

SENATE, No. 3047

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
215th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED NOVEMBER 14, 2013

Sponsored by:

Senator JENNIFER BECK

District 11 (Monmouth)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators T.Kean and Weinberg

SYNOPSIS

Provides protections for individuals with developmental disabilities through accountability and transparency; designated as "Stephen Komminos' Law."

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/13/2013)

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1 AN ACT concerning individuals with developmental disabilities,
2 designated as Stephen Komminos' Law, supplementing Title 30
3 of the Revised Statutes, and amending P.L.2010, c.5.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:

7
8 1. (New section) a. The Commissioner of Human Services, or
9 the commissioner's designee, shall designate one or more members
10 of the public to serve as an advocate for individuals with
11 developmental disabilities and one or more staff members from the
12 Special Response Unit in the department, to participate in an
13 unannounced site visit conducted pursuant to this section.

14 b. An advocate and staff member designated pursuant to
15 subsection a. of this section and a member of a law enforcement
16 agency shall conduct at least six bi-monthly unannounced site visits
17 during a calendar year at a facility, as defined in section 3 of
18 P.L.1977, c.82 (C.30:6D-3), to check whether the individuals with
19 developmental disabilities who are receiving services from the
20 facility are at risk of, or are being subjected to, abuse, neglect, or
21 exploitation by a caregiver, and report the same pursuant to section
22 3 of P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-75).

23
24 2. (New section) a. The commissioner, or the commissioner's
25 designee, shall notify the guardian or authorized family member of
26 an individual with a developmental disability receiving services
27 from the Division of Developmental Disabilities of any injury to the
28 individual with a developmental disability, as soon as possible, but
29 no later than one hour after the occurrence of the injury.
30 Notification shall be in person, or by telephone and the use of other
31 electronic means to follow up the telephoned notification.

32 b. As used in this section "authorized family member" means a
33 relative of the individual with a developmental disability authorized
34 by the individual's guardian, or by the individual if the individual is
35 his own guardian, to receive information pursuant to this section.

36
37 3. (New section) a. Each State developmental center and
38 private licensed facility for persons with developmental disabilities
39 shall bi-annually host an event and invite parents and guardians of
40 individuals with developmental disabilities to the event in order to
41 provide an opportunity for parents and guardians to share
42 experiences about their family members and wards with
43 developmental disabilities.

44 b. The provider of a community residence for the
45 developmentally disabled, as defined in section 2 of P.L.1977, c.448

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

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1 (C.30:11B-2), shall request contact information from each parent or
2 guardian of an individual with a developmental disability residing
3 in the residence and advise the parent or guardian that, if the parent
4 or guardian agrees, the provider shall exchange contact information
5 with other parents and guardians of individuals with developmental
6 disabilities residing in the residence, in order to provide an
7 opportunity for parents and guardians to share experiences about
8 their family members and wards with developmental disabilities.

9

10 4. Section 2 of P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-74) is amended to read
11 as follows:

12 2. As used in this act:

13 "Abuse" means wrongfully inflicting or allowing to be inflicted
14 physical abuse, sexual abuse, or verbal or psychological abuse or
15 mistreatment by a caregiver upon an individual with a
16 developmental disability.

17 "Authorized family member" means a relative of the individual
18 with a developmental disability authorized by the individual's
19 guardian, or by the individual if the individual is his own guardian,
20 to receive information pursuant to P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-73 et
21 seq.).

22 "Caregiver" means a person who receives State funding, directly
23 or indirectly, in whole or in part, to provide services or supports, or
24 both, to an individual with a developmental disability; except that
25 "caregiver" shall not include an immediate family member of a
26 person with a developmental disability.

27 "Central registry" means the Central Registry of Offenders
28 Against Individuals with Developmental Disabilities established
29 pursuant to **[this act]** P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-73 et seq.).

30 "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Human Services.

31 "Department" means the Department of Human Services.

32 "Developmental disability" means developmental disability as
33 defined in section 3 of P.L.1977, c.82 (C.30:6D-3).

34 "Exploitation" means the act or process of a caregiver using an
35 individual with a developmental disability or his resources for
36 another person's profit or advantage.

