

FLOOR AMENDMENT STATEMENT: No

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE: Yes

VETO MESSAGE: No

GOVERNOR'S PRESS RELEASE ON SIGNING: Yes

FOLLOWING WERE PRINTED:

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REPORTS: No

HEARINGS: No

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES: Yes

"Christie signs several bills taking aim at opioid epidemic," Associated Press State Wire: New Jersey, July 21, 2017

"Transgender rights are now law as Christie signs dozens of bills," The Record, July 22, 2017

RWH/JA

P.L.2017, CHAPTER 155, *approved July 21, 2017*
Assembly, No. 1662 (*First Reprint*)

1 **AN ACT** concerning information about the availability of beds in
2 certain residential facilities and supplementing Title 30 of the
3 Revised Statutes.

4

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

7

8 1. a. The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in
9 the Department of Human Services shall oversee the development and
10 maintenance of a data dashboard report, which shall collect and track
11 the daily information received pursuant to section 2 of this act about
12 the number of open beds that are available for treatment for
13 individuals in need of mental health or substance use disorder
14 treatment in each facility in the State that is licensed to provide:

15 (1) long term or extended care services for mental health or
16 substance use disorders and receives State or county funding,
17 including, but not limited to, a psychiatric facility, psychiatric unit of a
18 general hospital, short-term care facility, and special psychiatric
19 hospital, as those terms are defined in section 2 of P.L.1987, c.116
20 (C.30:4-27.2), and a residential health care facility as defined in
21 section 1 of P.L.1953, c.212 (C.30:11A-1); or

22 (2) acute or intermediate level of care services for mental health or
23 a substance use disorder and receives State or county funding,
24 including, but not limited to, a psychiatric facility, psychiatric unit of a
25 general hospital, short-term care facility, and special psychiatric
26 hospital, as those terms are defined in section 2 of P.L.1987, c.116
27 (C.30:4-27.2).

28 b. The information maintained in the data dashboard report shall
29 include, by county:

30 (1) the address and telephone number of the facility;

31 (2) the type of services provided by the facility;

32 (3) the licensed bed capacity of the facility; and

33 (4) the number of open beds that are available for the provision of
34 mental health or substance use disorder services, based on the
35 information received pursuant to section 2 of this act.

36 c. The information described in subsection b. of this section shall
37 be:

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Assembly AHU committee amendments adopted June 6, 2016.

- 1 (1) prominently displayed on the website of the department;
- 2 (2) made available to the public, upon request, through the
- 3 Statewide 2-1-1 telephone system; and
- 4 (3) made available using any other means that the Commissioner
- 5 of Human Services deems appropriate.
- 6 d. The commissioner is authorized to solicit, receive, and accept
- 7 grants, funds, or anything of value from any public or private entity
- 8 and receive and accept contributions of money, property, labor, or any
- 9 other thing of value from any legitimate source for the purpose of the
- 10 development and maintenance of a data dashboard report pursuant to
- 11 this act.
- 12
- 13 2. **1[a.]** Each facility in the State that is licensed to provide
- 14 mental health or substance use disorder services, as provided for in
- 15 section 1 of this act, and receives State or county funding shall
- 16 submit to the data dashboard report, no less than once a day,
- 17 information advising of the number of open beds that are available
- 18 for the provision of mental health or substance use disorder services
- 19 on that day.
- 20 **1[b.]** In addition to the reporting requirements provided for in
- 21 subsection a. of this section, each acute care hospital licensed
- 22 pursuant to P.L.1971, c.136 (C.26:2H-1 et seq.) shall report, no less
- 23 than once a day, through an online data collection system
- 24 containing nonidentifying information to be shared publicly:
- 25 (1) the number of patients who were admitted to the emergency
- 26 room and hospital with a psychiatric or addiction diagnosis;
- 27 (2) the number of psychiatric screening evaluations that were
- 28 requested from, and completed by, a county mental health screener,
- 29 as defined in section 2 of P.L.1987, c.116 (C.30:4-27.2);
- 30 (3) the amount of time, in hours and minutes, that patients have
- 31 been waiting for evaluation since admission to the emergency room;
- 32 (4) the number of patients who were transferred for psychiatric
- 33 treatment to a psychiatric facility or special psychiatric hospital, as
- 34 those terms are defined in section 2 of P.L.1987, c.116 (C.30:4-
- 35 27.2);
- 36 (5) the number of patients who were admitted for psychiatric
- 37 treatment to the hospital, and the total wait time of these patients
- 38 from the date and time of admission to the emergency room;
- 39 (6) the percentage of patients on whom chemical or physical
- 40 restraints were used; and
- 41 (7) such other data as necessary to monitor the effectiveness of
- 42 the response system for acute care psychiatric services in the
- 43 State.**1**
- 44
- 45 3. a. The division shall convene a workgroup which shall
- 46 include, at a minimum, one representative from each of the following
- 47 organizations:
- 48 (1) the New Jersey Hospital Association;

ASSEMBLY, No. 1662

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 217th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2016 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman GARY S. SCHAER

District 36 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

Assemblyman CRAIG J. COUGHLIN

District 19 (Middlesex)

Assemblywoman ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT

District 31 (Hudson)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman Mosquera

SYNOPSIS

Requires development and maintenance of data dashboard report to advise of open bed availability in residential facilities providing behavioral health services.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/7/2016)

1 AN ACT concerning information about the availability of beds in
2 certain residential facilities and supplementing Title 30 of the
3 Revised Statutes.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:

7
8 1. a. The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in
9 the Department of Human Services shall oversee the development and
10 maintenance of a data dashboard report, which shall collect and track
11 the daily information received pursuant to section 2 of this act about
12 the number of open beds that are available for treatment for
13 individuals in need of mental health or substance use disorder
14 treatment in each facility in the State that is licensed to provide:

15 (1) long term or extended care services for mental health or
16 substance use disorders and receives State or county funding,
17 including, but not limited to, a psychiatric facility, psychiatric unit of a
18 general hospital, short-term care facility, and special psychiatric
19 hospital, as those terms are defined in section 2 of P.L.1987, c.116
20 (C.30:4-27.2), and a residential health care facility as defined in
21 section 1 of P.L.1953, c.212 (C.30:11A-1); or

22 (2) acute or intermediate level of care services for mental health or
23 a substance use disorder and receives State or county funding,
24 including, but not limited to, a psychiatric facility, psychiatric unit of a
25 general hospital, short-term care facility, and special psychiatric
26 hospital, as those terms are defined in section 2 of P.L.1987, c.116
27 (C.30:4-27.2).

28 b. The information maintained in the data dashboard report shall
29 include, by county:

30 (1) the address and telephone number of the facility;

31 (2) the type of services provided by the facility;

32 (3) the licensed bed capacity of the facility; and

33 (4) the number of open beds that are available for the provision of
34 mental health or substance use disorder services, based on the
35 information received pursuant to section 2 of this act.

36 c. The information described in subsection b. of this section shall
37 be:

38 (1) prominently displayed on the website of the department;

39 (2) made available to the public, upon request, through the
40 Statewide 2-1-1 telephone system; and

41 (3) made available using any other means that the Commissioner
42 of Human Services deems appropriate.

43 d. The commissioner is authorized to solicit, receive, and accept
44 grants, funds, or anything of value from any public or private entity
45 and receive and accept contributions of money, property, labor, or any
46 other thing of value from any legitimate source for the purpose of the
47 development and maintenance of a data dashboard report pursuant to
48 this act.

1 2. a. Each facility in the State that is licensed to provide mental
2 health or substance use disorder services, as provided for in section 1
3 of this act, and receives State or county funding shall submit to the
4 data dashboard report, no less than once a day, information advising of
5 the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental
6 health or substance use disorder services on that day.

7 b. In addition to the reporting requirements provided for in
8 subsection a. of this section, each acute care hospital licensed pursuant
9 to P.L.1971, c.136 (C.26:2H-1 et seq.) shall report, no less than once a
10 day, through an online data collection system containing
11 nonidentifying information to be shared publicly:

12 (1) the number of patients who were admitted to the emergency
13 room and hospital with a psychiatric or addiction diagnosis;

14 (2) the number of psychiatric screening evaluations that were
15 requested from, and completed by, a county mental health screener, as
16 defined in section 2 of P.L.1987, c.116 (C.30:4-27.2);

17 (3) the amount of time, in hours and minutes, that patients have
18 been waiting for evaluation since admission to the emergency room;

19 (4) the number of patients who were transferred for psychiatric
20 treatment to a psychiatric facility or special psychiatric hospital, as
21 those terms are defined in section 2 of P.L.1987, c.116 (C.30:4-27.2);

22 (5) the number of patients who were admitted for psychiatric
23 treatment to the hospital, and the total wait time of these patients from
24 the date and time of admission to the emergency room;

25 (6) the percentage of patients on whom chemical or physical
26 restraints were used; and

27 (7) such other data as necessary to monitor the effectiveness of the
28 response system for acute care psychiatric services in the State.

