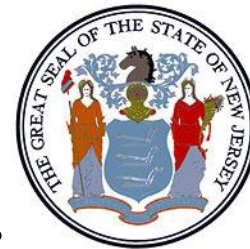


News From Senator Shirley K. Turner



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TURNER PROPOSES LEGISLATION TO GET TOUGH ON ABUSE CRIMES AGAINST ELDERLY AND DISABLED

TRENTON – Senator Shirley K. Turner (D-Mercer/Hunterdon) today announced that she is introducing legislation to upgrade the offense of assault in situations where the victim is elderly or disabled. The legislation was prompted by the recent vicious assault and restraint of a 92-year-old woman during a home invasion in Ewing, as well as the carjacking and robbery of a 78-year-old woman at a shopping center in Lawrence.

“Criminals that target defenseless elderly or disabled victims should be subjected to harsher penalties,” said Turner. “There is no question in my mind that the victims in the two recent Mercer County cases were not randomly selected; the predators in those cases chose their victims because of their age. Criminals that prey on people who are vulnerable should be punished more severely.”

Under the proposed bill, a person who causes bodily injury to an elderly person or a person with a disability would be guilty of a crime of the third degree and would be sentenced to a mandatory term of imprisonment of three years. Presently, there is no sentencing enhancement when the victim is elderly or disabled.

“Ultimately, the increased punishment should act as a deterrent and these predators will think twice before preying on an elderly or disabled victim,” said Turner. “It’s deplorable that our senior citizens are being targeted in their homes and at public shopping centers. We need to send a strong message to criminals that the abuse of helpless victims will not be tolerated.”

The bill will be introduced next week.