

ASSEMBLY LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 1172

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 8, 2021

The Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 1172.

As amended and reported by the committee, Assembly Bill No. 1172 allows municipal and county police departments to establish designated safe areas which may be used by members of the public to conduct sales transactions for items listed on classified websites, such as craigslist.

For the purpose of ensuring public safety, the bill allows municipal and county police departments to install a video camera capable of recording a clear image of the designated safe area at all times the area is made available to the public. The amended bill provides that local police departments and their members would not be responsible for regulating the sales transactions or be civilly liable for crimes or offenses committed by participants to the sales transactions. Under the amended bill, county and municipal police departments are allowed to conduct a public awareness campaign, utilizing the Internet and any other available resources, to inform the general public about designated safe areas on their department's property. The public awareness campaign may include safety tips to decrease the risk of crime when engaging in Internet sales transactions.

In addition, the amended bill requires the Attorney General to notify chief law enforcement officers that they are permitted to establish a designated safe area on municipal and county police department property.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2020-2021 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amended the bill to:

1) clarify that the Attorney General is to notify chief law enforcement agencies that they are permitted to establish a designated safe area. As introduced, the bill required the Office of the Attorney General in the Department of Law and Public Safety to provide notification; and

2) Allow county and municipal police departments to establish a public awareness campaign. As introduced, the bill required the Attorney General to conduct a public awareness campaign.