

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2050

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 13, 2024

The Senate Judiciary Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 2050.

This bill establishes “Stephanie’s Law.” The bill is named after a domestic violence victim, Stephanie Nicole Parze, who was murdered by her ex-boyfriend. The Stephanie Nicole Parze Foundation was created in her memory to provide support to victims of domestic violence. This bill is intended to provide additional support and protections for victims of domestic violence, and the public at large, by establishing a publicly-accessible domestic violence Internet registry containing information on persons: (1) convicted of a domestic violence crime or offense; (2) with a final domestic violence restraining order issued against them; or (3) who committed contempt of a temporary or final domestic violence restraining order.

The bill would require the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), in conjunction with the Attorney General, to develop and maintain the publicly-accessible domestic violence Internet registry. This registry would be separate from the domestic violence central registry maintained by the AOC pursuant to section 1 of P.L.1999, c.427 (C.2C:25-34), which is not accessible to the public.

The Internet registry would contain the following information for any person included in the registry: (1) the person’s name and any aliases the person has used or under which the person may be or may have been known; (2) a brief description of any crime or offense involving domestic violence for which the person was convicted; the date and location of each disposition; and a general description of the person’s modus operandi, if applicable; (3) the person’s age, race, gender, date of birth, height, weight, hair, eye color, and any distinguishing scars or tattoos; (4) a photograph of the person and the date on which the photograph was entered into the registry; (5) the make, model, color, year, and license plate number of any vehicle operated by the person; and (6) the person’s last known address.

A person whose name is erroneously included in the registry established under the bill may petition the AOC for removal of the person’s name. The AOC would be required to remove the person’s name from the registry if the person has not been found guilty of a crime or offense involving domestic violence, has not had a final domestic violence restraining order entered against the person, or has not been found guilty of contempt of a temporary or final domestic

violence restraining order. On the website through which a person may search the registry, the AOC would be required to include information regarding the manner in which a person may petition the AOC to remove the person's name and the circumstances under which the AOC would grant a petition to remove the name.

Within five days of a change of address, a person whose name is included in the registry would be required to provide the AOC with the new address. The AOC would also be required to include information on the registry website on the manner in which a person may provide an updated address to the AOC.

Finally, the provisions of the bill would require a law enforcement officer to determine, upon conducting an arrest of a person, if there is a domestic violence restraining order entered against the person. This determination is to include a search of the central domestic violence registry maintained by the AOC pursuant to section 1 of P.L.1999, c.427 (C.2C:25-34), as well as the publicly-accessible registry established under the bill.

This bill was prefiled for introduction in the 2024-2025 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.