37 "Intimate parts" means the following body parts of a person:
38 sexual organs, genital area, anal area, inner thigh, groin, buttock, or
39 breast.

40 "Lewdness" means the exposing of the genitals for the purpose
41 of arousing or gratifying the sexual desire of a caregiver or an
42 individual with a developmental disability, or any flagrantly lewd
43 and offensive act which the caregiver knows or reasonably expects
44 is likely to be observed by an individual with a developmental
45 disability.

46 "Neglect" shall consist of any of the following acts by a
47 caregiver on an individual with a developmental disability: willfully
48 failing to provide proper and sufficient food, clothing, maintenance,

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1 medical care, or a clean and proper home; or failure to do or permit
2 to be done any act necessary for the well-being of an individual
3 with a developmental disability.

4 "Physical abuse" means a physical act directed at an individual
5 with a developmental disability by a caregiver of a type that causes
6 one or more of the following: pain, injury, anguish, or suffering.
7 Such acts include, but are not limited to, the individual with a
8 developmental disability being kicked, pinched, bitten, punched,
9 slapped, hit, pushed, dragged, or struck with a thrown or held
10 object.

11 "Sexual abuse" means an act or attempted act of lewdness, sexual
12 contact, or sexual penetration between a caregiver and an individual
13 with a developmental disability. Any form of sexual contact or
14 activity between a caregiver and an individual with a developmental
15 disability, absent marriage, domestic partnership, or civil union, is
16 sexual abuse, regardless of whether the individual with a
17 developmental disability gives consent or the caregiver is on or off
18 duty.

19 "Sexual contact" means an intentional touching by a caregiver or
20 individual with a developmental disability, either directly or
21 through clothing, of the intimate parts of the individual with a
22 developmental disability or the caregiver for the purpose of
23 sexually arousing or sexually gratifying the caregiver. Sexual
24 contact of the caregiver with himself must be in view of the
25 individual with a developmental disability whom the caregiver
26 knows to be present.

27 "Sexual penetration" means vaginal intercourse, cunnilingus,
28 fellatio, or anal intercourse between a caregiver and an individual
29 with a developmental disability or insertion of the hand, finger, or
30 object into the anus or vagina, either by the caregiver or upon the
31 caregiver's instruction.

32 "Verbal or psychological abuse or mistreatment" means any
33 verbal or non-verbal act or omission by a caregiver that inflicts one
34 or more of the following: emotional harm; mental distress; or
35 invocation of fear, humiliation, intimidation, or degradation to an
36 individual with a developmental disability. Examples include, but
37 are not limited to: bullying; ignoring need; verbal assault; use of
38 racial or ethnic slurs; or intimidating gestures, such as shaking a fist
39 at an individual with a developmental disability.

40 (cf: P.L.2010, c.5, s.2)

41

42 5. Section 3 of P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-75) is amended to read
43 as follows:

44 3. a. (1) A case manager or case manager's supervisor in the
45 department, a person employed or volunteering in a program,
46 facility, community care residence, or living arrangement licensed
47 or funded by the department, a person conducting an unannounced
48 site visit pursuant to section 1 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending

1 before the Legislature as this bill), or a person providing
2 community-based services with indirect State funding to a person
3 with a developmental disability, as applicable, having reasonable
4 cause to believe that an individual with a developmental disability
5 has been subjected to abuse, neglect, or exploitation by a caregiver
6 shall report the same immediately to the department by telephone or
7 otherwise, and if appropriate the department shall notify, no later
8 than one hour after the occurrence of the abuse, neglect, or
9 exploitation, the guardian or authorized family member of the
10 individual with a developmental disability who was the subject of
11 the abuse, neglect, or exploitation, as required by section 2 of
12 P.L. , c. (C.)(pending before the Legislature as this bill).

13 (2) Such report, where possible, shall contain the name and
14 address of the individual with a developmental disability and the
15 caregiver responsible for the care, custody, or control of the
16 individual with a developmental disability, and the guardian, or
17 other person having custody and control of the individual and, if
18 known, the condition of the individual with a developmental
19 disability, the nature and possible extent of the individual's injuries,
20 maltreatment, abuse, neglect or exploitation, including any evidence
21 of previous injuries, maltreatment, abuse, neglect, or exploitation,
22 and any other information that the person believes may be helpful
23 with respect to the injuries, maltreatment, abuse, neglect, or
24 exploitation of the individual with a developmental disability and
25 the identity of the alleged offender.

