



Submitted

Bob Andrzejczak
Senator
First Legislative District
SenAndrzejczak@njleg.org

Bruce Land
Assemblyman
First Legislative District
AsmLand@njleg.org

January 29, 2019

Dear Committee Members:

I am a Democratic member of the New Jersey Senate representing Legislative District 1, which comprises all of Cape May County, a majority of Cumberland County, and a portion of Atlantic County. I know that you and the New York Legislature are considering bail reform measures similar to those enacted here in New Jersey, and I wanted to make you aware of some of the issues that we have faced in this State since the reform's enactment.

I supported this legislation when it was presented in New Jersey, and advocated for its passage. Unfortunately, it has not lived up to expectation. Not only has the reform let out some bad actors that clearly should have been released, but the reform's implementation has cost much more than anticipated, vastly exceeding the fiscal estimates. While everyone is in agreement that low-level and first time offenders should be given the opportunity of pretrial release, we have seen the release of some much more severe offenders, a number of which have committed additional crimes.

The cost of implementation has also been much higher than expected, and has shifted the cost from the offender to the taxpayer. The bail system supported many functions of the court, and the cost of re-arresting multiple offenders and bail jumpers was borne by the offenders themselves. Now, in New Jersey, we are making taxpayers pay to release criminals back into their neighborhoods, and with no accountability. The State does not have the resources to properly monitor these individuals.

Conversely, some offenders who would otherwise qualify for bail are now being denied the right to pre-trial release altogether as a result of the new public safety assessment (PSA). The assessment tool has denied release to some who deserve it, and allowed the release of some who have not. In January 2017, a convicted child predator was arrested for attempting to lure a 12 year old girl to his house for "sexual things." The PSA determined that he was not a threat and was released. The Police Chief in Little Egg Harbor, a community just north of Atlantic City, was so distressed that he appealed the release all the way to the New Jersey Supreme Court. His appeal was denied.

To be clear and transparent, I am not "in the bag" for any industry or special interest. In fact, I was fully supportive of this law, and still believe in the concept. But the implementation is key. I am writing to you because of my experience a year and change into the reform's enactment in

211 South Main Street
Schoolhouse Office Park, Suite 104
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210
Phone: 609-465-0700 • Fax: 609-465-4578

1117 East Landis Avenue, Unit C
Vineland, NJ 08380
Phone: 856-696-7109

219 N. High Street, Suite B
Millsville, NJ 08332
Phone: 856-765-0891 • Fax: 856-765-0897

9/11/11

New Jersey. I simply ask that you fully review the reform measures being proposed. I am trying to rectify a problem here in New Jersey and encourage other states to avoid making the same mistake. I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Bob Andrzejczak
Senator, First Legislative District – New Jersey