

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 153

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 10, 2019

Sponsored by:

Senator DECLAN J. O'SCANLON, JR.

District 13 (Monmouth)

Senator STEPHEN M. SWEENEY

District 3 (Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem)

SYNOPSIS

Urges AG to study best practices regarding law enforcement emergency vehicle lights and sirens and speeding.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A SENATE RESOLUTION** urging the Attorney General to study best
 2 practices for law enforcement regarding emergency vehicle
 3 warning lights and sirens and when to exceed the speed limit.

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 5 **WHEREAS**, By safely and efficiently responding to service calls, law
 6 enforcement officers help to ensure the safety of the citizens and
 7 residents of this State; and

8 **WHEREAS**, On any given day, a law enforcement officer may respond
 9 to both emergency and non-emergency calls for service; and

10 **WHEREAS**, A law enforcement officer must quickly calculate how best
 11 to respond by considering the nature of the call, the community the
 12 officer is travelling through, and the road conditions; and

13 **WHEREAS**, Depending on the urgency of the call, it may be necessary
 14 for a law enforcement officer to exceed the posted speed limit; and

15 **WHEREAS**, The decision concerning when to exceed the speed limit
 16 and utilize the vehicle's emergency light and siren system is often
 17 left to the discretion of the individual officer; and

18 **WHEREAS**, The safety of citizens, residents, and law enforcement
 19 officers alike is compromised when an officer fails to appropriately
 20 utilize a vehicle's emergency light and siren system when
 21 exceeding the speed limit; and

22 **WHEREAS**, A number of tragic accidents have highlighted the need to
 23 determine when it is appropriate for an officer to exceed the speed
 24 limit and use emergency lights and sirens when responding to a
 25 service call; and

26 **WHEREAS**, The Attorney General guidelines regarding police
 27 vehicular pursuit, last updated on September 17, 2009, outline the
 28 proper procedures to be followed when police officers are
 29 confronted with the possibility of pursuing a fleeing vehicle; and

30 **WHEREAS**, Accordingly, it is in the public interest for the Attorney
 31 General to study the implementation of best practices for law
 32 enforcement regarding the proper use of a vehicle's emergency
 33 light and siren system and when to exceed the speed limit; now,
 34 therefore,

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 36 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

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 38 1. The Attorney General of New Jersey is urged to conduct a
 39 study of best practices for law enforcement regarding the proper use
 40 of a vehicle's emergency light and siren system, when to exceed the
 41 speed limit, and whether the Attorney General guidelines regarding
 42 police vehicular pursuit should be updated and to report the results
 43 of this study to the Governor, and to Legislature pursuant to section
 44 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1) at the earliest possible date.

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 46 2. Duly authenticated copies of this resolution, signed by the
 47 President of the Senate and attested by the Secretary thereof, shall
 48 be transmitted to the Attorney General.

STATEMENT

This Senate resolution urges the Attorney General of New Jersey to undertake a study of best practices for law enforcement regarding the proper use of emergency vehicle warning lights and sirens and speeding.

By safely and efficiently responding to service calls, law enforcement officers help to ensure the safety of the citizens and residents of this State. On any given day, a law enforcement officer may respond to both emergency and non-emergency calls for service. A law enforcement officer must quickly calculate how best to respond by considering the nature of the call, the community the officer is travelling through, and the road conditions. Depending on the urgency of the call, it may be necessary for a law enforcement officer to exceed the posted speed limit. The decision concerning when to exceed the speed limit and utilize the vehicle's emergency light and siren system is often left to the discretion of the individual officer. The safety of citizens, residents, and law enforcement officers alike is compromised when an officer fails to appropriately utilize a vehicle's emergency light and siren system when exceeding the road's speed limit. A number of tragic accidents have highlighted the need to determine when it is appropriate for an officer to exceed the speed limit and use emergency lights and sirens when responding to a service call. The Attorney General guidelines regarding police vehicular pursuit outline the proper procedures to be followed when police officers are confronted with the possibility of pursuing a fleeing vehicle; however, these guidelines were last updated on September 17, 2009.

Accordingly, it is in the public interest for the Attorney General to study the implementation of best practices for the use of a vehicle's emergency light and siren system, when to exceed the speed limit, and whether the Attorney General guidelines regarding police vehicular pursuit should be updated.