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Corzine visits Bogota for 'Patricia's Law'

Bill signed for missing Bogota woman



Present at the signing of 'Patricia's Law' are from left: the missing woman's daughter, Christine Viola holding her young son; Assemblywoman Joan Voss (D-Dist. 38); state Senator Loretta Weinberg (D-Dist. 37); James Viola, husband of the missing woman; Governor Corzine (signing the bill); Assemblyman Gordon M. Johnson (D-Dist. 37); state Attorney General Anne Milgram and state Senator Paul A. Sarlo (D-Dist. 36).

BOGOTA - Governor Corzine signed "Patricia's Law" at the Borough Hall here on Wednesday, March 19, legislation designed to speed authorities response to missing persons reports.

The law, named for Patricia M. Viola, 42, and a mother of two, was last seen the morning of Feb. 13, 2001, leaving Bixby School after she finished a shift working as a volunteer in the school's library.

Her husband, James Viola, has spent the past seven years publiciz-

ing her disappearance in the hopes that she might be found. The Viola family is offering a \$10,000 reward for information that will lead to her whereabouts.

The new law requires that police accept, without any delay, any report of a missing person. Further the police must advise the family of a missing person of support services that are available.

Police will also work with medical examiner's offices to gather and compare DNA samples for

possible links to unidentified bodies.

The law was unanimously approved by the legislature in January and will go into effect in a few months. The law is based on similar laws in three other states - Connecticut, Indiana and Oregon.

The law directs police to gather information and investigate whether or not there is an indication of foul play and even if it appears the person disappeared voluntarily.