29

30 3. a. The division shall convene a workgroup which shall
31 include, at a minimum, one representative from each of the following
32 organizations:

33 (1) the New Jersey Hospital Association;

34 (2) the New Jersey Chapter of the American College of Emergency
35 Physicians;

36 (3) the Health Care Association of New Jersey;

37 (4) LeadingAge New Jersey; and

38 (5) other stakeholders as the division deems appropriate.

39 b. The workgroup shall assist the division and the department in
40 the monitoring of the data reporting requirements as provided for in
41 section 2 of this act, including, but not limited to the following
42 parameters:

43 (1) definitions of all data elements;

44 (2) protocols for data reporting;

45 (3) qualifications of a person who submits data pursuant to section
46 2 of this act;

47 (4) facility compliance with the provisions of this act;

48 (5) development of a "real-time" reporting mechanism; and

1 (6) any other area of interest that the workgroup deems
2 appropriate.

3

4 4. This act shall take effect on the first day of the fourth month
5 next following the date of enactment.

6

7

8

STATEMENT

9

10 This bill requires the development and maintenance of a data
11 dashboard report, which is to collect and track daily information
12 about the number of open beds that are available in facilities in the
13 State for individuals in need of mental health or substance use
14 disorder treatment. The bill defines these facilities to include
15 facilities which provide long term or extended care services or acute
16 or intermediate level of care services and receive State or county
17 funding including, but not limited to, those facilities licensed in the
18 State as: a psychiatric facility (a State or county psychiatric hospital
19 or psychiatric unit of a county hospital); psychiatric unit of a
20 general hospital (an inpatient unit restricting services to care of
21 voluntarily admitted persons with mental illness); a short-term care
22 facility (an inpatient, community-based facility providing acute care
23 and assessment services); a special psychiatric facility, (a public or
24 private hospital which provides voluntary and involuntary mental
25 health services); and a residential health care facility.

26 The information in the data dashboard report is to be prominently
27 displayed on the website of the Department of Human Services
28 (DHS), made available to the public, upon request, through the
29 Statewide 2-1-1- telephone system, and made available using any
30 other means the Commissioner of Human Services deems
31 appropriate.

32 The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in DHS is
33 to oversee the development and maintenance of the data dashboard
34 report, and the commissioner is authorized to solicit funds and
35 accept contributions for the purpose of the development and
36 maintenance of the report.

37 The bill directs the division to convene a workgroup which will
38 include representatives from four organizations: the New Jersey
39 Hospital Association; the New Jersey Chapter of the American
40 College of Emergency Physicians; the Health Care Association of
41 New Jersey; and Leading Age New Jersey, and other stakeholders
42 as the division deems appropriate.

43 The workgroup will assist the division and the department in:
44 monitoring the data reporting; defining all data elements;
45 developing protocols for data reporting; defining qualifications of
46 the person who is responsible to submit the data; monitoring facility
47 compliance; developing a "real-time" reporting mechanism; and any
48 other area of interest that the workgroup deems appropriate.

1 Each facility provided for in the bill is to submit to the data
2 dashboard report, no less than once a day, information advising of
3 the number of open beds that are available for the provision of
4 mental health or substance use disorder services.

5 Based on that daily information, the data dashboard report would
6 include, by county: the address and telephone number of the
7 facility; the type of services provided by the facility and its licensed
8 bed capacity; and the number of open beds that are available for the
9 provision of mental health and substance use disorder services on
10 that day.

11 Additionally, the bill requires each acute care hospital to report,
12 no less than once a day through an online data collection system,
13 the following information: 1) the number of patients who were
14 admitted to the emergency room and hospital with a psychiatric or
15 addiction diagnosis; 2) the number of psychiatric screening
16 evaluations that were requested from, and completed by, a county
17 mental health screener; 3) the amount of time, in hours and minutes,
18 that patients have been waiting for evaluation since admission to the
19 emergency room; 4) the number of patients who were transferred
20 for psychiatric treatment to a psychiatric facility or special
21 psychiatric hospital; 5) the total wait time of the patients who were
22 admitted for psychiatric treatment to the hospital from the date and
23 time of admission to the emergency room; 6) the percentage of
24 patients on whom chemical or physical restraints were used; and 7)
25 such other data as necessary to monitor the effectiveness of the
26 response system for acute care psychiatric services in the State.

ASSEMBLY HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 1662

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 6, 2016

The Assembly Human Services Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 1662.

As amended by the committee, this bill requires the development and maintenance of a data dashboard report, which is to collect and track daily information about the number of open beds that are available in facilities in the State for individuals in need of mental health or substance use disorder treatment. The bill defines these facilities to include facilities which provide long term or extended care services or acute or intermediate level of care services and receive State or county funding, including, but not limited to, those facilities licensed in the State as: a psychiatric facility (a State or county psychiatric hospital or psychiatric unit of a county hospital); psychiatric unit of a general hospital (an inpatient unit restricting services to care of voluntarily admitted persons with mental illness); a short-term care facility (an inpatient, community-based facility providing acute care and assessment services); a special psychiatric facility, (a public or private hospital which provides voluntary and involuntary mental health services); and a residential health care facility.

The information in the data dashboard report is to be prominently displayed on the website of the Department of Human Services (DHS), made available to the public, upon request, through the Statewide 2-1-1- telephone system, and made available using any other means the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate.

The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in DHS is to oversee the development and maintenance of the data dashboard report, and the commissioner is authorized to solicit funds and accept contributions for the purpose of the development and maintenance of the report.

The bill directs the division to convene a workgroup which will include representatives from four organizations: the New Jersey Hospital Association; the New Jersey Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians; the Health Care Association of

New Jersey; and Leading Age New Jersey, and other stakeholders as the division deems appropriate.

The workgroup will assist the division and DHS in: monitoring the data reporting; defining all data elements; developing protocols for data reporting; defining qualifications of the person who is responsible to submit the data; monitoring facility compliance; developing a "real-time" reporting mechanism; and any other area of interest that the workgroup deems appropriate.

Each facility provided for in the bill is to submit to the data dashboard report, no less than once a day, information advising of the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health or substance use disorder services.

Based on that daily information, the data dashboard report would include, by county: the address and telephone number of the facility; the type of services provided by the facility and its licensed bed capacity; and the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health or substance use disorder services on that day.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2016-2017 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amendments delete the requirements for data collection other than the daily reporting of open beds for mental health or substance use disorder services. Specifically, data collection requirements were deleted with respect to the number of patients admitted to emergency rooms with a psychiatric or addiction diagnosis, the number of psychiatric screening evaluations, the wait time of patients for evaluations, the number of patients transferred to a psychiatric facility, the number of patients admitted for psychiatric treatment to the hospital and their wait times for admission, and the percentage of patients on whom restraints were used.

ASSEMBLY BUDGET COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 1662

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 23, 2016

The Assembly Budget Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 1662 (1R).

This bill requires the development and maintenance of a data dashboard report, which is to collect and track daily information about the number of open beds that are available in facilities in the State for individuals in need of mental health or substance use disorder treatment. The bill defines these facilities to include facilities which provide long term or extended care services or acute or intermediate level of care services and receive State or county funding, including, but not limited to, those facilities licensed in the State as: a psychiatric facility (a State or county psychiatric hospital or psychiatric unit of a county hospital); psychiatric unit of a general hospital (an inpatient unit restricting services to care of voluntarily admitted persons with mental illness); a short-term care facility (an inpatient, community-based facility providing acute care and assessment services); a special psychiatric facility, (a public or private hospital which provides voluntary and involuntary mental health services); and a residential health care facility.

The bill requires that the information in the data dashboard report be prominently displayed on the website of the Department of Human Services (DHS), made available to the public, upon request, through the Statewide 2-1-1- telephone system, and made available using any other means the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate.

The bill directs the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in DHS to oversee the development and maintenance of the data dashboard report, and authorizes the commissioner to solicit funds and accept contributions for the purpose of the development and maintenance of the report.

The bill directs the division to convene a workgroup which will include representatives from four organizations: the New Jersey Hospital Association; the New Jersey Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians; the Health Care Association of New Jersey; and Leading Age New Jersey, and other stakeholders as the division deems appropriate.

The workgroup will assist the division and DHS in: monitoring the data reporting; defining all data elements; developing protocols for data reporting; defining qualifications of the person who is responsible to submit the data; monitoring facility compliance; developing a "real-time" reporting mechanism; and any other area of interest that the workgroup deems appropriate.

Each facility provided for in the bill is to submit to the data dashboard report, no less than once a day, information advising of the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health or substance use disorder services.

