

SENATE STATE GOVERNMENT, WAGERING, TOURISM &
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 3185

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 4, 2021

The Senate State Government, Wagering, Tourism and Historic Preservation Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 3185.

This bill allows current and former judicial officers, prosecutors, and law enforcement officers, and certain family members and persons residing in the same household, to register to vote without disclosing their residential address. This bill also prohibits the public disclosure of the voter registration information of those persons.

Under the bill, any (1) active, formerly active, or retired judicial officer, prosecutor, or law enforcement officer, or (2) a member of the immediate family of such a person, or (3) a person residing in the same household as such a person, would be permitted to register to vote without disclosing their street address. Such registrants would leave the space for a street address on the voter registration form blank and would, instead, attach to the form a document showing proof that the person qualifies to register to vote as permitted under the bill. The form would contain a mailing address, post office box, or other contact point where mail can be received by the person registering to vote. Upon receiving a voter registration form, the commissioner of registration or county board of elections, as the case may be, would provide the person registering to vote with a map of the municipality in which the person resides to select the voting district in which the registrant will be permitted to vote. Future address updates to the qualified registrant's voter registration form would be conducted in the same manner.

Under the bill, any person who makes public any information which has been provided by a registrant concerning the mailing address, post office box, or other contact point of the registrant, or concerning the election district in which the registrant resides, is guilty of a crime of the fourth degree. The bill directs the Secretary of State, in consultation with the county boards of elections and county superintendents of elections, to develop implementation guidelines and criteria including, but not be limited to, the required documentation and proof of eligibility.

The bill also amends current law concerning automatic voter registration services at the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission to require that a notice be provided to eligible applicants to inform them that they may decline the automatic voter registration and may register to vote without disclosing the applicant's street address as provided by the bill.

This bill is modeled after the privacy protections afforded under current law for victims of domestic violence and stalking with respect to their voter registration.