SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 3614

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 13, 2021

The Senate Judiciary Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 3614.

This bill would provide a stipend to persons for their work as a member of a board, commission, committee, task force, or other similar entity that is created, before or after the effective date of the bill, and (1) allocated within a principal Executive Branch department of the New Jersey State government, (2) allocated in but not of such principal department, (3) is any other State entity, including each State college and university, or (4) is allocated in but not of such other State entity. A stipend may also be made available to the members of a multi-member entity that is a bi-state agency.

The stipend is to be paid each month in which a meeting is held by the specific entity and is attended by a member. A stipend is not to be paid where the law already provides for a salary, stipend, or remuneration that is in excess of the amount of the stipend set in accordance with the bill. A stipend would still be paid to a member who receives a stipend or remuneration pursuant to another law that is less than the amount set in accordance with the bill, in such an amount as will provide total compensation that is equal to the amount of the stipend set under the bill. The same amount of stipend would be paid to all members of the same entity.

Each stipend would be in an amount that is at least $300 but not more than to $1,500. The head of each department or other State entity, or individual designated to lead an entity that is in but not of such department or other entity, or designated to lead a bi-state entity, would set, for each calendar year, the specific amount of the stipend that will be paid to the members of the board, commission, committee, task force, or other entity. Consideration would be given to the number of meetings held each month and the scope of responsibilities of the members when setting the amount of the stipend. The head of each department or other State entity, or the designated individual, who sets the stipend amount would transmit an annual report to the Governor and Legislature containing the amount to be disbursed to members of each particular board, commission, committee, task force, or other entity.

The total annual amount paid for stipends would primarily come from an appropriation of the fees collected by the board, commission, committee, task force, or other entity. If there are no fees collected, or the fees are insufficient, or are otherwise dedicated by law for another purpose, there would be an appropriation from the State's General Fund to pay the stipends.

The committee amendments to the bill:

- include within the bill's scope members of independent entities that are allocated in but not of an Executive Branch department or other State entity, or entities that are State colleges and universities, as well as members of a bi-state agency; and

- expressly apply the bill to members of boards, commissions, committees, task forces, or other multi-member entities created by law before or after the bill takes effect.