Based on that daily information, the data dashboard report will include, by county: the address and telephone number of the facility; the type of services provided by the facility and its licensed bed capacity; and the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health or substance use disorder services on that day.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in the Department of Human Services (DHS) may incur minimal, indeterminate one-time costs to update an existing database required pursuant to P.L.2015, c.293 to include the number of beds in certain facilities which are available for individuals in need of mental health and substance use disorder services.

The department may also incur a minimal, indeterminate one-time cost to develop a data dashboard report from the information collected for this database which is to be prominently displayed on the department's website and made available to the public in ways the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate.

There is likely to be no marginal cost to maintain this database after it is established.

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR
CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 1662

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 15, 2017

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 1662 (1R).

This bill requires the development and maintenance of a data dashboard report, which is to collect and track daily information about the number of open beds that are available in facilities in the State for individuals in need of mental health or substance use disorder treatment. The bill defines these facilities to include facilities which provide long term or extended care services or acute or intermediate level of care services and receive State or county funding including, but not limited to, those facilities licensed in the State as: a psychiatric facility (a State or county psychiatric hospital or psychiatric unit of a county hospital); psychiatric unit of a general hospital (an inpatient unit restricting services to care of voluntarily admitted persons with mental illness); a short-term care facility (an inpatient, community-based facility providing acute care and assessment services); a special psychiatric facility, (a public or private hospital which provides voluntary and involuntary mental health services); and a residential health care facility.

The information in the data dashboard report is to be prominently displayed on the website of the Department of Human Services (DHS), made available to the public, upon request, through the Statewide 2-1-1- telephone system, and made available using any other means the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate.

The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in DHS is to oversee the development and maintenance of the data dashboard report, and the commissioner is authorized to solicit funds and accept contributions for the purpose of the development and maintenance of the report.

The bill directs the division to convene a workgroup which will include representatives from four organizations: the New Jersey Hospital Association; the New Jersey Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians; the Health Care Association of New Jersey; and Leading Age New Jersey, and other stakeholders as the division deems appropriate.

The workgroup will assist the division and the department in: monitoring the data reporting; defining all data elements; developing protocols for data reporting; defining qualifications of the person who is responsible to submit the data; monitoring facility compliance; developing a "real-time" reporting mechanism; and any other area of interest that the workgroup deems appropriate.

Each facility provided for in the bill is to submit to the data dashboard report, no less than once a day, information advising of the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health or substance use disorder services.

Based on that daily information, the data dashboard report would include, by county: the address and telephone number of the facility; the type of services provided by the facility and its licensed bed capacity; and the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health and substance use disorder services on that day.

Additionally, the bill requires each acute care hospital to report, no less than once a day through an online data collection system, the following information: 1) the number of patients who were admitted to the emergency room and hospital with a psychiatric or addiction diagnosis; 2) the number of psychiatric screening evaluations that were requested from, and completed by, a county mental health screener; 3) the amount of time, in hours and minutes, that patients have been waiting for evaluation since admission to the emergency room; 4) the number of patients who were transferred for psychiatric treatment to a psychiatric facility or special psychiatric hospital; 5) the total wait time of the patients who were admitted for psychiatric treatment to the hospital from the date and time of admission to the emergency room; 6) the percentage of patients on whom chemical or physical restraints were used; and 7) such other data as necessary to monitor the effectiveness of the response system for acute care psychiatric services in the State.

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 1662

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 1, 2017

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 1662 (1R).

This bill requires the development and maintenance of a data dashboard report, which is to collect and track daily information about the number of open beds that are available in facilities in the State for individuals in need of mental health or substance use disorder treatment. The bill defines these facilities to include facilities which provide long term or extended care services or acute or intermediate level of care services and receive State or county funding including, but not limited to, those facilities licensed in the State as: a psychiatric facility (a State or county psychiatric hospital or psychiatric unit of a county hospital); psychiatric unit of a general hospital (an inpatient unit restricting services to care of voluntarily admitted persons with mental illness); a short-term care facility (an inpatient, community-based facility providing acute care and assessment services); a special psychiatric facility, (a public or private hospital which provides voluntary and involuntary mental health services); and a residential health care facility.

The information in the data dashboard report is to be prominently displayed on the website of the Department of Human Services (DHS), made available to the public, upon request, through the Statewide 2-1-1- telephone system, and made available using any other means the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate.

The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in DHS is to oversee the development and maintenance of the data dashboard report, and the commissioner is authorized to solicit funds and accept contributions for the purpose of the development and maintenance of the report.

The bill directs the division to convene a workgroup which will include representatives from four organizations: the New Jersey Hospital Association; the New Jersey Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians; the Health Care Association of New Jersey; and Leading Age New Jersey, and other stakeholders as the division deems appropriate.

The workgroup will assist the division and DHS in: monitoring the data reporting; defining all data elements; developing protocols for

data reporting; defining qualifications of the person who is responsible to submit the data; monitoring facility compliance; developing a "real-time" reporting mechanism; and any other area of interest that the workgroup deems appropriate.

Each facility provided for in the bill is to submit to the data dashboard report, no less than once a day, information advising of the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health or substance use disorder services.

Based on that daily information, the data dashboard report would include, by county: the address and telephone number of the facility; the type of services provided by the facility and its licensed bed capacity; and the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health and substance use disorder services on that day.

This bill will take effect on the first day of the fourth month after enactment.

As reported, this bill is identical to Senate Bill No. 2466, as also reported by the committee.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in the Department of Human Services (DHS) may incur minimal, indeterminate one-time costs to update an existing database required pursuant to P.L.2015, c.293 to include the number of beds in certain facilities which are available for individuals in need of mental health and substance use disorder services.

The DHS may also incur a minimal, indeterminate one-time cost to develop a data dashboard report from the information collected for this database which is to be prominently displayed on the department's website and made available to the public in ways the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate.

There is likely to be no marginal cost to maintain this database after it is established.

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 1662

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 217th LEGISLATURE

DATED: JUNE 27, 2016

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Requires development and maintenance of data dashboard report to advise of open bed availability in residential facilities providing behavioral health services.
- Type of Impact:** Minimal, indeterminate, one-time cost, General Fund
- Agencies Affected:** The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in the Department of Human Services

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
State Cost	Minimal Increase	\$0	\$0

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in the Department of Human Services (DHS) may incur minimal, indeterminate one-time costs to update an existing database required pursuant to P.L.2015, c.293 to include the number of beds in certain facilities which are available for individuals in need of mental health and substance use disorder services.
- The department may also incur a minimal, indeterminate one-time cost to develop a data dashboard report from the information collected for this database which is to be prominently displayed on the department's website and made available to the public in ways the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate.
- There is likely to be no marginal cost to maintain this database after it is established.

BILL DESCRIPTION

Assembly Bill No. 1662 (1R) of 2016 requires the development and maintenance of a data dashboard report, which is to collect and track daily information about the number of open beds that are available in facilities in the State for individuals in need of mental health or substance use disorder treatment. The bill defines these facilities to include facilities which provide long

term or extended care services or acute or intermediate level of care services and receive State or county funding, including, but not limited to, those facilities licensed in the State as: a psychiatric facility (a State or county psychiatric hospital or psychiatric unit of a county hospital); psychiatric unit of a general hospital (an inpatient unit restricting services to care of voluntarily admitted persons with mental illness); a short-term care facility (an inpatient, community-based facility providing acute care and assessment services); a special psychiatric facility, (a public or private hospital which provides voluntary and involuntary mental health services); and a residential health care facility.

The information in the data dashboard report is to be prominently displayed on the website of the DHS, made available to the public, upon request, through the Statewide 2-1-1- telephone system, and made available using any other means the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate.

The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in DHS is to oversee the development and maintenance of the data dashboard report, and the commissioner is authorized to solicit funds and accept contributions for the purpose of the development and maintenance of the report.

The bill directs the division to convene a workgroup which will include representatives from four organizations: the New Jersey Hospital Association; the New Jersey Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians; the Health Care Association of New Jersey; and Leading Age New Jersey, and other stakeholders as the division deems appropriate.

The workgroup will assist the division and DHS in: monitoring the data reporting; defining all data elements; developing protocols for data reporting; defining qualifications of the person who is responsible to submit the data; monitoring facility compliance; developing a "real-time" reporting mechanism; and any other area of interest that the workgroup deems appropriate.

Each facility provided for in the bill is to submit to the data dashboard report, no less than once a day, information advising of the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health or substance use disorder services.

Based on that daily information, the data dashboard report would include, by county: the address and telephone number of the facility; the type of services provided by the facility and its licensed bed capacity; and the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health or substance use disorder services on that day.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS estimates that this bill may have a minimal, indeterminate, one-time cost to update the database that the division is required to maintain pursuant to P.L.2015, c. 293.