26 b. Within the department, the commissioner shall maintain a
27 unit to receive and prioritize such reports, initiate appropriate
28 responses through timely and appropriate investigative activities,
29 alert appropriate staff, and ensure that findings are reported in a
30 uniform and timely manner.

31 c. (1) A person employed or volunteering in a program,
32 facility, community care residence, or living arrangement licensed
33 or funded by the department, or a person providing community-
34 based services with indirect State funding to a person with a
35 developmental disability, as applicable, who fails to report an act of
36 abuse, neglect, or exploitation against an individual with a
37 developmental disability while having reasonable cause to believe
38 that such an act has been committed, is a disorderly person.

39 (2) A case manager or case manager's supervisor in the
40 department who fails to report an act of abuse, neglect, or
41 exploitation of an individual with a developmental disability while
42 having reasonable cause to believe that such an act has been
43 committed, shall be guilty of a **【disorderly person's offense】** crime
44 of the fourth degree, unless the abuse, neglect, or exploitation
45 results in the death of an individual with a developmental disability,
46 in which case the case manager or case manager's supervisor shall
47 be guilty of a crime of the **【fourth】** third degree.

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1 d. In addition to any penalty imposed pursuant to this section, a
2 person convicted under this section shall be subject to a penalty in
3 the amount of \$350 for each day that the abuse, neglect, or
4 exploitation was not reported, payable to the Treasurer of the State
5 of New Jersey, which shall be used by the department to fund the
6 provision of food and care to individuals with developmental
7 disabilities residing in community care residences.

8 e. A case manager or case manager's supervisor who is charged
9 with failure to report an act of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an
10 individual with a developmental disability while having reasonable
11 cause to believe that such an act has been committed, shall be
12 temporarily reassigned to duties that do not involve contact with
13 individuals with developmental disabilities or other vulnerable
14 populations and shall be terminated from employment if convicted.

15 In the case of a case manager or case manager's supervisor who
16 is employed by the department, the case manager or supervisor shall
17 retain any available right of review by the Civil Service
18 Commission.

19 (cf: P.L.2012, c.69, s.9)

20

21 6. Section 4 of P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-76) is amended to read
22 as follows:

23 4. a. Upon receipt of a report pursuant to section 3 of **[this act]**
24 P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-75), the department shall designate an
25 entity, as established by the commissioner, that shall immediately
26 take such action as shall be necessary to ensure the safety of the
27 individual with a developmental disability and to that end may
28 request appropriate assistance from local and State law enforcement
29 officials or contact Adult Protective Services to provide assistance
30 in accordance with the provisions of P.L.1993, c.249 (C.52:27D-
31 406 et seq.). The guardian of the individual with a developmental
32 disability also shall be authorized to request appropriate assistance
33 from local and State law enforcement officials.

34 b. The commissioner shall adopt rules and regulations
35 necessary to provide for an investigation of a reported incident and
36 subsequent substantiation or non-substantiation of an allegation of
37 abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an individual with a
38 developmental disability by a caregiver, **[by]** which shall include:
39 (1) maintaining a Special Response Unit to investigate serious
40 unusual incidents, as defined by applicable rules and regulations, in
41 facilities or community programs licensed, contracted, or regulated
42 by the department ; (2) notification of the name of the individual
43 who is investigating an incident that occurred at a developmental
44 center to the guardian or authorized family member of the
45 individual with a developmental disability who is the subject of the
46 incident; and (3) providing an opportunity for a guardian or
47 authorized family member to submit information to facilitate an
48 investigation. During its investigation of an allegation of abuse,

1 neglect, or exploitation of an individual with a developmental
2 disability by a caregiver, the Special Response Unit or the chief
3 executive officer of a developmental center or the officer's
4 designee, as applicable, shall make a good faith effort to notify the
5 caregiver of the possibility of the caregiver's inclusion on the
6 registry, and give the caregiver an opportunity to respond to the
7 department concerning the allegation. A guardian of an individual
8 with a developmental disability, upon request, shall be permitted to
9 attend, or observe if attendance would impede the investigation, an
10 investigative interview concerning an allegation of abuse, neglect,
11 or exploitation of the individual.

