

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 4978

To the General Assembly:

Pursuant to Article V, Section I, Paragraph 14 of the New Jersey Constitution, I am returning Assembly Bill No. 4978 with my recommendations for reconsideration.

Although the synopsis of the bill indicates that the bill requires the Attorney General to "report data regarding shootings that did not result in bodily injury," the language of the bill is slightly more ambiguous with respect to the scope of the incidents for which data is to be collected and reported. Specifically, this bill requires each county prosecutor to provide to the Attorney General, every quarter for three years, data pertaining to criminal complaints concerning crimes involving the use of a firearm that did not result in bodily injury. The Attorney General is to submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature and publish the report on the Internet website of the Department of Law and Public Safety.

I applaud the proponents of this bill for seeking to implement one of the recommendations in the September 2024 report issued by the State Commission of Investigations ("SCI") entitled, "Illegal Firearms: Use & Trends in New Jersey." However, I am advised that the current language used in this bill could be construed to include any offense involving a firearm, such as threatening another person with a firearm, using the firearm as a blunt weapon, or even simple possession of a firearm. I am, therefore, proposing minor revisions to mirror the language contained in the SCI's recommendation and as reflected in the bill's synopsis to avoid any confusion and to clarify that the data to be reported pertains to crimes involving the discharge of a firearm that does not result in bodily injury.

Therefore, I herewith return Assembly Bill No. 4978 and recommend that it be amended as follows:

Page 2, Section 1, Line 11:

Delete "that" and insert "in which the firearm was discharged but such discharge"

[seal]

Respectfully,

/s/ Philip D. Murphy

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Kate E. McDonnell

Chief Counsel to the Governor