P.L.2015, c.293 required the division to create and maintain a database to track daily information about the number of open beds that are available for substance use disorder treatment in each residential substance use disorders treatment facility in the State that received State or county funding. This bill expands the definition of the types of beds on which information must be collected, and presumably included in the same database, in two ways. First, the bill includes beds for individuals who are in need of mental health or substance use disorder treatment. Furthermore, the bill includes other types of facilities which may provide

these beds, not just residential substance use disorder treatment facilities. The bill defines these facilities to include facilities which provide long term or extended care services or acute or intermediate level of care services and receive State or county funding, including, but not limited to, those facilities licensed in the State as: a psychiatric facility (a State or county psychiatric hospital or psychiatric unit of a county hospital); psychiatric unit of a general hospital (an inpatient unit restricting services to care of voluntarily admitted persons with mental illness); a short-term care facility (an inpatient, community-based facility providing acute care and assessment services); a special psychiatric facility, (a public or private hospital which provides voluntary and involuntary mental health services); and a residential health care facility. This will increase the number of facilities and beds which will be reported and will necessitate the division to amend the currently developed database to include this additional information.

The bill also instructs the division to take the information collected and make it available to the public through a data dashboard report which is to be prominently displayed on the website of the department and made available using other means the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate. The OLS estimates that the creation and distribution of the data dashboard report may result in minimal, indeterminate, one-time expenditures by the department, but it is likely that these costs will be nominal and part of the expansion of the database.

Additionally, the bill directs the division to convene a workgroup to assist in developing the protocols and methods of data reporting. The bill does not contain a provision authorizing an appropriation to the workgroup, but does permit the Commissioner of Human Services to solicit, receive, and accept grants, funds, or anything of value from entities and accept contributions of money, property, labor, or any other thing of value for the purpose of the development and maintenance of the database. The receipt of these contributions and the input of the workgroup could have a fiscal effect on the development of the database, but that effect is uncertain and cannot be quantified.

Finally, the bill requires each facility in the State which is licensed to provide mental health or substance use disorder services, and receives State or county funding, to submit to the data dashboard report daily information on the number of open beds available for these services. Without details on the establishment of the dashboard report, it is not possible for the OLS to quantify the cost of this activity to these facilities, but the OLS assumes, for the purposes of this estimate, that the transmission of this data will be done electronically on a daily basis and should only result in very minimal, if any, cost to the facility.

Section: Human Services

*Analyst: Robin Ford
Lead Fiscal Analyst*

*Approved: Frank W. Haines III
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer*

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

SENATE, No. 2466

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
217th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JULY 14, 2016

Sponsored by:

Senator JOSEPH F. VITALE

District 19 (Middlesex)

Senator DIANE B. ALLEN

District 7 (Burlington)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Madden and Gordon

SYNOPSIS

Requires development and maintenance of data dashboard report to advise of open bed availability in residential facilities providing behavioral health services.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/20/2017)

1 AN ACT concerning information about the availability of beds in
2 certain residential facilities and supplementing Title 30 of the
3 Revised Statutes.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:

7
8 1. a. The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in
9 the Department of Human Services shall oversee the development and
10 maintenance of a data dashboard report, which shall collect and track
11 the daily information received pursuant to section 2 of this act about
12 the number of open beds that are available for treatment for
13 individuals in need of mental health or substance use disorder
14 treatment in each facility in the State that is licensed to provide:

15 (1) long term or extended care services for mental health or
16 substance use disorders and receives State or county funding,
17 including, but not limited to, a psychiatric facility, psychiatric unit of a
18 general hospital, short-term care facility, and special psychiatric
19 hospital, as those terms are defined in section 2 of P.L.1987, c.116
20 (C.30:4-27.2), and a residential health care facility as defined in
21 section 1 of P.L.1953, c.212 (C.30:11A-1); or

22 (2) acute or intermediate level of care services for mental health or
23 a substance use disorder and receives State or county funding,
24 including, but not limited to, a psychiatric facility, psychiatric unit of a
25 general hospital, short-term care facility, and special psychiatric
26 hospital, as those terms are defined in section 2 of P.L.1987, c.116
27 (C.30:4-27.2).

28 b. The information maintained in the data dashboard report shall
29 include, by county:

30 (1) the address and telephone number of the facility;

31 (2) the type of services provided by the facility;

32 (3) the licensed bed capacity of the facility; and

33 (4) the number of open beds that are available for the provision of
34 mental health or substance use disorder services, based on the
35 information received pursuant to section 2 of this act.

36 c. The information described in subsection b. of this section shall
37 be:

38 (1) prominently displayed on the website of the department;

39 (2) made available to the public, upon request, through the
40 Statewide 2-1-1 telephone system; and

41 (3) made available using any other means that the Commissioner
42 of Human Services deems appropriate.

43 d. The commissioner is authorized to solicit, receive, and accept
44 grants, funds, or anything of value from any public or private entity
45 and receive and accept contributions of money, property, labor, or any
46 other thing of value from any legitimate source for the purpose of the
47 development and maintenance of a data dashboard report pursuant to
48 this act.

1 2. Each facility in the State that is licensed to provide mental
2 health or substance use disorder services, as provided for in section
3 1 of this act, and receives State or county funding shall submit to
4 the data dashboard report, no less than once a day, information
5 advising of the number of open beds that are available for the
6 provision of mental health or substance use disorder services on that
7 day.

8
9 3. a. The division shall convene a workgroup which shall
10 include, at a minimum, one representative from each of the following
11 organizations:

- 12 (1) the New Jersey Hospital Association;
13 (2) the New Jersey Chapter of the American College of Emergency
14 Physicians;
15 (3) the Health Care Association of New Jersey;
16 (4) LeadingAge New Jersey; and
17 (5) other stakeholders as the division deems appropriate.

18 b. The workgroup shall assist the division and the department in
19 the monitoring of the data reporting requirements as provided for in
20 section 2 of this act, including, but not limited to the following
21 parameters:

- 22 (1) definitions of all data elements;
23 (2) protocols for data reporting;
24 (3) qualifications of a person who submits data pursuant to section
25 2 of this act;
26 (4) facility compliance with the provisions of this act;
27 (5) development of a "real-time" reporting mechanism; and
28 (6) any other area of interest that the workgroup deems
29 appropriate.

30
31 4. This act shall take effect on the first day of the fourth month
32 next following the date of enactment.

33

34

35

STATEMENT

36

37 This bill requires the development and maintenance of a data
38 dashboard report, which is to collect and track daily information
39 about the number of open beds that are available in facilities in the
40 State for individuals in need of mental health or substance use
41 disorder treatment. The bill defines these facilities to include
42 facilities which provide long term or extended care services or acute
43 or intermediate level of care services and receive State or county
44 funding, including, but not limited to, those facilities licensed in the
45 State as: a psychiatric facility (a State or county psychiatric hospital
46 or psychiatric unit of a county hospital); psychiatric unit of a
47 general hospital (an inpatient unit restricting services to care of
48 voluntarily admitted persons with mental illness); a short-term care

1 facility (an inpatient, community-based facility providing acute care
2 and assessment services); a special psychiatric facility, (a public or
3 private hospital which provides voluntary and involuntary mental
4 health services); and a residential health care facility.

5 The bill requires that the information in the data dashboard
6 report be prominently displayed on the website of the Department
7 of Human Services (DHS), made available to the public, upon
8 request, through the Statewide 2-1-1- telephone system, and made
9 available using any other means the Commissioner of Human
10 Services deems appropriate.

11 The bill directs the Division of Mental Health and Addiction
12 Services in DHS to oversee the development and maintenance of
13 the data dashboard report, and authorizes the commissioner to
14 solicit funds and accept contributions for the purpose of the
15 development and maintenance of the report.

16 The bill directs the division to convene a workgroup which will
17 include representatives from four organizations: the New Jersey
18 Hospital Association; the New Jersey Chapter of the American
19 College of Emergency Physicians; the Health Care Association of
20 New Jersey; and Leading Age New Jersey, and other stakeholders
21 as the division deems appropriate.

22 The workgroup will assist the division and DHS in: monitoring
23 the data reporting; defining all data elements; developing protocols
24 for data reporting; defining qualifications of the person who is
25 responsible to submit the data; monitoring facility compliance;
26 developing a "real-time" reporting mechanism; and any other area
27 of interest that the workgroup deems appropriate.

28 Each facility provided for in the bill is to submit to the data
29 dashboard report, no less than once a day, information advising of
30 the number of open beds that are available for the provision of
31 mental health or substance use disorder services.

32 Based on that daily information, the data dashboard report will
33 include, by county: the address and telephone number of the
34 facility; the type of services provided by the facility and its licensed
35 bed capacity; and the number of open beds that are available for the
36 provision of mental health or substance use disorder services on that
37 day.

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR
CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2466

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 15, 2017

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 2466.

