

SENATE, No. 3014

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 19, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator VIN GOPAL

District 11 (Monmouth)

Senator JOSEPH A. LAGANA

District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Directs Attorney General to establish program for anonymous reporting of potential threats to school safety.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/25/2021)

1 AN ACT concerning school safety threats and supplementing
2 chapter 41 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

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7 1. The Attorney General of the State of New Jersey shall
8 establish a program that provides the ability for the public to
9 anonymously report information concerning unsafe, potentially
10 harmful, dangerous, violent, or criminal activities in schools or the
11 threat of those activities. The program shall:

12 a. establish and maintain readily accessible methods of
13 anonymous reporting, which may include, but need not be limited
14 to, a telephone tip line and mobile application;

15 b. allow for any member of the public to report information,
16 including students, parents, school staff members, and other
17 community members;

18 c. establish methods and procedures to ensure that the identity
19 of the reporting party remains unknown to all persons and entities,
20 except in instances where the reporting party voluntarily discloses
21 his identity and verifies that his identity may be shared with law
22 enforcement officers, school officials, and employees operating the
23 program;

24 d. promptly forward information received by the program to
25 the appropriate law enforcement agencies or school officials;

26 e. provide training to law enforcement dispatch centers, school
27 districts, nonpublic schools, and other entities determined by the
28 Attorney General on awareness of the program and appropriate
29 response to tips received through the program; and

30 f. provide program awareness and education materials to all
31 public and nonpublic schools in the State.

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33 2. a. The Attorney General shall annually prepare a report on
34 the program. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the
35 following:

36 (1) the total number of reports made to the program,
37 disaggregated by subgroups to be determined by the Attorney
38 General;

39 (2) the dates, times, and means of reporting;

40 (3) the total number of instances of misuse of the program; and

41 (4) a summary of the outcomes and actions taken on reports
42 made to the program.

43 b. The Attorney General shall submit the report to the
44 Governor and the Education Committees of the Senate and General
45 Assembly and post the report on the Internet website of the
46 Department of Law and Public Safety by January 1 of the following
47 year.

1 3. This act shall take effect on the first day of the seventh
2 month next following the date of enactment.

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5 STATEMENT

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7 This bill requires the Attorney General to establish a program
8 that provides a means for the public to anonymously report
9 information concerning unsafe, potentially harmful, dangerous,
10 violent, or criminal activities in schools or the threat of those
11 activities. The program will allow students, parents, school staff,
12 and other community members to anonymously report information
13 through readily accessible methods such as a telephone tip line or
14 mobile application. The program must ensure that the identity of
15 the reporting party remains unknown, except in instances where the
16 reporting party voluntarily discloses his identity and verifies that his
17 identity may be shared with law enforcement officers, school
18 officials, and employees operating the program. The bill requires
19 that information received through the program be promptly shared
20 with the appropriate law enforcement agencies or school officials.

21 Under the bill, training will be provided to law enforcement
22 dispatch centers, school districts, nonpublic schools, and other
23 entities determined by the Attorney General on awareness of the
24 program and appropriate response to tips received through the
25 program. In addition, program awareness and education materials
26 will be provided to all public and nonpublic schools in the State.
27 The program established under this bill would be similar to
28 Colorado's "Safe2Tell" program, which provides an anonymous
29 and readily accessible tool for the reporting and sharing of
30 information regarding potential threats to school safety.

31 This bill also requires the Attorney General to annually prepare a
32 report on the program that includes, but is not limited to, the
33 following: (1) the total number of reports made to the program,
34 disaggregated by subgroups to be determined by the Attorney
35 General; (2) the dates, times, and means of reporting; (3) the total
36 number of instances of misuse of the program; and (4) a summary
37 of the outcomes and actions taken on reports made to the program.
38 The Attorney General is required to submit the report to the
39 Governor and the Education Committees of the Senate and General
40 Assembly and post the report on the Internet website of the
41 Department of Law and Public Safety by January 1 of the year
42 immediately following issuance of the report.