

SENATE COMMUNITY AND URBAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 3685

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 5, 2024

The Senate Community and Urban Affairs Committee reports favorably, and with committee amendments, Senate Bill No. 3685.

As amended, this bill requires municipalities to have electronic systems in place to receive complaints and to provide certain municipal announcements. The complaint system required by the bill would allow an individual to fill out and transmit a complaint form on the Internet website of the municipality. The notification system would allow an individual to sign up to receive electronic announcements of certain municipal information through e-mail, text messages, social media, or other electronic means. While many municipalities already have such systems in place, many do not. This bill would require all municipalities to have these systems in order to ensure that all residents of the State receive the benefits of these transparency measures.

In light of the unfunded mandate provisions of the State Constitution, under which a State law may be declared unconstitutional if it does not authorize resources other than the property tax to offset the additional direct expenditures required for its implementation, this bill would only require the implementation of these electronic systems if funding is made available for those purposes through State appropriations, grants, or otherwise.

Further, any action undertaken pursuant to the provisions of the bill would not be deemed to be an exercise of a government function and not be subject to the provisions of the "New Jersey Tort Claims Act," N.J.S.59:1-1 et seq.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to provide that any action undertaken pursuant to the provisions of the bill would not be deemed to be an exercise of a government function and would not be subject to the provisions of the "New Jersey Tort Claims Act," N.J.S.59:1-1 et seq.