This bill requires the development and maintenance of a data dashboard report, which is to collect and track daily information about the number of open beds that are available in facilities in the State for individuals in need of mental health or substance use disorder treatment. The bill defines these facilities to include facilities which provide long term or extended care services or acute or intermediate level of care services and receive State or county funding, including, but not limited to, those facilities licensed in the State as: a psychiatric facility (a State or county psychiatric hospital or psychiatric unit of a county hospital); psychiatric unit of a general hospital (an inpatient unit restricting services to care of voluntarily admitted persons with mental illness); a short-term care facility (an inpatient, community-based facility providing acute care and assessment services); a special psychiatric facility, (a public or private hospital which provides voluntary and involuntary mental health services); and a residential health care facility.

The bill requires that the information in the data dashboard report be prominently displayed on the website of the Department of Human Services (DHS), made available to the public, upon request, through the Statewide 2-1-1- telephone system, and made available using any other means the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate.

The bill directs the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in DHS to oversee the development and maintenance of the data dashboard report, and authorizes the commissioner to solicit funds and accept contributions for the purpose of the development and maintenance of the report.

The bill directs the division to convene a workgroup which will include representatives from four organizations: the New Jersey Hospital Association; the New Jersey Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians; the Health Care Association of New Jersey; and Leading Age New Jersey, and other stakeholders as the division deems appropriate.

The workgroup will assist the division and DHS in: monitoring the data reporting; defining all data elements; developing protocols for

data reporting; defining qualifications of the person who is responsible to submit the data; monitoring facility compliance; developing a "real-time" reporting mechanism; and any other area of interest that the workgroup deems appropriate.

Each facility provided for in the bill is to submit to the data dashboard report, no less than once a day, information advising of the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health or substance use disorder services.

Based on that daily information, the data dashboard report will include, by county: the address and telephone number of the facility; the type of services provided by the facility and its licensed bed capacity; and the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health or substance use disorder services on that day.

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2466

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 1, 2017

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 2466.

This bill requires the development and maintenance of a data dashboard report, which is to collect and track daily information about the number of open beds that are available in facilities in the State for individuals in need of mental health or substance use disorder treatment. The bill defines these facilities to include facilities which provide long term or extended care services or acute or intermediate level of care services and receive State or county funding including, but not limited to, those facilities licensed in the State as: a psychiatric facility (a State or county psychiatric hospital or psychiatric unit of a county hospital); psychiatric unit of a general hospital (an inpatient unit restricting services to care of voluntarily admitted persons with mental illness); a short-term care facility (an inpatient, community-based facility providing acute care and assessment services); a special psychiatric facility, (a public or private hospital which provides voluntary and involuntary mental health services); and a residential health care facility.

The information in the data dashboard report is to be prominently displayed on the website of the Department of Human Services (DHS), made available to the public, upon request, through the Statewide 2-1-1- telephone system, and made available using any other means the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate.

The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in DHS is to oversee the development and maintenance of the data dashboard report, and the commissioner is authorized to solicit funds and accept contributions for the purpose of the development and maintenance of the report.

The bill directs the division to convene a workgroup which will include representatives from four organizations: the New Jersey Hospital Association; the New Jersey Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians; the Health Care Association of New Jersey; and Leading Age New Jersey, and other stakeholders as the division deems appropriate.

The workgroup will assist the division and DHS in: monitoring the data reporting; defining all data elements; developing protocols for data reporting; defining qualifications of the person who is responsible to submit the data; monitoring facility compliance; developing a "real-

time" reporting mechanism; and any other area of interest that the workgroup deems appropriate.

Each facility provided for in the bill is to submit to the data dashboard report, no less than once a day, information advising of the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health or substance use disorder services.

Based on that daily information, the data dashboard report would include, by county: the address and telephone number of the facility; the type of services provided by the facility and its licensed bed capacity; and the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health and substance use disorder services on that day.

This bill will take effect on the first day of the fourth month after enactment.

As reported, this bill is identical to Assembly Bill No. 1662 (1R), as also reported by the committee.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in the Department of Human Services (DHS) may incur minimal, indeterminate one-time costs to update an existing database required pursuant to P.L.2015, c.293 to include the number of beds in certain facilities which are available for individuals in need of mental health and substance use disorder services.

The DHS may also incur a minimal, indeterminate one-time cost to develop a data dashboard report from the information collected for this database which is to be prominently displayed on the department's website and made available to the public in ways the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate.

There is likely to be no marginal cost to maintain this database after it is established.

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
SENATE, No. 2466
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
217th LEGISLATURE

DATED: JUNE 5, 2017

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Requires development and maintenance of data dashboard report to advise of open bed availability in residential facilities providing behavioral health services.
- Type of Impact:** Minimal, indeterminate, one-time cost, General Fund
- Agencies Affected:** The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in the Department of Human Services

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
State Cost	Minimal Increase	\$0	\$0

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in the Department of Human Services (DHS) may incur minimal, indeterminate one-time costs to update an existing database required pursuant to P.L.2015, c.293 to include the number of beds in certain facilities which are available for individuals in need of mental health and substance use disorder services.
- The department may also incur a minimal, indeterminate one-time cost to develop a data dashboard report from the information collected for this database which is to be prominently displayed on the department's website and made available to the public in ways the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate.
- There is likely to be no marginal cost to maintain this database after it is established.

BILL DESCRIPTION

Senate Bill No. 2466 of 2017 requires the development and maintenance of a data dashboard report, which is to collect and track daily information about the number of open beds that are available in facilities in the State for individuals in need of mental health or substance use disorder treatment. The bill defines these facilities to include facilities which provide long term or extended care services or acute or intermediate level of care services and receive State or

county funding, including, but not limited to, those facilities licensed in the State as: a psychiatric facility (a State or county psychiatric hospital or psychiatric unit of a county hospital); psychiatric unit of a general hospital (an inpatient unit restricting services to care of voluntarily admitted persons with mental illness); a short-term care facility (an inpatient, community-based facility providing acute care and assessment services); a special psychiatric facility, (a public or private hospital which provides voluntary and involuntary mental health services); and a residential health care facility.

The information in the data dashboard report is to be prominently displayed on the website of the DHS, made available to the public, upon request, through the Statewide 2-1-1- telephone system, and made available using any other means the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate.

The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in DHS is to oversee the development and maintenance of the data dashboard report, and the commissioner is authorized to solicit funds and accept contributions for the purpose of the development and maintenance of the report.

The bill directs the division to convene a workgroup which will include representatives from four organizations: the New Jersey Hospital Association; the New Jersey Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians; the Health Care Association of New Jersey; and Leading Age New Jersey, and other stakeholders as the division deems appropriate.

The workgroup will assist the division and DHS in: monitoring the data reporting; defining all data elements; developing protocols for data reporting; defining qualifications of the person who is responsible to submit the data; monitoring facility compliance; developing a "real-time" reporting mechanism; and any other area of interest that the workgroup deems appropriate.

Each facility provided for in the bill is to submit to the data dashboard report, no less than once a day, information advising of the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health or substance use disorder services.

Based on that daily information, the data dashboard report would include, by county: the address and telephone number of the facility; the type of services provided by the facility and its licensed bed capacity; and the number of open beds that are available for the provision of mental health or substance use disorder services on that day.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS estimates that this bill may have a minimal, indeterminate, one-time cost to update the database that the division is required to maintain pursuant to P.L.2015, c.293.

P.L.2015, c.293 required the division to create and maintain a database to track daily information about the number of open beds that are available for substance use disorder treatment in each residential substance use disorders treatment facility in the State that received State or county funding. This bill expands the definition of the types of beds on which information must be collected, and presumably included in the same database, in two ways. First, the bill includes beds for individuals who are in need of mental health or substance use disorder treatment. Furthermore, the bill includes other types of facilities which may provide these beds, not just residential substance use disorder treatment facilities. The bill defines these

facilities to include facilities which provide long term or extended care services or acute or intermediate level of care services and receive State or county funding, including, but not limited to, those facilities licensed in the State as: a psychiatric facility (a State or county psychiatric hospital or psychiatric unit of a county hospital); psychiatric unit of a general hospital (an inpatient unit restricting services to care of voluntarily admitted persons with mental illness); a short-term care facility (an inpatient, community-based facility providing acute care and assessment services); a special psychiatric facility, (a public or private hospital which provides voluntary and involuntary mental health services); and a residential health care facility. This will increase the number of facilities and beds which will be reported and will require the division to revise the currently developed database to include this additional information.

The bill also instructs the division to take the information collected and make it available to the public through a data dashboard report which is to be prominently displayed on the website of the department and made available using other means the Commissioner of Human Services deems appropriate. The OLS estimates that the creation and distribution of the data dashboard report may result in indeterminate, one-time expenditures by the department, but it is likely that these costs will be nominal and part of the expansion of the database.

Additionally, the bill directs the division to convene a workgroup to assist in developing the protocols and methods of data reporting, and permits the Commissioner of Human Services to solicit, receive, and accept grants, funds, or anything of value from entities and accept contributions of money, property, labor, or any other thing of value for the purpose of the development and maintenance of the database. The receipt of these contributions and the input of the workgroup could have a fiscal effect on the development of the database, but that effect is uncertain.

