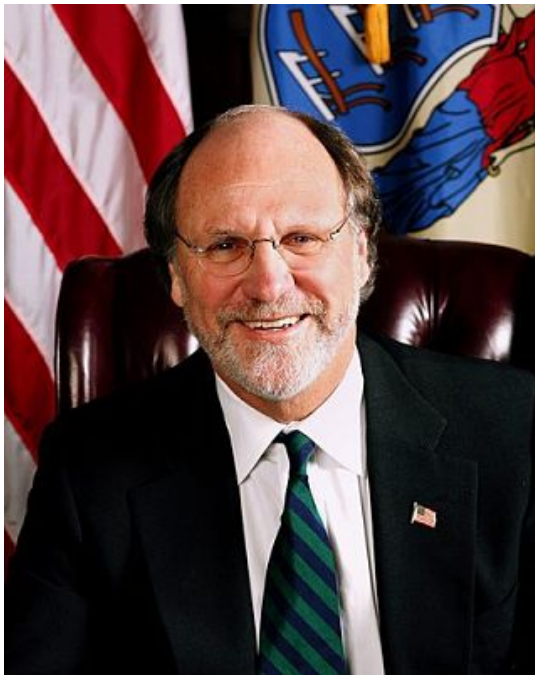


By **TOM HESTER**  
NEW JERSEY NEWSROOM



Parents who kill, abuse or abandon their children would be barred from alimony or inheritance under legislation signed into law by Gov. Jon Corzine Thursday.

Under the law (A-2681), alimony will be denied to any person convicted of a crime that resulted in death or serious bodily injury to a family member and the crime was committed after the marriage or civil union ended in divorce. In addition, a person convicted of an attempt or conspiracy to commit murder will not receive alimony from the person who was the intended victim or be awarded equitable distribution.

The legislation was prompted, in part, by the case of Matt Calbi, a 14-year-old-boy from Old Tappan in Bergen County, who died after sustaining a lethal kick to the neck from his mother Linda Calbi during a violent argument on Aug. 17, 2003. Following his son's death, Chris Calbi's father found there was no legal precedent to preclude him from having to make alimony payments to his estranged wife upon her parole. The wife, Linda Calbi, pleaded guilty to aggravated assault and was sentenced to three years in prison.

The measure was sponsored in the Assembly by Sandra Love (D-Gloucester), Paul D. Moriaty (D-Gloucester) and Valerie Vainieri Huttel (D-Bergen).

"This law really serves a simple and singular purpose: to keep money out of the hands of those who would go so far as to beat and kill their own family and then expect to receive an alimony

payment from a former spouse,” Love said.

The law was also prompted, in part, by the case of Faheem Williams, the 7-year-old Newark youngster whose mummified corpse was found in an apartment basement by police in 2 003 after his mother, Melinda Williams had abandoned him and other siblings to live with her cousin. Although the cousin pled guilty to manslaughter in Faheem’s death, Williams had to be separately barred from seeking the \$1 million that the state paid to her son’s estate.

Under previous law, the intestate share of a decedent child’s estate was equally distributed between the surviving parents, regardless of whether that child’s parents abused the child before his death.

“Any parent found to have abused their child should immediately forfeit their right to their child’s estate,” said Moriarty (D-Gloucester). “No parent who puts their innocent child’s life in danger should get one penny.”

Under the law, a parent loses all rights to intestate succession and to administer the estate if they refused to acknowledge or abandoned the child by willfully forsaking or failing to care for the child in such a way that it exposed the child to physical or moral risk or they were convicted of committing sexual assault, criminal sexual contact, endangering welfare of a child, attempt or conspiracy to murder a child or committed abuse or neglect that contributed to a child’s death.