



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

## O'Mara continues to blast Albany Democrats' pro-lawlessness agenda: Criticizes Hochul for signing 'Clean Slate Act' into law

THOMAS F. O'MARA November 16, 2023

| ISSUE: **BAIL REFORM; CRIMINAL JUSTICE; DISCOVERY; LAW ENFORCEMENT; PUBLIC SAFETY**

**DEMOCRATS' CLEAN SLATE BILL:**

**A VICTORY FOR CRIMINALS,  
A LOSS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY.**

1. Automatically seal the records of individuals convicted of felonies, including violent crimes such as assault, robbery, and even manslaughter.
2. Will place undue strain on law enforcement resources as they monitor offenders.
3. Make it more difficult for employers to make informed hiring decisions, as they will no longer be able to see an applicant's full criminal history.
4. Make it more difficult for landlords to protect their tenants, as they will no longer be able to see a tenant's full criminal history.

"Another day in New York, another pro-criminal policy pushed by one-party rule," said Senator O'Mara.

These new actions once again prove that Democrats care more about protecting violent felons and dangerous individuals than they do victims and law-abiding New Yorkers.

**Albany, N.Y., November 16**—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C-Big Flats) today strongly criticized Governor Kathy Hochul for signing into law a measure known as the "Clean Slate Act" that will erase criminal records from public view and provide no protections for crime

victims or law-abiding New Yorkers.

Hochul held a bill signing ceremony in Brooklyn this morning.

O'Mara voted against the legislation (S7551A/A1029C) when it was approved by the state Senate earlier this year. He was joined by every member of the Senate Republican conference in opposition to the new law.

The Clean Slate Act calls for sealing criminal records – including for violent crimes such as assault, armed robbery, attempted murder, manslaughter, kidnapping, drug trafficking, and others – eight years after a sentence is complete for felonies and after three years for misdemeanors. O'Mara and his GOP colleagues said the action continues an alarming trend by Hochul and the Legislature's Democrat majorities to keep enacting pro-criminal policies despite rising rates of criminal violence statewide.

O'Mara said, "Another day in New York, another pro-criminal policy pushed by one-party rule. This state is facing a crisis of rising crime and lawlessness, and yet this new law continues to make our communities, neighborhoods, and streets even less safe. The crisis, caused in large part by Democrat-led cashless bail and other soft-on-crime policies, could be stopped if Albany Democrats stopped pushing a radical, pro-criminal agenda. These new actions once again prove that Democrats care more about protecting violent felons and dangerous individuals than they do victims and law-abiding New Yorkers."

Statewide polling throughout the past year continues to show that New Yorkers view crime as one of the most critical issues confronting the state and that New York is moving in the wrong direction to address it.

In 2019, Senate Democrats began completely reversing years of public safety progress by pushing the enactment of dangerous cashless bail laws, discovery law changes, parole

“reforms,” Raise the Age, HALT, and other pro-criminal policies, O’Mara said.

Senate Republicans have responded by sounding the alarm and continuously calling for the enactment of measures to restore public safety in New York. The Senate GOP public protection plan, part of a comprehensive “Rescue New York” agenda released earlier this year, includes:

Investing in law enforcement and fighting against Democrat efforts to “defund the police”;

Ending cashless bail, restoring judicial discretion, and rejecting dangerous Democrat proposals, like Clean Slate, to erase criminal records;

Fixing unworkable discovery and “speedy trial” laws that have turned the state’s criminal justice system into a revolving door for repeat and violent offenders;

Reforming a broken parole system and refocusing the parole process around the protection and rights of crime victims and their families;

Ensuring that cop killers, serial killers, child killers, and other dangerous murderers can never be released from prison;

Strengthening penalties for violent and repeat offenders, as well as hate crimes;

Investing in proven mental health, addiction, homeless, and victims’ programs and services;  
and

Strengthening and making Kendra’s Law permanent, to ensure that those struggling with mental illness get the help they need.