

Office of the Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

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Statement of Gov. Christie Whitman Regarding Thomas Trantino

NJ Gov. Christie Whitman today issued the following statement regarding Thomas Trantino's recent placement in a halfway house:

"I was surprised to learn of Mr. Trantino's placement in a halfway house during my absence. It is my understanding that any final determination regarding his release will be made by the Parole Board pursuant to the most recent decision of the New Jersey Supreme Court. I further understand that Attorney General Peter Verniero is reviewing the record and will be advising the Department of Corrections on all aspects of the parole process as it relates to Mr. Trantino's halfway house placement and any future parole hearing," Gov. Whitman said.

"Mr. Trantino's actions have played an important role in my decision to toughen our laws with respect to murders of police officers and in reforming our parole system," she said.

"The brutal murders of two police officers by Mr. Trantino in 1963 still haunt the victims' families and all of the people of our great state. The memory of those murders was squarely on our minds when I enacted the Law Enforcement Officers Bill of Rights that guarantees the death penalty or life without parole for anyone who kills a police officer in the line of duty," Whitman said.

"In addition, legislation I signed substantially reformed our parole system to ensure that tough standards are met by any person seeking parole. Among other improvements, those reforms allow for victim input and allow the Parole Board to consider all relevant information at a parole hearing," the Governor said.