

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

**SENATE, No. 641**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: JUNE 14, 2018

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 641.

This bill requires a person who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been sexually abused to immediately report that abuse to law enforcement officials. A person's failure to report sexual abuse is a fourth degree crime under the bill.

Under current law, a person who has reasonable cause to believe that an act of child abuse, including sexual abuse, has been committed is required to notify the Division of Child Protection and Permanency. Failure to report abuse to the division is a disorderly person's offense. This bill ensures that law enforcement officials are immediately notified in instances where sexual abuse has occurred, and that the failure to report sexual abuse results in an enhanced criminal penalty.

The penalty for a disorderly persons offense is a term of imprisonment for up to 6 months, a fine of up to \$1,000, or both. The penalty for a fourth degree crime is up to 18 months imprisonment, a fine of up to \$10,000, or both.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2018-2019 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.