ASSEMBLY, No. 177

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman HAROLD "HAL" J. WIRTHS
District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)
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District 25 (Morris and Somerset)

Co-Sponsored by:
Assemblymen Space, DePhillips, Thomson, Assemblywomen B.DeCroce and DiMaso

SYNOPSIS

Provides that school district may not prohibit active or retired law enforcement officer or registered security officer from carrying firearm in performance of school security duties if authorized under State law to carry.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/16/2020)

AN ACT concerning security in public schools and supplementing chapter 41 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

1. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection e. of N.J.S.2C:39-5 or any other section of law to the contrary, a school district that enters into an agreement for the provision of school security services with an active or retired law enforcement officer, including a safe schools resource officer or a Class Three special law enforcement officer, or with a security officer registered under the provisions of the "Security Officer Registration Act," P.L.2004, c.134 (C.45:19A-1 et seq.), shall not prohibit that officer from carrying a firearm in school buildings or on school grounds in the performance of his school security duties if that officer is authorized under State law to carry such firearm.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill provides that if a school district enters into an agreement for the provision of school security services with an active or retired law enforcement officer, including a safe schools resource officer or a Class Three special law enforcement officer, or with a security officer registered under the "Security Officer Registration Act," P.L.2004, c.134 (C.45:19A-1 et seq.), the school district may not prohibit that officer from carrying a firearm in school buildings or on school grounds in the performance of his school security duties if that officer is authorized under State law to carry such a firearm.

In the wake of the recent school shooting tragedy in Parkland, Florida, many communities have sought the assignment of active or retired law enforcement officers or armed security officers in the public schools. However, some boards of education have prohibited these officers from actually carrying a firearm in the performance of their school security duties. This prohibition does not reflect the desire of many of the residents of these communities who seek the level of protection that an armed officer would provide. This bill would prohibit a school district from imposing such a restriction.