Finally, the bill requires each facility in the State which is licensed to provide mental health or substance use disorder services, and receives State or county funding, to submit to the data dashboard report daily information on the number of open beds available for these services. Without details on the establishment of the dashboard report, it is not possible for the OLS to quantify the cost of this activity to these facilities, but the OLS assumes, for the purposes of this estimate, that the transmission of this data will be done electronically on a daily basis and should only result in very minimal, if any, cost to the facility.

Section: Human Services

*Analyst: Robin Ford
Lead Fiscal Analyst*

*Approved: Frank W. Haines III
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer*

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

Governor Christie Takes Action on Pending Legislation

Friday, July 21, 2017

Tags: [Bill Action](#)
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Trenton, NJ – Governor Chris Christie today took action on dozens of bills, including S-359/A-2320 (Codey, Vitale/Vainieri Huttle, Conaway, Jimenez, Lampitt, Jasey, Sumter), which raises the minimum age from 19 to 21 of a person to whom a vendor may sell, offer for sale, distribute, give or furnish tobacco products in New Jersey. This new law also amends various related statues concerning penalties, fines, signage requirements, non-face-to-face transactions, and enforcement provisions to reflect the increased minimum age.

“By raising the minimum age to purchase tobacco products to 21, we are giving young people more time to develop a maturity and better understanding of how dangerous smoking can be and that it is better to not start smoking in the first place,” Governor Christie said. “My mother died from the effects of smoking, and no one should lose their life due to any addictive substance. Additionally, the less people who develop costly tobacco habits that can cause health problems, such as lung cancer, heart disease and developmental issues, the less strain there will be on our healthcare system.”

Governor Christie also took action on pending legislation related to:

Further Addressing the Opioid Epidemic

Governor Christie signed four bills that continue New Jersey's leadership role in fighting the national opioid epidemic. The legislation that requires the Department of Human Services develop, maintain, and post on their website daily information about the number of open beds available in facilities in the state for people in need of mental health or substance use disorder treatment; help inform parents of student athletes and cheerleaders about the use and misuse of prescription opioids; allows hospice programs to accept the unused prescription medicines of their hospice patients for safe disposal and implements the use of current-day, sensitive terminology when referring to persons with substance use disorders or certain disabilities.

- **A-1662/S-2466 (Schaer, Vainieri Huttle, Coughlin, McKnight, Mukherji/Vitale, Allen)** - Requires development and maintenance of data dashboard report to advise of open bed availability in residential facilities providing behavioral health services
- **A-3944/S-2402 (Mazzeo, Lagana, Vainieri Huttle, Benson, Caride, Wimberly/Diegnan, Vitale)** - Requires DOE to develop educational fact sheet for distribution to parents of student-athletes and cheerleaders concerning use and misuse of prescription opioids
- **S-2970/A-4522 (Vitale, Diegnan/Lampitt, Vainieri Huttle, Jimenez)** - Allows hospice care programs to accept unused prescription medications for disposal under certain circumstances
- **S-2721/ACS for A-926 (Vitale, Whelan/Vainieri Huttle, Benson, Tucker, Eustace, McKnight, Mosquera)** - Implements person-first language and changes pejorative terminology referring to persons with certain disabilities or substance use disorders

Protecting and Preserving the Environment

The Governor also signed several bills to protect people and improve the quality of life by strengthening New Jersey's environment.

“These new laws will create more open space preservation opportunities, green energy solutions and safeguards to ensure quality drinking water for all New Jerseyans,” Governor Christie said. “They provide greater flexibility for counties and municipalities to use the roughly \$270 million open space tax dollars they collect each year for the intended mission of protecting New Jersey's environment, improving communities with more recreation and

conservation, and preventing overcrowding of our towns and schools. They also ensure reliable, sustainable and safe environmental infrastructure across the state, by investing nearly \$100 million in critical projects this year."

- **A-1645/S-195 (Schaer, Webber, Dancer, Pintor Marin/Kyrillos, Smith)** - Expands definition of "acquisition," for purposes of county and municipal open space trust funds, to include demolition, removal of debris, and restoration of lands being acquired
- **S-3352/A-5045 (Ruiz, Bateman/Oliver, Chaparro, Singleton, Lagana, Bramnick, Vainieri Huttie, Zwicker)** - Appropriates \$71,700,224 from constitutionally dedicated CBT revenues and various Green Acres funds to DEP for local government open space acquisition and park development projects
- **S-3353/A-5046 (Greenstein, Thompson/Eustace, Land, Mukherji, Schaer, Bramnick, Vainieri Huttie, Wimberly)** - Appropriates \$12.3 million from constitutionally dedicated CBT revenues for recreation and conservation purposes to DEP for State capital and park development projects
- **S-3354/A-5044 (Gordon, Allen/McKeon, Mazzeo, Muoio, Moriarty, Bramnick, Zwicker, Vainieri Huttie)** - Appropriates \$8,992,898 to DEP from constitutionally dedicated CBT revenues and various Green Acres funds for grants to certain nonprofit entities to acquire or develop lands for recreation and conservation purposes
- **S-3240/A-4996 (Greenstein, Codey/Mukherji, Mazzeo, Schaer, Holley, Land)** - Authorizes NJ Environmental Infrastructure Trust to expend certain sums to make loans for environmental infrastructure projects for FY2018
- **CC for S-3241/A-4998 (Smith, Codey/Eustace, Muoio, Moriarty, Conaway, Andrzejczak)** - Appropriates funds to DEP for environmental infrastructure projects for FY2018
- **S-3242/A-4997 (Gordon, Oroho/McKeon, Prieto)** - Clarifies procedures for approval of environmental and transportation infrastructure projects
- **S-3181/A-4756 (Smith, Diegnan/DeAngelo, Eustace, Gusciora)** - Permits solar electric power generation facility projects not having commenced commercial operation to retain designation through May 31, 2018 as connected to distribution system
- **S-2834/A-4569 (Sweeney, Greenstein, Bateman/Eustace, Karabinchak, McKeon, Vainieri Huttie, Benson, Muoio)** - The "Water Quality Accountability Act"; imposes certain testing, reporting, management, and infrastructure investment requirements on water purveyors

Governor Christie also took action on the following bills:

BILL SIGNINGS:

S-5/A-4925 (Vitale, Sweeney/Conaway, O'Scanlon, Houghtaling, Quijano, Giblin, DeAngelo, Munoz, Mukherji, A.M. Bucco) - Establishes data reporting requirements for emergency medical services providers and dispatch centers

SS SCS SCS for S-291, 652, 1954/ACS for A-1464 (Vitale, Whelan, Allen, Turner/Lampitt, Coughlin, Conaway, Vainieri Huttie, Lagana, Mukherji, Moriarty) - Authorizes health care providers to engage in telemedicine and telehealth

S-742/A-1205 (Beach/Mosquera, Holley, Wimberly, Jones) - Requires board of education to enter into agreement with law enforcement authorities regarding access to live video streams of public school buildings

S-1295/A-3701 (Vitale/Eustace, Munoz) - Amends and repeals sections of "Respiratory Care Practitioner Licensing Act"

S-1315/A-1839 (Vitale/Giblin, Wimberly, McKeon, Mukherji, Sumter) - Revises statutes regarding practice of physical therapy

S-1840/A-2085 (Ruiz, Gill/Mukherji, Oliver, McKnight) - Prohibits charging fee to stop publishing personal identifying information obtained through the criminal justice system

S-1913/A-2794 (Addiego, Greenstein/Lagana, Moriarty, Mukherji, Downey) - "Personal Information and Privacy Protection Act"; restricts collection and use of personal information by retail establishments for certain purposes

S-2058/A-671 (T. Kean, Pou/Munoz, Giblin, Mukherji, Moriarty) - Adds two nurse educators to the New Jersey Board of Nursing

S-2331/A-3962 (Codey, Vitale/Jasey, McKeon, Vainieri Huttie, Munoz, Mukherji, Mosquera, Lampitt) - Establishes tuition reimbursement program for certain psychiatrists who work in underserved areas or psychiatric hospitals in New Jersey

CC S-2403/A-3717 (Rice, Turner/Sumter, Vainieri Huttie, Lampitt, Downey) - Establishes Women's Vocational Training Pilot Program to promote economic self-sufficiency of low-income women through increased participation in high-wage, high-demand occupations; authorizes allocation of certain funds therefor

S-2452/A-4007 (Diegnan, Stack/Houghtaling, Downey, Mosquera, Mazzeo) - Requires Director of Division of Taxation to promulgate Property Taxpayer Bill of Rights

