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Press Release

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Kean, Rible, and Angelini Bill Clears Legislative Hurdles

Bill to Regulate the Sale of Used Jewelry Passes Out of Senate and Assembly Committees

Legislation sponsored by state Senator Sean Kean, Assemblyman David Rible and Assemblywoman Mary Pat Angelini that would require permanent records to be maintained in any sale of used jewelry cleared two legislative committees today.

“Unfortunately, the theft and reselling of jewelry is a common occurrence,” said Kean, R-Monmouth. “This legislation is a step toward eliminating these illegal sales.”

The bill specifically prohibits anyone from illegally reselling jewelry. Buyers of the second hand articles would be required to keep a permanent record of the contact information of the person from whom they purchased the jewelry and a list describing all the items that were purchased from that seller. In addition, each buyer would need to maintain updated photos of any jewelry purchased, keep all of these second hand articles in their possession for a minimum of 14 days, and send their local police department a copy of these records.

“From my experiences as a former detective I realize how critical it is to get as much information from the seller of any jewelry in the event of a burglary,” stated Rible. “This measure will serve as an investigative tool for law enforcement to assist them in solving the case and enhancing the chances of returning the victim’s jewelry.”

Under current law, only pawnbrokers are required to keep a proper record of their deposits and redemptions. This act requires buyers to leave a paper trail of their transactions which will deter perpetrators reselling jewelry in the future. Anyone who violates these conditions must pay a penalty of at least \$10,000 for the first offense and \$20,000 for the second offense, and any future offenses, in addition to the penalties provided by the law. More importantly, if any used jewelry that is sold is stolen the rightful owner may be able to rightfully recover their possessions.

“In many instances stolen jewelry has been resold or melted down before the rightful owner was able to recover it,” said Angelini. “This bill will help to prevent this from happening and greatly assist in reuniting people with their jewelry.”

The bill was drafted in response to a rash of burglaries that occurred in eastern Monmouth County in late March and early April. The alleged criminals broke into over a dozen homes and stole gold jewelry and coins. The thieves were caught in early April. The jewelry that was sold to local pawnshops was recovered since the pawnshops, under law, must hold onto the purchased



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goods for a year. The alleged thieves also sold some of the jewelry to local jewelry stores. Since there was no law on the books regarding how long the jewelry stores must hold onto the purchased jewelry, some of the stolen jewelry was quickly resold by the jewelry store owners to smelters and melted. The purpose of the bill is to afford local public law enforcement officials enough time to have an opportunity to recover stolen jewelry.

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