

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR **ASSEMBLY, Nos. 4444 and 4471**

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 7, 2023

The Senate Judiciary Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments the First Reprint of the Assembly Committee Substitute for Assembly Bill Nos. 4444 and 4471.

This substitute bill, as amended, would upgrade any simple assault committed against a sports official for a school- or community-sponsored youth sports event to an aggravated assault under the following circumstances: the person is clearly identifiable as being engaged in the performance of the duties of a sports official; or because of the person's status as a sports official. The bill defines "sports official" as meaning "any person who serves as a referee, umpire, timer, scorer, coach, athletic trainer, manager, or assistant . . . , or serves in a similar capacity but may be known by a different title, whether the person is compensated or a volunteer."

Any such simple assault committed against a sports official, graded under current law as a disorderly persons offense, would be upgraded to a crime of the fourth degree if the official suffered no bodily injury, and upgraded to a crime of the third degree if bodily injury occurred. A crime of the fourth degree is potentially punishable by a term of imprisonment of up to 18 months, a fine of up to \$10,000, or both. A crime of the third degree is potentially punishable by a term of imprisonment of three to five years, a fine of up to \$15,000, or both. By way of comparison, a simple assault disorderly persons offense is potentially punishable by a term of imprisonment of up to six months, a fine of up to \$1,000, or both.

The changes to the law would take effect on the first day of the fourth month next following enactment.

The substitute bill, as amended and reported by the committee, is identical to Senate Bill No. 709, also amended and reported today by the committee.

The committee amendments to the bill:

- remove the upgrading of a simple assault to aggravated assault when committed against a sports official while traveling to or from a

school- or community-sponsored youth sports event, because such targeting of a sports official for an assault could already be covered by the provisions upgrading an assault against a sports official “because of the person’s status as a sports official.”