S-2577/A-4238 (Cunningham, Ruiz, Gordon/Sumter, Jasey, Muoio, Lagana, Downey, Benson) - Requires Higher Education Student Assistance Authority to provide annual New Jersey College Loans to Assist State Students Loan Program report to Governor and Legislature and develop student loan comparison information document to increase program transparency

S-2618/A-4691 (Cunningham, Pou/Caride, McKeon, Jasey, Giblin) - Requires institutions of higher education to enter into collective Statewide reverse transfer agreement

S-2819/A-4363 (Sweeney, Ruiz, Lesniak/Taliaferro, Andrzejczak, Lampitt, Mosquera, Holley, Quijano) - Creates "Nourishing Young Minds Initiative Fund" in Dept. of Agriculture to help pay for child food and nutrition programs

S-3027/A-4631 (Smith, Greenstein/Lampitt, Quijano, Eustace, Kennedy, Benson, Muoio, Zwicker, Mukherji) - Establishes State food waste reduction goal of 50 percent by 2030

S-3067/A-4652 (Ruiz, Vitale/Vainieri Huttie, Caride, Eustace, Jasey, Wimberly, Gusciora) - Requires Commissioner of Education to develop guidelines for school districts regarding transgender students

S-3176/A-4898 (Madden/Mukherji, Singleton) - Changes year used to calculate TDI and FLI employee taxes from most recent calendar year to most recent fiscal year

S-3191/A-3370 (Sweeney, Bateman/Burzichelli, Jones) - Extends voting rights of representatives of sending districts on receiving district board of education

S-3219/A-4859 (Sweeney, T. Kean, Greenstein, Holzapfel/Vainieri Huttie, Prieto, Downey) - Establishes additional penalties related to child pornography and expands crime to include portrayal of child in sexual manner; establishes crime of leader of child pornography network

S-3331/A-5039 (Cruz-Perez/Jones) - Authorizes State Treasurer to sell surplus real property in City of Camden, County of Camden to Camden County Improvement Authority

SJR-105/AJR-157 (Diegnan, Cruz-Perez, Sweeney/Pinkin, Karabinchak, Coughlin) - Designates August 29, 2017 as Governor James Florio Day in New Jersey

SJR-113/AJR-165 (Gordon/Vainieri Huttie, Chiaravalloti) - Clarifies intent of law subjecting PANYNJ to open public records and freedom of information laws in New Jersey and New York

A-222/S-2171 (DeAngelo, Giblin, Singleton, Holley, Benson/Bateman, Greenstein, Stack) - "New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act"; authorizes issuance of \$125,000,000 in general obligation bonds to finance capital projects at public libraries; appropriates \$5,000

A-373/S-607 (Auth, Vainieri Huttie, McGuckin, Schepisi, Peterson, Jimenez/Addiego, A.R. Bucco) - Requires life imprisonment without parole for persons convicted of the murder of a minor under the age of 18 in the course of the commission of a sex crime

A-555/S-1847 (Pinkin, Eustace/Diegnan) - Revises statutes concerning incorporation and governance of the Protestant Episcopal Church to remove gender-specific references

A-621/S-2328 (Lagana, Greenwald, Moriarty, Mosquera, Mukherji/Cruz-Perez, Turner) - Permits bowling alleys, including alleys licensed to sell alcoholic beverages, to conduct amusement games

A-1458/S-2449 (Lampitt, Mosquera, Downey, Singleton, Vainieri Huttie/Vitale, Ruiz) - Requires health care professionals engaged in prenatal care to provide parents of newborns with information on health insurance coverage for newborn children

A-1761/S-332 (Eustace, Mukherji, Gusciora/Scutari, Bateman) - Creates fencing crime involving stolen domestic companion animals

A-2060/S-2333 (Gusciora, Sumter, Oliver, Jasey, McKnight/Cruz-Perez, Turner) - Establishes process for consideration of offers from short sale buyers during residential mortgage foreclosures

A-2221/S-2453 (Benson, Russo, DeAngelo, A.M. Bucco/Diegnan, Greenstein) - Allows gross income taxpayers to use returns to make voluntary contributions to the Boy Scouts of America Councils in New Jersey

A-2441/S-2910 (Eustace, Gusciora, Kennedy, Mazzeo, Mukherji/Gordon, Turner) - Authorizes the Unclaimed Property Administrator to verify certain governmental debts before delivering abandoned property

A-2926/S-3197 (Greenwald, Vainieri Huttie, Schaer, Mukherji, Holley, Mosquera, Muoio, Sumter, Mazzeo/Cruz-Perez, Cunningham) - Repeals law suspending certain licenses, registrations and certifications for failure to repay student loans

A-2993/S-1305 (Conaway, Pinkin, Sumter, Wimberly, McKnight, Mukherji/Vitale, Madden) - Requires Medicaid coverage for diabetes self-management education, training, services, and equipment for patients diagnosed with diabetes, gestational diabetes, and pre-diabetes

A-3347/S-2242 (Wolfe, Holley, Jasey, McKnight, Wimberly/Diegnan) - Establishes New Jersey School Safety Specialist Academy in Department of Education and requires school districts to designate school safety specialist

A-3438/S-1564 (DeAngelo, Danielsens, Holley, Houghtaling, Downey, Wimberly, Quijano/Turner, Beach) - Requires initial determination of unemployment benefits to be made within three weeks of filing of claim

A-3463/S-2038 (Coughlin/Vitale, Codey) - Updates references to DOC and DHS and refers to persons receiving services from DHS

A-3686/S-2423 (McKeon, Jasey, Munoz, Vainieri Huttie, A.M. Bucco/Codey, Oroho) - Establishes new crime of strict liability vehicular homicide; renames existing vehicular homicide as reckless vehicular homicide; designated as Ralph and David's Law

A-4011/S-2887 (Jones, Barclay, Moriarty, Mosquera, Greenwald, Lampitt, Mazzeo, Chiaravalloti/Cruz-Perez, Beach) - Designates USS New Jersey as New Jersey State Ship

A-4081/S-2662 (Lampitt, Vainieri Huttle, Benson, Wimberly, Greenwald/Allen, Sweeney) - "Charlie's Law"; Establishes civil penalties for persons who interfere with or deny persons with disabilities accompanied by service or guide dogs access to places of public accommodation

A-4088/S-2567 (Schaer, Jasey, Benson, Wimberly/Cruz-Perez, Singer) - Establishes "High School to College Readiness Commission" to examine issues and develop recommendations to enhance student preparation for postsecondary education

A-4175/S-2808 (Caride, McKnight, Holley, Pintor Marin, Wimberly/Ruiz, Turner) -Requires Commissioner of Education to develop guidance on identifying English language learners for gifted and talented programs

A-4246/S-3194 (Dancer/Lesniak, Beck) - Decreases annual thoroughbred race dates to 50 minimum upon written consent from New Jersey Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association

A-4317/S-3206 (Prieto, Giblin/Diegnan) - Concerns violations of certain occupational licensing laws

A-4568/S-3017 (Vainieri Huttle, Eustace, Pinkin, Jasey, Johnson/Vitale, Ruiz) - Prohibits health insurers, SHBP, SEHBP, certain health care providers, and Medicaid from discriminating in providing coverage and services based on gender identity

A-4875/S-1996 (Muoio, Gusciora/Beach, Van Drew) - Requires gubernatorial candidates' statements be posted online

A-4969/S-3281 (Oliver, Giblin, Jasey, McKnight, Schaer, Wimberly/Gill, Cunningham) - Establishes Montclair State University as public research university

ACS for A-4994/S-3314 (McKeon, Burzichelli, Singleton, Caride/Sarlo, Oroho) - Requires certain State and local government agency employees with access to federal tax information to undergo criminal history background checks

AJR-37/SJR-67 (Mosquera, Chaparro/Weinberg) - Designates June 21 of each year as "ASK Day" to promote children's health and gun safety

ACS for AJR-54/SJR-104 (Benson, Mosquera, Chiaravalloti, Holley, McKnight, Wimberly/Sweeney, Beach) - Designates April 2nd of each year as "World Autism Awareness Day"

AJR-72/SJR-31 (Gove, Rumpf, A.M. Bucco, Holley/A.R. Bucco) - Designates September 17 through September 23 of each year as "Constitution Week"

AJR-115/SJR-81 (Vainieri Huttle, Lampitt, Giblin, Benson/Diegnan, A.R. Bucco) - Designates third Friday in September of every year as Concussion Awareness Day

AJR-126/SJR-85 (Dancer, DeAngelo, Munoz, A.M. Bucco, Mukherji, Houghtaling, Downey/Allen, Madden) - Commemorates establishment and service of the New Jersey State Police and celebrates 95th anniversary of first graduating class

AJR-137/SJR-102 (Mazzeo/Whelan) - Urges United States President Trump, members of his administration, and Congress to oppose measures and actions to prohibit states from authorizing and conducting Internet gaming

BILLS VETOED:

