

**Rutgers School of Public
Affairs and
Administration**

Memo

To: Governor Phil Murphy

From: Nasheedah Singleton

cc: Professor Warner

Date: 3/19/2023

Re: Reshaping Domestic Violence Laws in New Jersey

Domestic violence is a serious issue that affects individuals and families in New Jersey and around the world. In recent years, there has been growing awareness of the prevalence and impact of domestic violence, and many states, including New Jersey, have enacted laws to protect victims and hold perpetrators accountable. However, there is still much work to be done to ensure that victims are fully protected, that the public has access to a country-wide domestic violence registry and that perpetrators are brought to justice.

Despite New Jersey's strong domestic violence laws, many victims still face barriers to accessing justice and protection. Some of these barriers include inadequate resources for victims such as a public domestic violence registry, insufficient training for law enforcement and court personnel, and a lack of coordinated community response.

To address these challenges and strengthen New Jersey's domestic violence laws, I propose the following policy changes:

1. Increase Resources for victims: New Jersey should invest in more resources to support domestic violence victims, including making it mandatory for offenders to register to a domestic violence registry, so that the public is made aware of people who were either placed under a permanent restraining order or a permanent keep away order status, so that the public is protected, also to deter future occurrences from happening. I believe that if most victims had the opportunity to know that a person of whom they were dating had a domestic violence history, 9 out of 10 most likely would have second thoughts about allowing an abuser into their lives.
2. Mandatory training for Law Enforcement and Court Personnel: To improve the response to domestic violence, New Jersey should require mandatory training for law enforcement and court personnel on recognizing and responding appropriately to domestic violence, trauma informed care and cultural competency.
3. Enhance Coordinated Community Response: New Jersey should establish and fund a coordinated community response to domestic violence, bringing together law enforcement, advocates, healthcare providers, and other community stakeholders to ensure comprehensive and effective response to domestic violence.
4. Expand Protections for Victims; New Jersey should expand protections for victims of domestic violence, including strengthening restraining order laws, expanding reporting factors for offenders, and ensuring that victims have access to emergency housing and financial assistance.

I conclude that, domestic violence is a serious issue that effects individuals and families in New Jersey and around the world. By implementing the proposed policy changes, New Jersey can strengthen its domestic violence laws, improve the response to domestic violence, and better protect victims of domestic violence. We urge you to support these policy changes and work towards a safer and more just New Jersey for all.