SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 4001

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 22, 2021

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 4001.

This bill removes the New Jersey Fire Engine and Equipment Museum from the auspices of the Department of Environmental Protection and requires it to be reorganized and established as an independent, non-profit organization. The museum is to oversee the permanent fire museum and fallen firefighter memorial to honor New Jersey's proud history of firefighting service and the brave men and women who have sacrificed their lives in the fire service.

The bill requires the museum to be operated by a board of directors, which is to consist of the following members: the Secretary of State or a designee; the Director of the Division of Fire Safety or a designee; the Executive Director of the New Jersey Historical Commission within the Department of State or a designee; one public member appointed by the President of the Senate, one public member appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly; one public member appointed by the Governor; and the membership of the board of directors of the New Jersey Fire Museum and Fallen Firefighter Memorial who served on the board prior to the effective date of the bill. The substitute also allows the board to appoint additional voting members by a unanimous vote of the existing members.

The board of directors for the New Jersey Fire Engine and Equipment Museum would have the following rights and responsibilities:

- to make, amend, and repeal rules and bylaws for its own governance and guidance not inconsistent with State and federal law;
- to maintain an office within the State as it may designate;
- to contract for, accept, solicit, or collect any grants, loans, funds, property, or other aid in any form from the federal government or any agency or instrumentality thereof, from the State or any agency, instrumentality, or political subdivision thereof, or from any other public source;
- to make and enter into contracts, leases, agreements, and purchases necessary for the use, or incidental to the performance of, the board's duties and the exercise of its powers established by the substitute;
- to insure against any losses in connection with the board's properties, operations, or assets;

- to formulate and adopt rules and regulations for the efficient conduct of the work and general administration of the board, its officers, and employees;
- to institute or cause to be instituted any legal proceedings or processes as may be necessary to properly enforce and give effect to any of the powers or duties of the executive director or the board;
- to develop an economic development master plan identifying the board's objectives, policies, and programs which will encourage the museum's attraction, expansion, and retention;
- to support and maintain existing museum facilities and services for the educational or recreational use and benefit of the public;
- to maintain exhibits and displays to promote and develop public interest and understanding of firefighter history;
- to develop, raise funds for, build and operate a fire museum, fire safety education center, and fallen firefighters memorial, and to provide for the display of fire apparatus and equipment, along with the history and documentation available for preservation;
- to determine the best course of action regarding museum collections both owned by and lent to the museum including, but not limited to, continuing any current ownerships agreements or memorandums of understanding entered into by the board prior to the substitute's enactment;
- to oversee museum facility expansion, development, and strategic planning;
- to address marketing, budget, and fundraising issues;
- to conduct educational and recreational programs held at the museum facilities;
- to make plans and preparations for preservation and restoration of museum collection pieces; and
- to partner with affiliate organizations to borrow and lend temporary or permanent museum collections and to raise funds with these affiliate organizations, which may include, but not be limited to, other museums and similar educational or research facilities.

The committee substitute allows the board of the directors to be dissolved upon a majority vote of its members. Upon dissolution of the board, any collections that were donated to the museum prior to or following the bill's effective date is to be returned to the original donors in accordance with existing ownership agreements or memorandums of understanding. Museum collections that were otherwise acquired or purchased as State property are to be placed in the custody of the Executive Director of the New Jersey Historical Commission in the Department of State upon dissolution of the board. The executive director is required to determine the appropriate course of action in housing or maintaining the collection.

Finally, the substitute provides a $200,000 supplemental appropriation to the board of the New Jersey Fire Engine and Equipment Museum to carry out its purposes.

As reported by the committee, Senate Bill No. 4001 is identical to Assembly Bill No. 5075 (ACS/2R), as amended and reported by the committee on this date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This substitute bill is not certified as requiring a fiscal note.