SCS for S-1297, 1990/A-3751 (Vitale, Sweeney/Jasey, Coughlin) - **CONDITIONAL** - Permits candidates for school board to circulate petitions jointly and be bracketed together on ballot; permits short nonpolitical designation of principles on petitions and ballots

A-31/S-3315 (Prieto, Muoio, Oliver, Schaer, Holley, Mukherji, Quijano, Wimberly, Pintor Marin/Vitale, Cruz-Perez) - **ABSOLUTE** - Increases amount of benefits under Work First New Jersey program by 30 percent over three years and according to Social Security cost of living increases thereafter

A-33/S-3316 (Muoio, Vainieri Huttle, Mukherji, Oliver, Gusciora, Pintor Marin/Vitale, Cruz-Perez) - **ABSOLUTE** - Repeals family cap in Work First New Jersey program

A-320/S-1018 (Singleton, Vainieri Huttle, Munoz, Moriarty, Lampitt, Sumter, Mukherji/Weinberg, Cruz-Perez) - **CONDITIONAL** - Establishes minimum Medicaid reimbursement rate for personal care services

A-1139/S-2616 (Holley, McKnight, Munoz, Kennedy, Mukherji, Pintor Marin, Wimberly/Ruiz, Vitale) - **CONDITIONAL** - Prohibits sale of unsafe supplemental mattresses designed for children's products

A-2297/S-659 (Vainieri Huttle, Sumter, Mukherji, Caride, Downey, Zwicker, Wimberly/Turner, Allen) - **CONDITIONAL** - Requires health insurance coverage for contraceptives to include prescriptions for 12 months

A-3338/S-862 (Eustace, Lagana, Vainieri Huttle, Muoio, Mukherji, Benson, Jimenez, Giblin, Moriarty, Lampitt/Stack, Weinberg) - **CONDITIONAL** - Dedicates one percent of cigarette and other tobacco products tax revenues to anti-smoking initiatives

ACS for A-3480, 4119/S-2536 (Downey, Lampitt, Schaer, Houghtaling, Benson, Singleton, Muoio, DeAngelo/Gill, Weinberg) - **ABSOLUTE** - Concerns employer inquiries about worker's wage and salary experience

A-4253/S-2634 (Quijano, Mukherji, Vainieri Huttle, Eustace, Jones, McKeon/Weinberg, Diegnan) - CONDITIONAL - Establishes "New Jersey Nonprofit Security Grant Pilot Program"; appropriates \$3,000,000 over next three fiscal years

A-4453/S-2881 (Downey, Houghtaling/Ruiz) – CONDITIONAL - Requires pupils who reside on certain federal property to enroll in resident school district in accordance with schedule determined by executive county superintendent of schools

A-4496/S-2977 (Wimberly, Sumter, Lampitt/Lesniak) – CONDITIONAL - "Healthy Small Food Retailer Act"; provides funding to small food retailers to sell fresh and nutritious food; appropriates \$1 million

A-4587/SCS for S-2574 (Quijano, Vainieri Huttle, Mukherji, Giblin/Diegnan, Sarlo) – ABSOLUTE - Imposes State sales and use tax and hotel and motel occupancy fee on transient accommodations; authorizes various municipal taxes and fees on transient accommodations

A-4870/S-3226 (Prieto, Oliver, Quijano, Pintor Marin, Schaer, Vainieri Huttle, Eustace/Ruiz, Sweeney, Greenstein) – ABSOLUTE - "Safe Transportation Jobs and Fair Employment Rules Act"

ACS for A-4927/SCS for S-3085 (Prieto, Oliver, Gusciora, Jasey/Sweeney, Diegnan, Ruiz) – CONDITIONAL - Revises law concerning family leave, temporary disability and family temporary disability leave, and domestic or sexual violence safety leave

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Christie signs several bills taking aim at opioid epidemic

Associated Press State Wire: New Jersey (NJ) - July 21, 2017

Section: News

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) — Republican Gov. Chris Christie has signed several bills that take aim at the growing opioid epidemic.

Chief among them is a law that orders the Department of Human Services to post on its website daily information about open beds available in facilities for people needing mental health or substance use disorder treatment.

Christie has made battling opioid abuse a centerpiece of his second term in office. He was named by President Donald Trump to chair a commission tasked with combating drug addiction and the opioid crisis.

Among other bills Christie signed Friday was a measure requiring the Department of Education to develop a fact sheet on opioid abuse for student-athletes and cheerleaders, and a bill to allow hospice care programs to accept unused prescription medications for disposal under certain circumstances.

Index terms: FastStory; NJ--Christie-Opioid Legislation; General news

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TRANSGENDER RIGHTS ARE NOW LAW AS CHRISTIE SIGNS DOZENS OF BILLS

Record, The (Hackensack, NJ) - July 22, 2017

- Author/Byline: Catherine Carrera, Staff Writer, @CattCarrera
- Edition: AE = BERGEN, PASSAIC-MORRIS, and HERALD NEWS
- Section: News
- Page: A6

After talking baseball and O.J. Simpson's parole on sports radio Friday, Gov. Chris Christie made time to sign dozens of new laws, including one that protects transgender students' privacy rights, and permits them to use bathrooms and dress according to their gender identity.

Christie also signed legislation designed to combat the state's heroin crisis and another named after a slain Hillsdale girl.

Fourteen bills were vetoed, including one that would have benefited anti-smoking initiatives by dedicating 1 percent of the tax revenues from the sale of cigarettes and tobacco products to those programs. He also agreed to raise the minimum age to buy tobacco products from 19 to 21.

The transgender rights law requires the commissioner of education to develop guidelines for school districts to address an array of transgender students' needs. Christie, a Republican who had sought his party's nomination for president after making some appeals to conservatives, signed the law cleared by the state's Democratic-controlled Legislature without comment.

"These guidelines are needed to ensure that transgender students can safely be themselves without fear of being persecuted," said Assemblywomen Valerie Vainieri Huttie, D-Englewood, one of the bill's sponsors, in a statement.

Some school districts have already implemented similar policies, allowing transgender students to use bathrooms and locker rooms that align with their gender identities.

Schools are also required to use the name or pronoun that corresponds to a student's gender identity, and a student's school ID should be in the name corresponding to the student's gender identity. Transgender students are also given equal opportunities to participate in physical education and in gender-segregated school activities.

Fighting heroin epidemic

In the final year of his second term, Christie's agenda has aimed to focus on fighting the state's heroin epidemic by expanding treatment and resources.

Statistics released this week by the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office show that this year could be Bergen County's most deadly year on record, with 244 overdoses, including 57 fatalities.

The new legislation requires the state's Department of Human Services to start a daily report, which would be posted on their website, that includes information on open beds available in facilities across the state for those in need of mental health or substance-use disorder treatment.

Further, the Department of Education is tasked with developing an educational fact sheet, targeted specifically for parents of student athletes and cheerleaders, about the use and misuse of prescription opioids.

Hospice programs, under the new laws, are permitted to accept unused prescription medication from their patients for safe disposal. Those programs are also required to use sensitive terminology when referring to people with substance use disorders or certain disabilities.

Joan's Law

The latest amendment to Joan's Law, a bill named after Hillsdale's 7-year-old Joan D'Alessandro, who was raped and killed by her neighbor 44 years ago, will require life in prison without parole for anyone convicted of murdering and sexually assaulting a person under the age of 18.

The previous bill required the same punishment for those convicted of that crime to minors under 14.

"This day is a tremendous victory," said Rosemarie D'Alessandro, Joan's mother and leading advocate of the law, which was first enacted 20 years ago.

D'Alessandro was hoping for a public signing of the bill, similar to the one former Gov. Christine Whitman did when signing the bill in

1997. She had been advocating for this latest amendment to the bill for seven years.

"They will never have to go through parole hearings and appeals like our family had to for through for years," D'Alessandro said. She was motivated to get Joan's Law established when her daughter's murderer, Joseph McGowan, became eligible for parole 14 years after receiving a life sentence. He has been denied parole several times.

Other bills signed

Christie signed five bills aimed to benefit the state's military veterans, including one that establishes a Gold Star Family Counseling Program in the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. Another bill allows all disabled veterans to receive parking privileges reserved for people with disabilities.

Among the bills signed that are aimed to preserve and protect the environment was legislation appropriating \$71.7 million from the corporate business tax revenue and Green Acres funds to the Department of Environment Protection for local government open space acquisitions and park development projects.

Christie began his day once again filling in on the WFAN-660 morning show, "Boomer & Carton."

"Sounds like a great day for me," Christie said as he kicked off the show. Christie began auditioning this month for a permanent hosting gig at the CBS sports radio station.

But, Friday's 20-minute segment was not part of the governor's series of auditions, said co-host Boomer Esiason.

The radio appearance came ahead of Christie's trip to Colorado next week for a meeting with the Republican Governors Association.

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