

Bond Case Briefs

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NJ Taxpayers May Have to Foot \$350 Million Bill After Health-Care Hikes.

- **Homeowners' property taxes at stake with insurance changes**
- **Republicans ask for hearings on what's behind premium increase**

New Jersey's 20% premium increase in public workers' health-care costs caught lawmakers by surprise and left them criticizing a potential \$350 million bill to homeowners who already pay the nation's highest property taxes.

The increase for local employees and retirees "was never disclosed, unfortunately, by Treasury when they came before us" during budget hearings earlier this year, said Democratic Senator and budget chairman Paul Sarlo.

"It's put on the backs right now of municipalities and the local unions," including sanitation workers, police and firefighters, said Sarlo, who also is Wood-Ridge mayor. His remarks came during a committee hearing in Trenton.

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