retroactive to March 9, 2020, and shall expire upon the conclusion of the COVID-19 emergency period.

STATEMENT

This bill would establish a fund to provide reimbursements to municipalities for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by a municipal police force or department for the management and control of crowds and traffic at a New Jersey Motor Vehicles Commission ("MVC") location during the COVID-19 pandemic. When MVC locations were reopened to the public during this pandemic, there were massive crowds necessitating the presence of police, at significant expense to the affected municipalities. Since these costs were due to poor planning on the part of the State, and not the municipalities, the State should reimburse these municipalities for those costs.

The bill appropriates $500,000 to the fund, which would be established within the Division of Local Government Services in the Department of Community Affairs. To obtain a reimbursement, a municipality would have to submit an application to the division in accordance with procedures specified by the division. The bill would be retroactive to March 9, 2020, when Executive Order No. 103 was issued, declaring a public health emergency and state of emergency in response to COVID-19, and would expire upon the conclusion of both declared emergencies.