

ASSEMBLY, No. 559

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 221st LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2024 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman STERLEY S. STANLEY

District 18 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Requires Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy to undertake study to determine efficiency and scaling in delivery of local government services.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 AN ACT requiring the study of efficiency and scaling in the delivery
2 of local government services, supplementing P.L.2007, c.63
3 (C.40A:65-1 et seq.), and making an appropriation.
4

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

7
8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

9 a. New Jersey residents face the highest property tax burden in
10 the United States and reducing this burden has been and continues
11 to be a priority for the Legislature.

12 b. The ongoing effort to share and regionalize local
13 government services has provided some relief over the years, but
14 the Legislature is committed to doing more to encourage
15 streamlining the delivery of local government services in order to
16 reduce the property tax burden on State residents.

17 c. In an effort to further encourage streamlining, a
18 determination of efficiency and scaling is required in order to
19 inform the Legislature as to the most effective methods to achieve
20 savings for taxpayers, while still ensuring a high level of quality in
21 the delivery of services.

22 d. To make this critical determination, a study should be
23 undertaken to identify the most efficient scale of service delivery so
24 that the Legislature can move forward with data-driven policy
25 changes.
26

27 2. As used in P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the
28 Legislature as this bill):

29 "Alternative service delivery method" means contracting with a
30 private for-profit or nonprofit entity, or utilizing volunteers, to
31 deliver a service traditionally provided by a local unit.

32 "Joint contract" means a contract between two or more local
33 units to form a joint meeting pursuant to section 14 of P.L.2007,
34 c.63 (C.40A:65-14).

35 "Local unit" means a "contracting unit" pursuant to section 2 of
36 P.L.1971, c.198 (C.40A:11-2), a "district" pursuant to
37 N.J.S.18A:18A-2, a "county college" pursuant to N.J.S.18A:64A-1,
38 a joint meeting, or any authority or special district that is subject to
39 the "Local Authorities Fiscal Control Law," P.L.1983,
40 c.313 (C.40A:5A-1 et seq.).

41 "Shared service agreement" means a contract authorized under
42 section 4 of P.L.2007, c.63 (C.40A:65-4).
43

44 3. a. The Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public
45 Policy of Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey shall conduct
46 a comprehensive study to research scaling for the most efficient
47 delivery of services by local units within the context of shared
48 service agreements, joint contracts, and alternative service delivery

1 methods. Specifically, the study shall examine, but not be limited
2 to increasing efficiency in the following areas of service delivery:

- 3 (1) municipal courts;
- 4 (2) construction code enforcement;
- 5 (3) fire code enforcement;
- 6 (4) municipal and county health services;
- 7 (5) property tax assessments;
- 8 (6) public works; and
- 9 (7) provision of emergency services, including police, fire, and
10 emergency medical response, and dispatch for emergency response.

11 b. The study may utilize a variety of research methods with a
12 mission to collect and compile the data on which comprehensive
13 decisions can be made to encourage the most efficient and effective
14 streamlining of delivery of services by local units.

15 c. The Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public
16 Policy shall issue a report of its findings and recommendations to
17 the Governor and the Legislature within one year of the
18 commencement of the study.

19

20 4. There is appropriated from the Property Tax Relief Fund to
21 Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey \$30,000 to conduct the
22 study and issue the report provided for in section 3 of P.L. ,

23 c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

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25 5. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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30 This bill directs the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and
31 Public Policy of Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, to
32 conduct a comprehensive study to research scaling for the most
33 efficient delivery of services by local units within the context of
34 shared service agreements, joint contracts, and alternative service
35 delivery methods.

36 New Jersey residents face the highest property tax burden in the
37 United States and reducing this burden has been and continues to be
38 a priority for the Legislature. In an effort to further encourage
39 streamlining of the delivery of local government services, a
40 determination of efficiency and scaling is required in order to
41 inform the Legislature as to the most effective methods to achieve
42 savings for taxpayers, while still ensuring a high level of quality in
43 the delivery of services.

44 Under the bill, the study will examine, but not be limited to
45 examining, increasing efficiency in the following areas of service
46 delivery:

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- 1 (1) municipal courts;
 - 2 (2) construction code enforcement;
 - 3 (3) fire code enforcement;
 - 4 (4) municipal and county health services;
 - 5 (5) property tax assessments;
 - 6 (6) public works; and
 - 7 (7) provision of emergency services, including police, fire, and
 - 8 emergency medical response, and dispatch for emergency response.
- 9 The bill specifies that the study may utilize a variety of research
10 methods with a mission to collect and compile the data on which
11 comprehensive decisions can be made to encourage the most
12 efficient and effective streamlining of delivery of services by local
13 units. Under the bill, the Bloustein School is required to issue a
14 report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the
15 Legislature within one year of the commencement of the study.
- 16 The bill appropriates from the Property Tax Relief Fund to
17 Rutgers, the State University \$30,000 conduct the study and issue
18 the report.