

ASSEMBLY BUDGET COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4404

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 27, 2022

The Assembly Budget Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4404.

This bill would establish the New Jersey Wind Institute for Innovation and Training (institute).

The institute would be governed by a board consisting of nine members, as follows: the Governor, the President of the Board of Public Utilities, the Commissioner of Environmental Protection, the Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, the Secretary of Higher Education, and the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development, or their designees; and three public members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. The public members would have relevant experience in one or more of the following areas: workforce development; education, research and innovation; clean energy or offshore wind development; environmental protection; or diversity and inclusion. The public members would be chosen to provide relevant experience in different areas, and one of the public members would be a representative of organized labor representing building and construction trades.

The institute would be charged with: (1) designing, establishing, and implementing workforce development, education, research, and innovation programs and initiatives that advance the State's offshore wind industry and associated clean energy goals; (2) collaborating with State agencies and other instrumentalities that include, but are not limited to, the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the Board of Public Utilities, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the New Jersey Commission on Science, Innovation, and Technology; (3) engaging with, collaborating, and coordinating efforts among offshore wind stakeholders, including but not limited to industry, State and federal agencies, regional partners, public and private institutions of primary, secondary, and higher education, labor groups, environmental groups, and environmental justice organizations in order to advance offshore wind workforce development, education, research, and innovation; and (4) promoting, supporting, and funding offshore wind workforce development, education, research,

and innovation efforts, including issuing requests for proposals or requests for qualifications, awarding grants or loans to private companies, private or public organizations, or individuals, entering into agreements and contracts, and entering into public-private partnerships.

The institute would be headed by an executive director, who would receive compensation without regard for Title 11A of the Revised Statutes. The executive director would be responsible, among other things, for hiring staff for the institute who would also receive compensation without regard for Title 11A of the Revised Statutes. Under the bill, no action taken at meetings held by the board would have force or effect until approved by the Governor or until 10 days after a copy of the minutes have been delivered. If, in this 10-day period, the Governor returns the copy of the minutes with a veto of any action taken by the board or any member thereof at the meeting, the action would have no effect. The bill authorizes the Governor to approve all or part of an action taken prior to the expiration of the 10-day period.

The bill would delegate to the institute certain enumerated powers, as described in section 8 of the bill. The bill would also authorize the board to form nonprofit entities, as described in section 9 of the bill. Under the bill, the institute and any nonprofit entity formed or for which control is assumed by the institute could enter into any agreements necessary to provide for the establishment, operation, and financial support of the institute and the nonprofit entity.

The Governor's Budget-in-Brief for Fiscal Year 2023 includes \$5 million to help establish the Wind Institute for Innovation and Training to support the State's offshore wind workforce. According to the budget-in-brief, this funding would complement funding from other sources, including Clean Energy Fund allocations and funding related to offshore wind development. This bill would establish the institute in statute.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Fiscal information for this bill is currently unavailable.