12 c. The Special Response Unit, the department, or other
13 investigating entity shall forward to the commissioner, or the
14 commissioner's designee, a substantiated incident of abuse, neglect,
15 or exploitation of an individual with a developmental disability for
16 inclusion of an offending caregiver on the central registry. The
17 Special Response Unit, the department, or other investigating entity
18 shall also forward to the commissioner, or the commissioner's
19 designee, all unsubstantiated incidents of abuse, neglect, or
20 exploitation of an individual with a developmental disability. As
21 soon as possible, and no later than 14 days after receipt of the
22 incident of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, the commissioner or the
23 commissioner's designee shall review the incident. The offending
24 caregiver of a substantiated incident shall be included on the central
25 registry as expeditiously as possible. The Special Response Unit
26 shall retain a record of all unsubstantiated incidents.

27 d. Upon the initiation of an investigation, the department shall:
28 (1) ensure that any communication concerning the alleged abuse,
29 neglect, or exploitation of an individual with a developmental
30 disability between a caregiver, case manager of the caregiver, the
31 case manager's supervisor, or a person at the appropriate Regional
32 Office of the Division of Developmental Disabilities is identified,
33 safeguarded from loss or destruction, and maintained in a secure
34 location; and (2) contact the Office of the Attorney General, which
35 shall determine whether to participate in the investigation.

36 e. (1) The Special Response Unit shall issue a written
37 report of the investigation that includes the conclusions of the unit,
38 the rationale for the conclusion, and a detailed summary of any
39 communication secured pursuant to subsection d. of this section.
40 The report shall also include an assessment of the role of any case
41 manager of a caregiver or the case manager's supervisor, if
42 applicable, in the allegation of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and a
43 recommendation about whether any civil or criminal action should
44 be brought against the case manager or supervisor. The report shall
45 be made part of the record for review in any civil or criminal
46 proceeding that may ensue.

47 (2) A written summary of the conclusions of the investigation
48 shall be provided to the guardian or authorized family member of

1 the individual with a developmental disability who is the subject of
2 the alleged abuse, neglect, or exploitation; except that records and
3 reports of an investigation shall be provided to a guardian or other
4 person who is responsible for the welfare of the individual with a
5 developmental disability if: the information is needed in connection
6 with the provision of care, treatment, assessment, evaluation, or
7 supervision to the individual; and the provision of information is in
8 the best interests of the individual with a disability as determined by
9 the Division of Developmental Disabilities.

10 f. A licensed provider in another state shall be permitted access
11 to the central registry.

12 (cf: P.L.2012, c.69, s.10)

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14 7. Section 5 of P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-77) is amended to read
15 as follows:

16 5. a. There is established a Central Registry of Offenders
17 Against Individuals with Developmental Disabilities in the
18 department.

19 b. The commissioner shall adopt rules and regulations that
20 define the procedures and standards for inclusion of an offending
21 caregiver on the central registry, and for notification of such
22 inclusion to the caregiver and to the guardian or authorized family
23 member of the individual with a developmental disability who was
24 the subject of the abuse, neglect, or exploitation that led to the
25 caregiver's inclusion on the central registry. The commissioner, or
26 the commissioner's designee, shall notify the guardian or authorized
27 family member of the individual of any action taken by the
28 department to remediate a condition that may have contributed to
29 the occurrence of the abuse, neglect, or exploitation of the
30 individual.

31 (1) For inclusion on the central registry in the case of a
32 substantiated incident of abuse, the caregiver shall have acted with
33 intent, recklessness, or careless disregard to cause or potentially
34 cause injury to an individual with a developmental disability.

35 (2) For inclusion on the central registry in the case of a
36 substantiated incident of neglect, the caregiver shall have acted with
37 gross negligence, recklessness, or in a pattern of behavior that
38 causes or potentially causes harm to an individual with a
39 developmental disability.

40 (3) In the case of a substantiated incident of exploitation, the
41 commissioner shall establish a dollar amount for inclusion on the
42 central registry.

