ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]
ASSEMBLY, No. 5512

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 22, 2023

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 5512 (1R).

This bill establishes the Deep Fake Technology Unit in the Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety.

"Deep fakes" are realistic video images and audio manipulated using artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms to convincingly depict events or statements that did not occur. Due to advances in technology, deep fakes have become difficult to distinguish from authentic video images and audio.

Under the bill, the Attorney General, in consultation with the Chief Technology Officer of the New Jersey Office of Information and Technology in the Department of the Treasury, is to establish the Deep Fake Technology Unit to provide technical assistance, expertise, education, and training to State and local law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and State courts regarding the investigation and analysis of potentially deceptive audio or visual media.

In addition, beginning one year following the unit's formation, the unit is required to provide a report to the Governor and Legislature that includes information regarding the unit's activity during the preceding year; a summary of technological advancements in deceptive audio or visual media and applicable detection methods; a summary of changes to the law related to deceptive audio or visual media; information regarding the unit's collaboration with the private sector and academic institutions; and recommendations for legislation and regulations to address the challenges posed by deceptive audio or visual media.

The bill permits the Administrative Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts to designate a representative to work with the unit as a liaison and training coordinator.

Finally, the bill appropriates $2 million from the General Fund to the Department of Law and Public Safety to effectuate the provisions of this bill.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that the bill may result in a State expenditure increase of up to $2 million in the

first year the bill is in effect. If the full $2 million is not expended in the first year, the residual amount will be spent in subsequent fiscal years until the full $2 million is exhausted. Cost increases for the ongoing operations of the Deep Fake Technology Unit in the Department of Law and Public Safety are indeterminate.

The OLS is unable to quantify the ongoing fiscal impact of the bill due to the emerging nature of deep fake technology and an inability to predict its effect on law enforcement agencies and State courts.

Annual expenses may increase over time due to advances in artificial intelligence and machine learning and the likelihood that the production of deep fake media may increase as the use of this technology becomes more widespread.