



National Police Association  
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September 10, 2024

The National Police Association would like to register its strong support for [New Jersey Assembly Bill 2378](#). This bill upgrades the penalties for assaulting a law enforcement officer from a fourth-degree offense (or third-degree offense if the officer is injured) to a second-degree offense. Penalties consist of a prison term of five to 10 years, a fine of up to \$150,000 dollars, or both. A defendant would be prohibited from entering a guilty plea to a lesser charge or merging this charge with other offenses.

We also support language in A2378 that upgrades the offense of assaulting a police officer with bodily fluids to a second-degree offense if the officer is injured; requires the offender to submit to laboratory testing; and notifies the officer of a positive test result.

Given the sharp rise in assaults on police officers, this bill is critical and overdue. Earlier this year the [FBI reported that assaults](#) on law enforcement officers reached a 10-year high in 2023, with more than 79,000 officers attacked last year alone. The number of officers shot has increased by 60% since 2018 (with a noted increase in ambush-style attacks), per data from the [Fraternal Order of Police](#). Officers are also stabbed, attacked with chemical weaponry, run over by vehicles, kicked, punched, and spit on.

Some of the victims of these heinous assaults are New Jersey law enforcement officers. During a [Gloucester Township event](#) this summer, an individual reportedly rode his bike into a crowd of officers, knocking one to the ground. Earlier this year, reports surfaced that a person unexpectedly attacked two [Galloway Township officers](#), slashing one in the face. Most recently, a suspect reportedly became violent and spit on a [Denville Township officer](#). Bodily fluids contain serious disease-carrying pathogens like mononucleosis, influenza, and strep, which places officers in additional harm's way.

Policing is, of course, an inherently dangerous job, which officers are well aware of when they enter the profession. The surge in attacks on officers does, however, transcend the typical risks associated with policing. Officers are being assaulted and killed in greater numbers simply because of the uniform they wear. Without an adequate legal deterrent -which this bill provides- offenders will continue to be emboldened to attack officers without fear of serious consequences.

Police officers stand between us and chaos, selflessly place their own lives at risk for us, and enforce the laws that allow us to exist as a free nation. Assaulting an officer of the law is essentially an attack on our way of life, the citizenry, and our Constitution.

Passing A2378 would send a resounding message that attacks on the men and women of law enforcement will not be tolerated. It will also go a long way in establishing goodwill and demonstrating to officers that the people of New Jersey support them.

The National Police Association is grateful to New Jersey Assembly members William Spearman, Alex Sauickie, and Wayne DeAngelo for sponsoring this critical bill. We urge the New Jersey Assembly to promptly pass it.

Respectfully submitted.

About The National Police Association: The National Police Association is a 501(c)3 non-profit Educational/Advocacy organization. For additional information visit <https://nationalpolice.org/main/>