



## Governor Phil Murphy

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# Newark, N.J.

## Governor Murphy Signs “Sami’s Law” to Enhance Protections for Rideshare Passengers

06/20/2019

**ROBBINSVILLE** – Governor Phil Murphy today signed legislation to enhance safety for rideshare passengers by requiring additional identification for drivers. The bill’s passage and signing follows the tragic death of Samantha “Sami” Josephson, a Robbinsville resident and student at the University of South Carolina, who mistakenly entered a car she thought was her rideshare.

“Every day, thousands of rideshare passengers entrust drivers to get them to and from home, school, and work safely and without delay,” **said Governor Murphy**. “Just one unscrupulous mind seeking to take advantage of those passengers is one too many, and it is our responsibility to keep riders safe. Today, I am proud to stand beside the Josephson family and legislative sponsors to enhance protections for New Jersey’s rideshare passengers, and ensure that Samantha Josephson’s tragic death is not in vain.”

“This is a bitter-sweet day for the Josephsons. We want to thank the Assembly and Senate for unanimously passing Sami’s Law,” **said Marci, Seymour, and Sydney Josephson**. “We appreciate Governor Murphy accommodating us by signing the bill in Robbinsville, Samantha’s hometown. We are proud that New Jersey has taken the lead in making rideshare safer for everyone. We also want to thank our family, friends, and community for supporting us through this tough time.”

The legislation signed today requires rideshare companies to issue additional identification materials to drivers to help passengers correctly identify their vehicle. First, rideshare companies must issue two identifying markers to each driver to be displayed on the front windshield and rear window. Second, rideshare companies must create and provide every driver with two copies of a two-dimensional barcode or other machine-readable code that passengers can scan to confirm the identity of the vehicle. Third, rideshare companies shall produce and issue two credential placards to be displayed on the driver and passenger side rear windows that include the driver’s name, photo, and license plate number. Drivers who fail to comply with these provisions are subject to a fine of \$250, and rideshare companies that fail to comply with these provisions can have their permit to operate in New Jersey suspended or revoked.

The new requirements take effect nine months following the date of enactment.

“We stand with the Josephsons through their unimaginable grief over the loss of Samantha in this tragedy,” **said Motor Vehicle Commission Chair and Chief Administrator B. Sue Fulton**. “The New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission will do everything in our power to make this law as effective as it can be so that no other such terrible tragedy can happen in the future.”

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A similar piece of legislation, also named “Sami’s Law,” was recently introduced at the federal level cosponsored by Senators Robert Menendez and Cory Booker in the U.S. Senate, and led by Representative Chris Smith in the U.S. House of Representatives.

“As ride-share services grow in popularity, we have a responsibility to address gaps in public safety, and Sami’s Law aims to do just that,” **said U.S. Senator Bob Menendez**. “No family should have to go through the kind of horrific tragedy experienced by the Josephson family.”

It’s essential that we take necessary steps to ensure the safety of ride share passengers. Making it easier for riders to identify their vehicles will make it tougher for nefarious actors to pose as a driver. It’s important that we’re working toward solutions that safeguard ride share users so that no family bears the same pain as the Josephson family,” **said U.S Senator Booker**.

“Seymour and Marci Josephson are remarkable, courageous people who have channeled their deep, abiding love for their daughter, Sami, into a national campaign to protect others from predators and murderers who can still pose as fake rideshare drivers with the intent to do harm,” **said Rep. Chris Smith who represents Robbinsville, N.J. where the Josephsons live and has authored a federal Sami’s Law**. “Today we see their enormous impact here at home, as New Jersey is the first state to pass legislation that mirrors the [federal version of Sami’s Law](#). We are grateful to Seymour and Marci and know that with their leadership and tenacity, we will see enactment of a federal Sami’s Law so that ride-share customers are *equally* protected in all 50 states.”

Sponsors of the state legislation include Senators Patrick Diegnan, Linda Greenstein, and Thomas Kean, and Assemblymembers Daniel Benson, Wayne DeAngelo, Valerie Vainieri Huttle, and Paul Moriarty.

“I have the utmost gratitude to the Josephson family for their strength and courage in promoting this legislation,” **said Senator Diegnan**. “It’s tragic that we had to lose a young adult with a promising career in order to address the issue of rider safety. Hopefully this law will educate users and prevent future tragedies.”

“Sami Josephson’s story is a tragedy that could have happened to anyone utilizing popular ridesharing services. It devastated our community and we must do what we can to promote public safety and honor her life,” **said Senator Greenstein**. “By placing a greater emphasis on visual safeguards, riders will be able to identify key items to confirm they are entering a credentialed ridesharing vehicle.”

“In the wake of tragedy, we have seen our local community come together to support the Josephson family and affect meaningful change. No parent should have to experience the loss of a child, especially due to a lack of common-sense safety measures for rideshare services. With the passage of this legislation, New Jersey leads the nation with stricter regulations for these widely utilized services such as Uber and Lyft,” **said Assemblyman Benson**.

“What Seymour and Marci Josephson and their family have endured with the loss of their daughter Sami is a hardship that no family should face,” **said Assemblyman DeAngelo**. “No one should ever be concerned for the safety of themselves or their loved ones when using these services. Through this new law, we make sure that as these services continue to develop, we are constantly working together to make sure customers are served safely and responsibly.”

“The bottom line is rideshare services must be safe for both the rider and the driver,” said **Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttle**. “New Jersey should focus on improving identification tools used by customers to recognize their driver and the vehicle. We have to do more to protect New Jersey residents; this cannot happen here. This new law takes us one step closer to achieving that goal.”

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