

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 1229

To the General Assembly:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I herewith return Assembly Bill No. 1229 with my recommendations for reconsideration.

This bill requires the Department of Community Affairs ("DCA") to prepare and make available on its website information concerning all county, State, and federal homeless prevention services and programs that are available to individuals who are homeless or who are at imminent risk of homelessness. This information includes, but is not limited to, grant and homeless intervention programs, homeless youth programs and other services provided to teens and young adults, and homelessness services provided to families involved in the child welfare system.

The DCA is required to update this information whenever new information about the programs and services becomes available and must ensure that this information is also posted on the websites of the Departments of Child and Families, Health, Human Services, and Military and Veterans Affairs. To maximize information sharing, the DCA also must notify local welfare agencies, veterans service offices, health care facilities, libraries, and community-based and nonprofit organizations focused on homelessness prevention of their requirement to post and share the information, at no cost, to individuals who are homeless or who are imminent risk of homelessness.

I commend the bill's sponsors for seeking to compile the array of homelessness resources and services available throughout the State in a single, easily accessible, location. By creating a clearinghouse of this information, individuals in need and service providers will be better able to connect with appropriate resources and programs.

While the bill will enhance public awareness of and help to facilitate access to available programs and services, it will require a considerable amount of time to prepare and maintain. I have been

advised by the DCA that, not only are the available programs vast, they are frequently updated. As a result, the bill's requirements will entail near full-time monitoring of available programs in order to ensure that the information posted on the DCA's website is accurate and reflects the most up-to-date information. To best manage this significant undertaking, I am recommending amendments to allow DCA to contract out the bill's responsibilities. In order to allow for sufficient time for the DCA to procure a contract, I am further recommending amendments to permit an additional six months to implement the bill's requirements.

Accordingly, I herewith return Assembly Bill No. 1229 and recommend that it be amended as follows:

Page 2, Section 1, Line 9: After "format," insert "or contract with a third party to prepare and make available,"

Page 3, Section 3, Line 36: Delete "immediately, but in order to" and insert "9 months following enactment, except that the department may take any anticipatory administrative action in advance as shall be necessary for the implementation of this act."

Page 3, Section 3, Lines 37-41: Delete in their entirety

[seal]

Respectfully,

Philip D. Murphy

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Parimal Garg

Chief Counsel to the Governor