43 c. The commissioner also shall adopt rules and regulations:

44 (1) necessary to provide for an appeals process, through the
45 "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et
46 seq.), of the commissioner's determination to include an alleged
47 offending caregiver's name on the central registry. The

1 commissioner's determination shall be a final agency decision
2 subject to review by the Appellate Division of the Superior Court;

3 (2) concerning the dissemination of information in the central
4 registry;

5 (3) that will prohibit persons included on the central registry
6 from employment in facilities or programs of the Division of
7 Developmental Disabilities in the department and those facilities or
8 programs licensed, contracted, or regulated by the department, or
9 from providing community-based services with indirect State
10 funding to persons with developmental disabilities; and

11 (4) necessary to provide for the removal of a person's name
12 from the central registry. A person may apply for removal of his
13 name to the commissioner after a period of five years of being
14 placed on the central registry. The person shall affirmatively
15 demonstrate to the commissioner clear and convincing evidence of
16 rehabilitation, using the provisions of P.L.1968, c.282 (C.2A:168A-
17 1 et seq.) as a guide.

18 d. The commissioner may adopt rules and regulations that will
19 allow bona fide employers serving vulnerable populations to inquire
20 of the department if potential or current employees are included on
21 the central registry, consistent with federal and State privacy and
22 confidentiality laws.

23 e. No information received in the central registry shall be
24 considered as a public or government record within the meaning of
25 P.L.1963, c.73 (C.47:1A-1 et seq.) or P.L.2001, c.404 (C.47:1A-5 et
26 al.).

27 (cf: P.L.2010, c.5, s.5)

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29 8. Section 6 of P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-78) is amended to read
30 as follows:

31 6. All records of a report made pursuant to **【this act】** section 3
32 of P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-75), all information obtained by the
33 department in investigating such reports, and all reports of findings
34 forwarded to the central registry pursuant to **【this act】** P.L.2010, c.5
35 (C.30:6D-73 et seq.) shall be kept confidential and may be
36 disclosed only:

37 a. insofar as information is shared with a guardian in
38 connection with a guardian's attendance at, or observation of, an
39 investigative interview as provided for in subsection b. of section 4
40 of P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-76); or

41 b. under circumstances expressly authorized by paragraph (2)
42 of subsection e. of section 4 of P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-76), or by
43 rules and regulations promulgated by the commissioner.

44 The department shall only disclose information that is relevant to
45 the purpose for which the information is required or is authorized as
46 provided for in subsections a. and b. of this section; except that the
47 department shall not disclose information which would likely
48 endanger the life, safety, or physical or emotional well-being of an

1 individual with a developmental disability or the life or safety of
2 any other person, or which may compromise the integrity of a
3 department investigation, civil or criminal investigation, or judicial
4 proceeding. If the department denies access to specific information
5 on this basis, the requesting entity may seek disclosure through the
6 Superior Court. Nothing in **[this act]** P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-73 et
7 seq.) shall be construed to permit the disclosure of any information
8 deemed confidential by federal or State law.
9 (cf: P.L.2010, c.5, s.6)

10

11 9. The Commissioner of Human Services, pursuant to the
12 "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et
13 seq.), shall adopt rules and regulations necessary to effectuate the
14 purposes of this act.

15

16 10. This act shall take effect on the first day of the seventh
17 month next following the date of enactment, but the Commissioner
18 of Human Services may take such anticipatory administrative action
19 in advance thereof as shall be necessary for the implementation of
20 this act.

21

22

23

STATEMENT

24

25 This bill, which is designated as "Stephen Komninos' Law,"
26 improves protections for individuals with developmental disabilities
27 and provides for increased transparency of investigations conducted
28 in connection with an allegation of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of
29 individuals with developmental disabilities.

30 The bill provides for six bi-monthly unannounced site visits to be
31 conducted at a facility, which is defined pursuant to section 3 of
32 P.L.1977, c.82 (C30:6D-3) and includes facilities operated by any
33 public or private agency, organization, or institution for the
34 provision of services for individuals with developmental
35 disabilities. The Commissioner of Human Services, or the
36 commissioner's designee, is required to designate members of the
37 public to serve as advocates for individuals with developmental
38 disabilities and staff members from the Special Response Unit in
39 the Department of Human Services (DHS) to participate in the
40 visits. A member of a law enforcement agency also would
41 participate in the visits, which would be conducted to determine
42 whether individuals with developmental disabilities are at risk of, or
43 are being subjected to, abuse, neglect, or exploitation by a
44 caregiver. Persons conducting the visits are required to report to
45 DHS if they have reasonable cause to believe that an individual has
46 been subjected to abuse, neglect, or exploitation pursuant to section
47 3 of P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-75).

