

STATE OF NEW YORK

4922

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

February 18, 2021

Introduced by Sen. LANZA -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Codes

AN ACT to amend the criminal procedure law and the executive law, in relation to requiring that all family members of a crime victim and all interested parties who want to give a victim impact statement to parole board members be allowed to do so

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 440.50 of the criminal procedure law, as added by
2 chapter 496 of the laws of 1978, subdivision 1 as amended by chapter 193
3 of the laws of 2017, and subdivision 2 as amended by chapter 14 of the
4 laws of 1985, is amended to read as follows:

5 § 440.50 Notice to crime victims, family members of a crime victim or an
6 interested party of case disposition.

7 1. Upon the request of a victim of a crime, a family member of a crime
8 victim or an interested party, or in any event in all cases in which the
9 final disposition includes a conviction of a violent felony offense as
10 defined in section 70.02 of the penal law, a felony defined in article
11 one hundred twenty-five of such law, or a felony defined in article one
12 hundred thirty of such law, the district attorney shall, within sixty
13 days of the final disposition of the case, inform the victim or a family
14 member of a crime victim or an interested party who requests to be
15 informed by letter of such final disposition. If such final disposition
16 results in the commitment of the defendant to the custody of the depart-
17 ment of corrections and community supervision for an indeterminate
18 sentence, the notice provided to the crime victim, a family member of a
19 crime victim or an interested party shall also inform [~~the victim~~] him
20 or her of his or her right to submit a written, audiotaped, or vide-
21 otaped victim impact statement to the department of corrections and
22 community supervision or to meet personally with [~~a member~~] members of
23 the state board of parole who will determine whether the defendant is

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[~~-~~] is old law to be omitted.

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1 released at a time and place separate from the personal interview
2 between a member or members of the board and the inmate and make such a
3 statement, subject to procedures and limitations contained in rules of
4 the board, both pursuant to subdivision two of section two hundred
5 fifty-nine-i of the executive law. A copy of such letter shall be
6 provided to the board of parole. The right of the victim, a family
7 member of a crime victim or an interested party under this subdivision
8 to submit a written victim impact statement or to meet personally with
9 ~~[a member]~~ members of the state board of parole applies to each personal
10 interview between a member or members of the board and the inmate.

11 2. As used in this section, "victim" means any person alleged or
12 found, upon the record, to have sustained physical or financial injury
13 to person or property as a direct result of the crime charged or a
14 person alleged or found to have sustained, upon the record, an offense
15 under article one hundred thirty of the penal law, or in the case of a
16 homicide or minor child, the victim's family.

17 3. As used in this section, "final disposition" means an ultimate
18 termination of the case at the trial level including, but not limited
19 to, dismissal, acquittal, or imposition of sentence by the court, or a
20 decision by the district attorney, for whatever reason, to not file the
21 case.

22 4. As used in this section, "family member of a crime victim" means a
23 member of the victim's immediate family who is at least sixteen years
24 old.

25 5. As used in this section, "interested party" shall mean a person,
26 who is not a family member of a crime victim, designated by the judge
27 who imposes the sentence on the defendant, as a person who has an
28 involvement with the case sufficient to make him or her an interested
29 party. The judge who imposes the sentence on a defendant shall designate
30 interested parties, if any, at the time of sentencing.

31 § 2. Paragraph (c) of subdivision 2 of section 259-i of the executive
32 law, as separately amended by chapters 40 and 126 of the laws of 1999,
33 subparagraph (A) as amended by chapter 130 of the laws of 2016, is
34 amended to read as follows:

35 (c) (A) Discretionary release on parole shall not be granted merely as
36 a reward for good conduct or efficient performance of duties while
37 confined but after considering if there is a reasonable probability
38 that, if such inmate is released, he will live and remain at liberty
39 without violating the law, and that his release is not incompatible with
40 the welfare of society and will not so deprecate the seriousness of his
41 crime as to undermine respect for law. In making the parole release
42 decision, the procedures adopted pursuant to subdivision four of section
43 two hundred fifty-nine-c of this article shall require that the follow-
44 ing be considered: (i) the institutional record including program goals
45 and accomplishments, academic achievements, vocational education, train-
46 ing or work assignments, therapy and interactions with staff and
47 inmates; (ii) performance, if any, as a participant in a temporary
48 release program; (iii) release plans including community resources,
49 employment, education and training and support services available to the
50 inmate; (iv) any deportation order issued by the federal government
51 against the inmate while in the custody of the department and any recom-
52 mendation regarding deportation made by the commissioner of the depart-
53 ment pursuant to section one hundred forty-seven of the correction law;
54 (v) any current or prior statement made to the board by the crime victim
55 or the victim's representative, where the crime victim is deceased or is
56 mentally or physically incapacitated or a family member of a crime

1 victim or interested party as defined in section 440.50 of the criminal
2 procedure law; (vi) the length of the determinate sentence to which the
3 inmate would be subject had he or she received a sentence pursuant to
4 section 70.70 or section 70.71 of the penal law for a felony defined in
5 article two hundred twenty or article two hundred twenty-one of the
6 penal law; (vii) the seriousness of the offense with due consideration
7 to the type of sentence, length of sentence and recommendations of the
8 sentencing court, the district attorney, the attorney for the inmate,
9 the pre-sentence probation report as well as consideration of any miti-
10 gating and aggravating factors, and activities following arrest prior to
11 confinement; and (viii) prior criminal record, including the nature and
12 pattern of offenses, adjustment to any previous probation or parole
13 supervision and institutional confinement. The board shall provide toll
14 free telephone access for crime victims, family members and interested
15 parties as defined in section 440.50 of the criminal procedure law. In
16 the case of an oral statement made in accordance with subdivision one of
17 section 440.50 of the criminal procedure law, [~~the parole board member~~
18 ~~shall present a written report of the statement to the parole board~~]
19 such oral statement shall be made to the members of the board who will
20 determine whether the defendant is released. A crime victim's represen-
21 tative shall mean the crime victim's closest surviving relative, the
22 committee or guardian of such person, or the legal representative of any
23 such person. Such statement submitted by the victim or victim's repre-
24 sentative, or a family member of a crime victim or interested party as
25 defined in section 440.50 of the criminal procedure law may include
26 information concerning threatening or intimidating conduct toward the
27 victim, the victim's representative, or the victim's family, made by the
28 person sentenced and occurring after the sentencing. Such information
29 may include, but need not be limited to, the threatening or intimidating
30 conduct of any other person who or which is directed by the person
31 sentenced. Any statement by a victim [~~or~~], the victim's representative,
32 a family member of a crime victim or an interested party made to the
33 board shall be maintained by the department in the file provided to the
34 board when interviewing the inmate in consideration of release. A victim
35 [~~or~~], victim's representative, family member of a crime victim or inter-
36 ested party who has submitted a written request to the department for
37 the transcript of such interview shall be provided such transcript as
38 soon as it becomes available.

39 (B) Where a crime victim or victim's representative as defined in
40 subparagraph (A) of this paragraph or a family member of a crime victim
41 or interested party as defined in section 440.50 of the criminal proce-
42 dure law, or other person submits to the parole board a written state-
43 ment concerning the release of an inmate, the parole board shall keep
44 that individual's name and address confidential.

45 § 3. This act shall take effect on the first of November next succeed-
46 ing the date on which it shall have become a law.