

SENATE ECONOMIC GROWTH COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 3277

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 10, 2024

The Senate Economic Growth Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 3277.

As amended and reported, this bill amends current law to provide for certain excess monies collected from animal license fees and other fees imposed under animal control statutes, which are deposited in special accounts established and held by a municipality or by the State, to be transmitted, respectively, to the county prosecutor's office or to the Superintendent of State Police for the enforcement and prosecution of the State's animal cruelty laws.

Current law provides that any unexpended balance remaining in these special accounts may be retained in those accounts until the end of the third fiscal year following; however, the law further provides that, at the end of the following third fiscal year, and at the end of each fiscal year thereafter, any amount then remaining in the State or municipal special account, which amount is in excess of the total amount paid into the special account during the last two fiscal years next preceding, is to be transferred, respectively, to the State's general fund or to the general fund of the municipality.

The bill provides that, commencing on the bill's effective date, instead of transmitting excess funds to the State or municipal general fund: (1) any excess funds remaining in a municipality's special account are to be transmitted to the county prosecutor's office in the county where the municipality is located; and (2) any excess funds remaining in the State special account are to be transmitted to the Superintendent of State Police.

The bill specifies that, of the total amount transmitted to the county prosecutor's office under the bill, 40 percent is to be retained by the county prosecutor's office and 60 percent is to be equally distributed among, and transmitted to, the various municipalities in the county. The bill further specifies that, of the total amount transmitted to the Superintendent of State Police under the bill: 40 percent is to be retained by the Division of State Police in the Department of Law and Public Safety; 50 percent is to be equally distributed among, and transmitted to, the chief humane law enforcement officer of each county throughout the State, who are required to equally distribute and transmit the amount received thereby to the chief law enforcement

officer of each municipality in the county, for use by the municipal humane law enforcement officers appointed by the municipality; and 10 percent is to be transmitted to the Law Enforcement Officers Training and Equipment Fund for use by the Police Training Commission.

The bill provides that: (1) any monies transferred from the State or municipal special funds, except those monies that are transferred to the Law Enforcement Officers Training and Equipment Fund, are to be used exclusively for the purposes of offsetting the costs of, and otherwise facilitating and supporting, the enforcement of the State's animal cruelty laws within the county, municipality, or State, including the investigation and prosecution of animal cruelty offenses and the performance of necropsies on deceased animals; and (2) any monies transferred to the Law Enforcement Officers Training and Equipment Fund are to be used by the Police Training Commission exclusively for the purposes of offsetting the costs of, and otherwise facilitating and supporting, the training provided to humane law enforcement officers in the State.

The bill authorizes the county prosecutor, the Superintendent of State Police, and the chief humane law enforcement officer of a county to provide for the transfer of any monies transmitted thereto to the appropriate county, municipal, or State accounts, as may be necessary to facilitate the purposes specified by the bill.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to make grammatical corrections and to correct references to the "Law Enforcement Officers Training and Equipment Fund" throughout the bill.