1 The bill also requires the commissioner, or the commissioner's
2 designee, to provide written notification to the guardian or an
3 authorized family member of an individual with a developmental
4 disability receiving services from the Division of Developmental
5 Disabilities of any injury to the individual with a developmental
6 disability, as soon as possible, but no later than one hour after the
7 occurrence of the injury. Notification is to be in person, or by
8 telephone and the use of other electronic means to follow up the
9 telephoned notification.

10 Additionally, a State developmental center and private licensed
11 facility for persons with developmental disabilities are to bi-
12 annually host an event in order to provide an opportunity for
13 parents and guardians to share experiences about their family
14 members and wards. To provide an opportunity for parents and
15 guardians of individuals with developmental disabilities residing in
16 community residence for the developmentally disabled also to share
17 their experiences, the bill requires a provider of these residences to
18 request contact information from each parent or guardian and advise
19 them that, if they agree, the contact information would be
20 exchanged with other parents and guardians of individuals with
21 developmental disabilities residing in the residence.

22 The bill also amends P.L.2010, c.5 (C.30:6D-73 et seq.), which
23 established the Central Registry of Offenders Against Individuals
24 with Developmental Disabilities (Central Registry) in DHS to
25 prevent caregivers who become offenders against individuals with
26 developmental disabilities from working with individuals with
27 developmental disabilities.

28 Specifically, the amendments to the Central Registry law permit
29 the guardian of an individual with a developmental disability to:
30 request assistance from local and State law enforcement officials to
31 ensure safety of an individual with a developmental disability in
32 connection with a report of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an
33 individual with a developmental disability; attend or observe, if
34 attendance would impede an investigation, an investigative
35 interview, upon request; and be notified, along with an authorized
36 family member, of an offending caregiver's inclusion on the Central
37 Registry and of action taken by DHS to remediate a condition.
38 Under current law: only DHS may request assistance from law
39 enforcement officials; investigative interviews are not open to all
40 guardians; and the notifications to guardians or authorized family
41 members are not required.

42 The bill further amends the current law to: change from a
43 disorderly persons offense to a fourth degree crime the failure of a
44 case manager or supervisor to report an incident, and makes it a
45 third degree rather than a fourth degree crime if the unreported
46 incident results in death; require notification to the guardian or
47 authorized family member of the name of the individual who is
48 investigating an incident at a developmental center; and provide an

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1 opportunity for a guardian or authorized family member to submit
2 information to facilitate an investigation.

3 The bill also amends the confidentiality provisions of the Central
4 Registry law to permit records and reports of an investigation to be
5 provided to a guardian or other person responsible for the welfare
6 of the individual with a developmental disability if: information is
7 needed in connection with caring for, treating, assessing,
8 evaluating, or supervising the individual; and providing information
9 is in the best interests of the individual, as determined by the
10 Division of Developmental Disabilities.

11 The bill is designated "Stephen Komninos' Law" to honor the
12 memory of Stephen, an individual with developmental disabilities
13 who died at the age of 22 while under the care of Bancroft
14 Neurohealth in Haddonfield, New Jersey, a private licensed facility
15 for persons with developmental disabilities. Stephen was a non-
16 verbal young man who was very sociable and suffered through
17 many substantiated incidents of abuse and neglect by caregivers.
18 Tragically, the last incident resulted in his death. The bill is
19 intended to encourage caregivers, supervisors, and managers of
20 facilities, as well as the appropriate funding, licensing, regulatory,
21 and law enforcement agencies to protect individuals with
22 developmental disabilities, by providing for more transparency in
23 incident reporting and investigations, the reporting of incidents in a
24 more timely manner, and an environment that does not tolerate
25 abuse, neglect, or exploitation of individuals with developmental
26 disabilities.